



COLONIAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN DANIEL DEFOE'S "ROBINSON CRUSOE"

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U.G.C NET (JULY 2018, DEC 2018)

ABSTRACT :

Colonialism has a deep rooted impact on English literature, specially writings written by English writers. Colonialism does not only mean to study about the ruler who conquers the land of the colonized or control only one specific field in the the domain of any literary genre .Colonialism is an umbrella term .It contains various things like settlement ,exploitation , surrogation ,superiority of the colonizer . Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe is the epitome of colonial consciousness.



KEYWORDS : Colonizer, Colonized, Superior ,Inferior ,Colonized Subject,White Man's Burden.

INTRODUCTION:

To travel to unknown place sometimes it becomes the cause of trouble for the unknown specially people of that particular place . Sometimes someone's unfulfilled desire of travel and craze to discover new land becomes the cause of identity crisis for the native or the original habitant of that region . It also creates an opportunity for some people to represent their superiority , authority , domination etc over the grass root levelled people. Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe is one of the first novel which shows the colonial consciousness among all types of literary genre written in English Language.

From the very beginning it is shown that the protagonist of the novel Robinson Crusoe goes against father's decision and decides to travel to unknown place . May be it is the desire to travel to that unknown place by someone who calls themselves superior over the native people , is the hidden desire to become colonizer . In this novel we also find that the initial desire of travel transforms Robinson Crusoe a true colonizer.

After the tragic shipwreck , Robinson Crusoe ,now he has a chance for survival on the island .The protagonist starts to keep the daily diary of activities and reflections . It is a sign of superior or educated person . It is also an indication of colonizer people who are educated one in comparison to the native people of that region . Robinson Crusoe starts building a permanent resident for dwelling . It is one of the initial step of colonizer for grabbing the lands of the original habitant of the place . Like an educated colonizer people, Robinson Crusoe hunts wild goats for food and clothing and tans their hides. He starts civilization by planting some burley and corn . As a learnt man he domesticates goats for milk , and even train a parrot for a pet. Through these works , Robinson Crusoe shows his consciousness over the original habitant of that island.

The novel also focuses on the cannibals from the main land have paddled over with their prisoners of war whom they killed and ate. It is also seen that Crusoe as powerful person or colonizer attacks them with his two loaded muskets and sword .Crusoe shoots several of the cannibals . The others run off in panic , leaving one of them .It is also seen that Crusoe and Friday attack with all the firepower at their command ,

kill all but four of the twenty one savages . The word "savage" is the clear indication of colonial consciousness in this novel.

In this novel , we all also observe that the protagonist Robinson Crusoe finds cannibal who is given name by Crusoe as Friday .It is really a matter of colonialism that identity is given by powerful or colonizer . It is also seen that Friday is made civilized and educated by Robinson Crusoe. It reminds that the concept of " White Man's Burden". It seems that it is the duty of a colonizer to civilize the colonized people. Colonial consciousness in the field of religion is also transparent in this novel when we see that Robinson Crusoe tries to convert Friday into Christianity and it is also seen that the named "Friday" also given by Robinson Crusoe . Robinson Crusoe teaches English to Friday for communication . But it is the mentality of the colonizer to impose their own language on the colonized subjects.

Defoe also uses colonial consciousness through the relationship between Robinson Crusoe and Xury and the relationship between Robinson Crusoe and Friday Crusoe sells Xury to the Portuguese Captain. Xury's sale shows us racist double standard sometimes apparent in Crusoe's behavior . In this way we can say that Friday can be seen as the victim of colonisation whose territory and beliefs usurped by the colonizer .

CONCLUSION :

It is seen in this novel that various types of colonialism dominates here. We can see settler colonialism , exploitation colonialism , surrogate colonialism . The text also focuses on the domination of powerful over the poor or original native . The novel also focuses on various kinds of imposition on the native by the colonizer . So we can say that colonial consciousness is the dominant in this novel.

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