

Racism And Psychological Drama In Richard Wright's *Native Son*

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Introduction

Literature, in its broadest sense, consists of any written productions. In simple words, it refers to those deemed to have imaginative or intellectual value, or which organize language in ways that differ from ordinary usage. This ordinary usage not only applied in particular literature this applied in the entire literature field in various language and society. This Literature can be classified according to whether it is fiction or non-fiction and whether it is poetry or prose; it can be further distinguished according to major forms such as the novel, short story or drama; and works are often categorized according to historical periods to certain aesthetic features or expectations. Literary works mainly deals with the certain issues or impact of the society. Each various in their culture activities and others circumstance of the society Developments in print technology have allowed an ever growing sharing and increase of written Postcolonial African literature with freedom and increased literacy since most African nations gained their independence in 1950s and 1960s, African literature has developed dramatically in quantity and in recognition, with large numbers of African works appearing in Western academic and the "best of" lists compiled at the end of the 19th century. African writers in this period wrote both in the Western languages especially in English, French, and Portuguese and in traditional African languages such as Hausa.

Racism and Psychological Drama

The word racism which means discrimination on the other meaning it is said as people having charge over the fellow beings that is considered to be slavery but instead of the slavery they named it as Racism. This racism is found in various parts of the world, among these people in Africa had suffered a lot but people like Mandela who brought out this issues and because of this the racism was spoken widely.

Richard Wright deals with many themes in the novel such as Racism, identity, fear, fate and free will, crime and justice, Anger, murder

and madness. African American writers talk about freedom and equality. They wanted to prove their existence. Therefore, they shaped different themes. Richard Wright draws his own experiences as an African-American male growing up in the south and moved to Chicago. He describes the sensation of “Blackness” through the mind of the protagonist, Bigger Thomas. He is depressed about the racial barrier, so he did not search for a job even though his family is in poverty. He wanted to attain his own will and fulfill his dream of defending the oppressor. The protagonist of *Native Son* is especially fearful of white people and the power they wield over him and ordinary white people, wealthy white people, white people who control the legal and justice system. Bigger’s fear symbolizes fear felt by much of black society. Fear also leads to terrible and unintended consequences; the protagonist’s fear leads him to hurt his friends and even murder two women. The theme of fear delves throughout the novel in the mind of Bigger.

Literally, Bigger hates the white-skin as the obvious symbol of this oppression. This intense nature drives him through the path of crime. But in his sense of oppression, his hatred of the whites, and of his violence, since he takes that road, he is typical of millions of Negroes. From being tossed by many trials and tribulation, Bigger is affected in the state of trauma...

Bigger dodged and the rat landed against a table leg. With clenched teeth, Bigger held the skillet; he was afraid to hurl it, fearing that he might miss. The rat squeaked and turned and ran in a narrow circle, looking for a place to hid; it leaped again past Bigger and scurried on dry rasping feet to one side of the box and then to the other, searching for the hole. Then it turned and reared upon its hind legs (NS 17)

In the opening scene of the novel, Bigger deals with a disgusting Black rat and he tries to kill it. The sensation of uttering the murder has been triggered out in the beginning. The words “Black” and “Whites” constantly disturb his mind due to the racial conflict in the society. The novel presents Bigger’s repressed feelings and his lack of personal, physical freedom. Bigger Thomas, the protagonist of the novel rapes a white woman and accidentally he commits murder. Then he burns the corpse in the furnace and then he writes a fake kidnapper note.

Bigger feels glad after the murder, his violence against a white woman gives a sense of power. After he commits the murder, he is at ease because he kills a white woman, Mary Dalton. He wants to attain his dreams by defending the whites. He is frustrated due to racial barrier and oppression of Blacks. His intention is to rob the money of the whites and lead a luxurious life but he did not want his people to get affected by his action.

He thinks that the murder has broken the hindrance of racial barrier and acts as a free man, unrestricted with a will of his own. Then he has the clear understanding of his own blackness and black culture, is

determined primarily in relation to the city's dominant white culture. Before the murder, Bigger is irresolute, frustrated, longing but hopeless.

The racial conflict of the society affects his emotional state and undergoes a state of trauma. According to American Psychological Association (APA), trauma is a normal reaction to a horrible event, the effect of it can be so severe. It can be caused by an overwhelmingly negative event which affects and gives an impact on the victims' mental and emotional stability. A victim may have anxiety or panic attacks and may not be able to cope with certain circumstances.

Racism is considered as one of the races is higher than the other. The nations that contain white people delivered racism against their minorities that is any race in the world. These minorities are such, Negroes, the Pueblos of America, the Australian and the Asian people. These people gained the rights of Negroes, and showed discrimination and domination and oppressed the Blacks.

This study deals with the discrimination and violence used against the black people who came from Africa to America. They suffered a lot from the fifteenth century in which their first coming was in Jamestown in 1619 by twenty blacks, till the twentieth century when they have some rights after the appearance of the Civil Rights Movement Literature helped as the tickets to voice for the Negro condition. Whereas writers and intellectuals from the different period had faced this racial condition to the other people.

Richard Wright's *Native Son* cautions people against denying the basic rights to all human beings in general and the blacks in particular. Bigger with his death proves to the world that the voices of the black people cannot be suppressed and every time there is injustice there would be people like Bigger who would become the voice of the voiceless blacks. *Native Son* is Wright's unique contribution to the work of human rights and humanitarianism, sympathy, community building and activism, trauma and recovery (5). According to Wright, racial oppression of the blacks should form the basis of all black writing.

The novel shows the circumstances of anger and fear played out after Wright's hero, Bigger Thomas murder of a white woman named Mary. Bigger is an alienated character who simultaneously hates himself. Actually, he thinks he has no effect on his surrounding and is fed up with his alienation. He cannot be considered into the society in terms of his race and falls victim to violent effects of anti-black racism and the harassment of black existence. The main problem in the novel is limited chance of the possibility of both blacks and whites living in the world without anti-black prejudices and the thought of white supremacy. Being black in an anti-black world is what brings about the responsibility of black people upon their own problems in a white dominated society. The theme of psychological escape co-relates with the

theme of madness. He wants to escape from the accidental murder. He is afraid of the authorities and acts out of control. So he wants to get rid of his state of trauma and the act of murder. Though this be madness, yet there is method in't (Hamlet 62). Hamlet bravely uses the method of feigned madness to avenge the opponent but attains a tragic end. Similarly, bigger commits intentional murder of Bessie. He wants to replace the accidental murder of Mary Dalton wittily. But the method of psychological escape leads in a tragic end.

Work cited

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