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CRITICAL STUDY OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS IN BESSIE AMELIA EMERY HEAD'S "A QUESTION OF POWER"

Megha Arsh, Dr. Subhash Sharma*

ABSTRACT

"A Question of Power" (1974), regardless of whether thought about a self-portraying novel or a third-individual self-portrayal, is loaded with the creators' experience of what was called at the time a "mental meltdown." While a creator can't be analyzed from an artistic text, a person can be. Elizabeth, the focal point of awareness in "A Question of Power", meets the models set out in the Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Third Edition (DSM-III, 1982) for suspicious schizophrenia. The story of her ailment is introduced by Bessie Head so as to offer us an exceptional comprehension of distrustfulness and of the association between this sickness and exploitation by the antagonistic. Regardless of the presumption of numerous that psychoanalytic treatment is important to manage distrustfulness; Head portrays a successful course of self-recuperating.

A Question of Power is an existential battle of a hero storyteller whose estrangement and recuperation underscore her quest for the personality of her actual self. It is an investigation into the ludicrous unavoidable issues facing everyone as showed in politically-sanctioned racial segregation South Africa. Force undermines and outright force ruins totally. South Africa's outright force delivered the blacks subhuman with their privileges repressed. Elizabeth's privileges are viciously assaulted from many points and her sensations of hatred brought about by the extraordinary foul play against her poise diminishes her to a condition of madness which takes her through numerous dim back streets of subliminal terrible encounters. For three or four years, she is crazy accepting that Sello sat in her unfilled seat relentlessly remarking on the entirety of her musings, insights and encounters. Bessie Head portrays a hero whose estrangements and loss of personality began upon entering the world with her dismissal by her family members. She is estranged from her nearby just as external climate and this makes her inwards examine search of her underlying foundations and explanations behind presence. She prevails in this pursuit when she understands that affection controls the universe. She takes an interest in the public cultivating of Motabeng town, recapturing her lost self, character and mental stability.

Key Words: Autobiography, Illness, Bessie Head, Psychoanalytic, Literature

*Megha Arsh, Research Scholar, Pacific Academy of Higher Education And Research University, Udaipur

Dr. Subhash Sharma, Associate Professor Dept. of English, Pacific Academy of Higher Education And Research University, Udaipur

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INTRODUCTION

Bessie Head's (6 July 1937 – 17 April 1986) composing involves a momentary spot in African writing between the home-grown, town focused composition of the 1950's and 1960's and the more obviously political and metropolitan composition—a lot of it composed by ousts in Europe and in North America—that came later. Dissimilar to a large number of her peers who escaped South Africa and politically-sanctioned racial segregation, including Es'kia Mphahlele and Lewis Nkosi, Head voyaged distinctly to the extent Botswana. Her composing zeroed in on life there rather than on the existence of issues she had abandoned in South Africa. Notwithstanding town life, Head's extraordinary subject was her own life, and the battle to track down a home. She was consistently "awkward," being a lady in a male centric world, an individual of blended race in a racially separated culture, and an occupant of a country that wouldn't give her citizenship for a considerable length of time; she was an outcast from a country that would not permit her to return. Her books and brief tales are loaded up with characters attempting to make new homes, attempting to fit in, attempting to build up local area. Furthermore, she was worried about the job of private enterprise in conventional African agribusiness and an idealistic perspective on shared cultivating repeats in her work.

"A Question of Power", the most self-portraying of Head's books, is viewed as her most prominent work. The hero is Elizabeth, the offspring of an unmarried insane white lady and an individual of colour in South Africa under politically-sanctioned racial segregation. With her young child, Elizabeth leaves South Africa for the town of Motabeng in Botswana, yet discovers no harmony there as she attempts to conform to country living and to discover acknowledgment as an autonomous disapproved of lady of blended race. The main individual with whom she shares scholarly interests is Tom, a white American Peace Corps volunteer. Elizabeth experiences hallucinations and alarming dreams and is hospitalized twice with psychological episodes. Just her obligation to her child and her questionable kinship with Tom holds her back from falling totally into craziness. At last, she recuperates and discovers satisfaction in humble town life.

INSPIRATION

At the point when she was stating "A Question of Power", Head was recuperating from a fit of anxiety that prompted her hospitalization. That she had the option to make an amazing and controlled portrayal of psychological dysfunction is a demonstration of her experienced abilities as an essayist and to her solidarity personally. The novel returns to a few of her repetitive topics: the chance of interracial participation; the contention between old ways and news, particularly as worked out in agribusiness and public cultivating; the abusive force of colonialists and of degenerate Africans; and the upsides of affection, empathy, and liberality. Dissimilar to the straighter "When Rain Clouds Gather, A Question of Power"

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substitutes account and distinct sections of town existence with clear scenes from Elizabeth's fantasies and dreams.

EMOTIONAL IMPLIMENTATIONS

Head investigates passionate flimsiness in *A Question of Power*, which is isolated into equal parts, addressing the two incredible male characters affecting the weak hero, Elizabeth. Numerous researchers consider this incredible novel with solid personal components to be Head's generally critical and provocative work. No work in the corpus of African writing managing the subject of frenzy, for instance Achebe's *Arrow of God*, Kofi Awoonor's *This Earth, My Brother*, or Ayi Kwei Armah's *Fragments*, catches the intricacy and force of the crazy psyche as does Bessie Head's *A Question of Power*.¹ Bessie Head's pushed into the crazy brain and her capacity to communicate in the profoundly representative language of frantiness determines, it appears, from a blend of the excruciating individual experience of mental distortion and an interest in psychoanalytical hypotheses. "In *A Question of Power*", Bessie Head utilizes the psychoanalysts' delimitation of the human brain into the cognizant, the sub-cognizant, and the un-cognizant to depict the entirety of her hero's experience. She portrays youth encounters as integral to the psychological cosmetics of the grown-up. There are alludes to physiological glitches which might have prompted the person's psychological sickness, however the accentuation is on society, the circumstance of the guardians in it, and how these become instrumental in the social unsteadiness, just as the psychological unevenness of the hero sometime down the road.

Albeit the vast majority of her changes show her tension, mental torment, and internal battle, Elizabeth learns a significant number of the things she comprehends about existence from her discussions with Sello and Dan. She portrays and considers Sello to be her companion and somebody who gives shape to her philosophical world and comprehension of the profound importance of affection, life, and God. As the days progress, Elizabeth seems to turn out to be more subject to Sello: "She was totally reliant upon Sello for bearing and similarly powerless, similar to a patient on his PCP for endurance". Here, Head recommends that despite the fact that Elizabeth's mind flights makes her casualty to forlornness, her visualizations of seeing Sello permits her to have organization and offer her battles with somebody who offers her clinical guidance. All through the advancement of their kinship, Elizabeth goes with Sello into the historical backdrop of humankind and race where he shows her the "admirers of humankind". Thinking about this thought of getting the hang of regarding race and humanity, Head expresses, "They have meandered together as shoeless priests... no sweethearts had stroked them in their single reflections on the spirit, yet they had been admirers of humankind". All through Elizabeth's otherworldly excursion, in addition to the fact that she views the historical backdrop of humankind, yet she likewise thinks about an answer for the issue of barbarous and brutal mentality. She believes that the unforgiving disposition of people is the explanation that others endure, subsequently, Elizabeth expects to

Saarth

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show non-abrasiveness and sympathy to humankind: "[T]he work she and Sello had done together had brought a non-abrasiveness and delicacy into humankind's set of experiences". Through this illustration of generosity, Elizabeth discovers that both correspondence and sharing are significant for people to have the option to associate with others inside society.

EPITOME OF BESSIE HEAD'S MARXIST VISION

Once more, Bessie Head has a message to pass on. This message is unadulterated Marxist as in she needs a world drained of imbalance and mistreatment denouncing those in position of force for delaying human torment. She could skilful make another world for Elizabeth wherein she empowers her to challenge and overcome the socio-political and mental impacts of prejudice and abuse. Having re-imagined a self-appreciation, Elizabeth can push ahead. LaRose Parris (2005) comments "In Head's treatment of the harsh socio-political frameworks and their effect on human mind, she graphs a way to a remarkable future by showing the past as terrible and uncaring."

According to a Marxist perspective, sexual orientation shameful is beyond the realm of possibilities while separation isn't wiped out. Bessie Head's vision of an uncouth African culture drained of sexual orientation abuse is showed in *A Question of Power*. Head longs for an idealistic culture where individuals are viewed as equivalent residents however not as classes due to their sexual orientation, shading or race. Elizabeth has been damaged and tortured by Dan and Sello, yet she could free herself of their impact. At last, she had the option to recapture her mental soundness by perceiving that she needs to dispose of the people who have been ruling her. Bessie Head's Marxist vision can be summarized in Remi Akujobi's words. Head longs for: "A general public that targets setting up a simply request and spotlight ought to be on human turn of events. Detachment that takes into account bad form and avoidance, dismissal and segregation ought to be supplanted with the strategy of incorporation, civil rights, genuineness, connections and thought. A ridiculous society where everybody is equivalent and free ought to be fabricated. A general public that regards its residents independent of sex and class. (Akujobi, 2006 13)"

CONCLUSION

Bessie Head lectures for a reality where individuals are not oppressed based on their sexual orientation and race. A reality where individuals overall and ladies specifically ought not to surrender their fight to withstand the preventions in transit of their advancement. It is through the personality of Elizabeth that Bessie Head needed to depict the experience she has had. Skilfully, she could pinpoint how much the general public has impacted her as an essayist. She needed to show how people can make changes in the general public. To Head, the people are the very individuals who can change the entire construction of their general public. It was individuals of South Africa and Botswana who were the specialist of bigotry and other bigoted philosophies. She needed to call for racial resistance, civil rights just as balance. *A Question of Power* can be viewed as a novel of incredible importance today. It

Saarth

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expands the pursuer's information and comprehension of an issue vital in a time of racial mistreatment that Head has lived in. Likewise, it upholds one's comprehension of such information inside an artistic setting. In a word, acclimatizing Head's Marxist viewpoint is a passage to the peruser to adjust/herself to whatever circumstance or conditions that life may force on him/her. A Marxist perusing of Head's novel can be additionally seen as a challenge to embrace whatever system accessible to come change with existence with its circumstances and encounters.

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