

Ethnic Threads And Derangement Presented In The Works Of Cyrus Mistry

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Abstract

Cyrus Mistry is an Indian novelist, dramatists and storytellers. He won various awards for his writing in English. Chronicle of a corpse bearer and Doongaji House are famous works of him. He wrote The Radiance of ashes and Passoin Flowet, a collection of short stories, too. He presented ethnic threads and an odd theme of derangement in his writings. Ethnicity is presented in most of his works and derangement presented in his short story collection i.e. Passion Flower. Being a Parsi his plot of the novels revolves around ethnicity of Parsi community most popularly in Chronicle of a corpse bearer and The Radiance of ashes. His Doongaji House is also the best example of ethnic threads presented in whole play. In this paper the author tries to present ethnic threads related to Parsi community and derangement presented in all the stories of Passion Flower.

Key wards: Ethnic threads, derangement

Introduction

Literature has been an effective way of presenting what is happening around us. It represents writer's thoughts and understanding associated with the society. Any literary work is a reflection of life of various characters and their thinking. It is an amalgamation of life style, societal issues, culture, beliefs, tradition and values. We can find a good connectivity of a thinking of a writer and a literary work having some key factors which exist in around society. The contacts and connections between men and women, community and society, religion and culture, norms and values, people and society, people and nation, illusion and reality, one's way of thinking and understanding, ethnicity and nation and so on.

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century we could find Parsi literature and the talk of fundamental ethical attributes which were ascribed in the Zoroastrian religion. Those ethical attributes are truthfulness, purity and charity. The image of Parsis was rational, progressive, prosperous and loyal to the British. At the time of British rule they had power and success in comparison with Hindu countrymen. In the colonial period there were many Parsi writers like Cornelia Sorabji, Behram Malabari and Freedom Kabarji. They had written about their people. Writers like Bapsi Sidhwa, Farrukh Dhondy, Rohinton Mistry, Dina Mehta, Boman Desai, Thrity Umrigar and Firdas Kanga talked about ethno-religious attributes. How can we forget Perin Bharucha's The Fire Worshippers (1968) a very important work of fiction in which the Parsi culture and life style were described. Nargis Dalal's Minari (1967) was also put its impact in literature. Many Parsi writers depicted Parsi culture in the twentieth century, too. Bharucha critically remarked that it is only in the recent novels written by Parsis that one finds a "definite assertion of ethnic indentity" ("Why All This Parsiness? An assertion of Ethno-religious Identity in the Recent Novels written by Parsis" -249). The writers like Rohinton Mistry, Boman Desai and others who live out if India also wrote novels and their writings focused Parsi culture. Their quest for identity is a prime issue and it has been presented in their writings.

There are various writers like Rohinton Mistry, Boman Desai, Cornelia Sorabji, Behram Malabari Freedom

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Kabarji, Bapsi Sidhwa, Farrukh Dhondy, Dina Mehta, Thrity Umrigar and Firdas Kanga presented their views and thinking through literature which convey the problems inherent in the society, various social issues, socio-political condition, educational condition, racial discrimination etc. Among all Rohinton Mistry, Bapsi Sidhwa, Gieve Patel, Cyrus Mistry and other writers who expressed ethnic identity, racial anxieties, derangement, human discrimination and other key aspects of prevailing in the society through their writing. Cyrus Mistry is an award winning writer who introduced ethnicity and derangement and other issues concerning Parsi community in his writing. He began his career as a playwright and then forges ahead as a journalist and as a novelist. His writings primarily set on typical middle class Parsi society.

Ethnic threads presented in Cyrus Mistry's works

Cyrus Mistry is one of the best eminent Indian playwrights, novelists and short story tellers. His *'The Chronicle of a Corpse Bearer'* is a notable story in which he portrays the life of Khandhias, a name of group within the Parsi community whose job is to collect and perform the corpses before cremation. This is the historical story of the son of the priest of Khandhia, who is destined to maintain struggle between life and death. The character of Buchia presents homosexuality that is taking care of the works at the Towers of Silence that is of the effective element in the novel that affects the work of khandias. Buchia's death is an ironic condition. His death is the result of all his wickedness and the bad image of a human being that represents the nature of a man that governs people.

Ethnicity is presented in the form of the narrator and his situation as a corpse bearer. The narrator Phiroze tells a story who is a son of a Parsi priest. His nature and work as a corpse bearer represents ethnic hereditary feature in the novel. His father wanted to become him a priest or a person stick to his community rituals. The Parsi language used in the novel. The feeling of saving himself from own community presented and search for identity among own people is among own people saw ethnic aspect of the novel. The role of panchayat in taking decision is also presents ethnic value. The nature of derangement is depicted as a confused situation revolves around Phiroze's love affair with Sepideh. He was confused and felt he is in some deranged situation in which he is unable to decide what to do in his life. When he is suspended and asked to work in double shift he felt derangement and at the time of keeping dead bodies and when lying nearby them the narrator felt derangement, too. The condition of Rustom about hi hunger also presents derangement factor. The present novel is a mirror of a struggling corpse bearer who striggles between life and death.

In the second novel : *The Radiance of Ashes* ,the plot is taken from Parsi family and the boy named Jingo who is Parsi boy struggling for his identity and pursuing his dream of becoming a writer but story is different. He has encountered by several problems in his life so he living a different life rather than what he thought of. The talk of a Parsi boy representing ethnic issue such as making identity, how other people treat him, use of Parsi accents in the dialogue, asking help to his own Parsi friends and his failure. The quest for identity is presented through the central character Jingo. Being a Parsi he could able to marry with Christian girl Crisitina. His relationship with a girl who belong to other caste is not acceptable by his parents. The talk of Jingo's parents related to Jingo's future and his relation with Cristina shows ethnic aspect.

The mental state of Jingo who felt imbalance in his life shows derangement. The condition of Jingo presents deranged situations in which his dreams ruins. The journey of what Jingo thought and what happened to him made him deranged. He even couldn't share his problems to others that's why he is thinking more and more but could find solution that made him deranged. In the novel it is depicted how a Parsi boy struggles throughout his life and due to Parsi community is less in number the boy couldn't get support from his people. The mental condition of Jingo and other characters including Jingo's parents, Crisitina in the whole novel presents derangement.

Passion Flower: Seven Stories of Derangement is Mistry's first collection of short stories. It is written in 2014. This collection of short stories are full of personal issues and how the characters handle with them is

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presented. The mind state of each character is regarding coping with the problems they encountered with is presented in this collection of short stories. Each story express different problems. The term derangement makes the stories recognizable which is found in each story.

The condition of Percy in the first story reveals that in each situation of his life whether he was with his mother, in the Gramophone society, travelling alone in a bus, meeting with ghost and at last when he knew about his mother, had some days to live through the Ghost and after his mother's death was deranged. Being a Parsi and living with Parsi community at one place has an ethnic element and how same people treated with him and the when his mother died neighbours arranged all the things as per parsi rituals saw ethnicity. The story involves both the terms ethnicity and derangement so it is analyzed in the present study.

"Unexpected Grace" is about how a woman, alone at home with her newborn, is going hysteric. Suspecting her husband is having an affair, she is close to going mad. What she is going through and how her mind is instrumental in planning some cruel actions, "Unexpected Grace" touches upon the delicate thread of complicated married relationships - the insanity people go through if the seed of suspicion is sown in a relationship.

The third story Finely Chopped Dill is about a cook Jecinta who was single. The story started with her anger. Being alone and having fear she felt restless. While chopping onions she was thinking. In the life of Jecinta had many bad experiences to share. One among them was –one day she was at her four men came to her Domasso Villa and one of them was carrying a gun. She was frightened and dizzy with fear that that man would kill her if watchman hadn't stepped out just then. Such bad experiences made her thinking that someone tried to kill her. She thought for police complain but Domasso wasn't interested in Jecinta's problem. Jecinta has no friend. She has one Rosabel but she had married and moved out. Dolsy was concerned to her anxiety and familiar to her domestic chaos. She obsessed with the idea that someone is trying to kill her. She felt a sign of danger.

In this story Jecinta was encountered by many bad experiences those made her life deranged and dizzy with fear. She was obsessed that someone was kill her, her break up with Jorem and her domestic chaos made her living with anxiety and stress. Most of her life he felt fear and humiliated. She didn't get support of her brother, too. She felt alone and struggled throughout her life to continue her job. Her aloofness and fearful nature made her derange all the time.

Two Angry Men' is a narrative of two colleagues (rather unlikely friends) in an advertising firm whose association goes back to being schoolmates but can barely mask their sharp judgements and rancour for the other. The employer employee equation of the two broadens the chasm as an argument unfolds one evening over drinks. Mistry's gradual detailing and stronghold over characters, which was up until now his flourishing trait, is quite weak here. Anand Mahendroo is a botanist who distances himself from his pregnant wife and seeks solace in the blinding pursuit of an extinct species of the *passiflora*, thus giving the name 'Passion Flower' to this fantasy fable. The story creates many serene moments of compassion, epiphany, innocence and self-realisation. The mystical tale is gripping throughout and a sense of desperation to read further lingers as it ends. Mistry's heroes are unlikely protagonists: they are spiteful, selfish, docile, regretful and disparaging, raging in agony and paranoia. But each one experiences an immeasurable sense of relief and freedom as the story inches to a close.

Conclusion

In the present research paper the researcher tries to present ethnic threads and derangement presented in two novels and one short story collection entitled as Passion Flower. This paper is very important in the sense that nobody much wrote on these two novels with the short story collection. It is unique in terms of presenting both the themes together in this paper. Cyrus Mistry is a Parsi writer and ethnicity presented in his works. He presented the odd theme of derangement in his short story collection: Passion Flower.

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