



Exploring Social Issues in English Literature

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Introduction:

The writer writes his literature to tell the story, emotions, thoughts, hopes and longings but there can also be written social issues in English literature. There are many writers like Henrik John Ibsen and George Bernard Shaw who laid social issues in their literature. Alexander Pope is also an important poet who laid the social issues in his literature. The world started to read the literature and the people and the government also started to regard it.

The writers have used various themes in the literature to lay social issues like racism, gender inequality, class disparities, poverty, oppression and the other things. They create the characters and try to lay the social issues in front of the people. These issues are opened in the literature through their storytelling power.

The Social Issues:

The writers handle the various social issues in their literature and those are thus-

1) Race and Racism:

The writer has tried to show the racism in his literature. There he shows how one race is better than the other, for that we can get the example of "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee.

2) Gender Inequality:

This theme is used in the book "A Doll's House" which is written by Henrik John Ibsen. He tries to show how society creates gender inequality. The female character is in the main role but how is she treated by the others has shown in the drama. She is a doll and moves according to her family or her husband.

3) Class Conflict:

There the writer has shown the class conflicts in the literature, for example "Oliver Twist" by Charles Dickens. There we can take another example of it "Look Back in Anger" by John Osborne in which Jimmy Potter is the main character, struggles in his married life, opposite upper class, with father in law who is a rich man.

4) Poverty and Social Exclusion:

In this literature the writer has tried to show the poverty of the society for example the "Grapes of Wrath" by John Steinbeck. There is a character called Tom Joad who escaped from the jail on the parole. He has killed a man for self defence. Then he reaches at his home and field but looks that the bank has handed over his fields and home. It is the time of depression and he goes with his friend preacher to California to search

for work but there are a lot of labourers so their values are low. There the people are ready to work on low money.

5) Colonialism and Imperialism:

These types of issues are in the "Heart of Darkness" by Joseph Conrad. There the writer has tried to show the reality of colonialism. He tries to tell that the light of London city and the dark of Africa do not differ from each other. Mr Kurtz is a character in the novel who works in the company in Africa. At last he dies of a horrible disease and there is a black woman who serves him till his death. The writer shows how they collect the wealth from Africa and bring it to England. There the writer shows the economical exploitation of Africa. "A Passage to India" by E M Forster is also with the theme of colonialism.

6) Social Justice and Oppression:

There is a novel titled "1984" by George Orwell. In this novel the writer shows how the party gets the power and controls on the society. The party controls everything like exercises, jobs, thoughts and even relationships. If the party does not like someone it can remove him or her. The party also controls the past and what people are able to remember about it.

7) War and Trauma:

There are several examples in the literature about the war like "All Quiet on The Western Front" by Erich Masia. It shows the psychological impact of war on the soldiers. And "Catch- 22" by Joseph Heller satirises the absurdity of the war. There is the drama titled "Arms and The Man" by George Bernard Shaw in which he has shown the satirical movements of the war and how the war is horrible for the soldiers.

8) Social Justice:

There the issue of the social justice is tender in society. There is a poem titled "The Rape of The Lock" by

Alexander Pope. The poem refers to how the innocent people are hanged by the court judges. They drink at night and sell justice to the rich people.

9) Fashion:

There is a poem "The Rape of The Lock" by Alexander Pope in which he has shown that how the women go in the toilet and use various makeup kits for themselves. There are also various ornaments and scents. The jewels are from India and scents from Africa.

10) The Habits:

There are many examples for the issues of the habits like "The Way of The World" by William Congreve. He shows how the women and men drink and smoke and play the playing cards.

11) The Fornication:

The issue of the fornication is shown in the novel titled " The Mistress" by Anitha Nair in which Radha marries Shyam and puts a sexual relationship with Christopher who has come to her uncle's house to write a book on him. She goes with Chris by the side of the river and smokes the drugs.

12) The Rape and Exploitation:

There is the novel titled "The Mistress" by Anita Nair in which she shows how Radha is raped and exploited by Shyam in the house and she cannot tell it anyone.

13) Social Hierarchy:

There is the novel titled "The God of Small Things" by Arundhati Roy in which Baby Kochamma spits on the face of Velutha. There both are Christians but they have different churches, fathers and different preachers for the ritual.

14) The Divorce:

There are the issues of marriages in the society as well as in the literature. The life partners do not understand each other and they go for divorce. There is the novel titled the God of Small Things" by Arundhati Roy in which

Ammu gets divorce from her husband and comes to live at her parents house.

15) The Inter-Caste Marriages:

This is the issue which is revolved in "The Mistress" by Anita Nair. There is a character whose name is Sethu who is a Hindu but lives like a Christian and marries with Islamic girl Saadiya. She gives birth to the child and insists on circumcision (khatna) because she feels that without it the child would not go into heaven after the death but Sethu refuses for it and she commits suicide.

16) The Employment:

This is the huge issue of the society. The government does not want to give the permanent jobs anymore. The Britishers brought the educational system in India to give the technical and commercial education. The society should find employment that is the main aim is of the education. Nowadays favourite sectors are many vacancies but the government does not want to give the permanent jobs to the youth. It is selling the sectors to the businessmen. Private sectors are exploiting of the youth. The government is attracted at the privatization.

There is a novel titled "The God of Small Things" by Arundhati Roy in which Chacko gets his education in Oxford University but after came back in India he cannot find the worth job.

17) Social Tendency:

The society's tendency is not clear or they are bounded with God and religion so the one party rules on the nation for 3-4 terms. So the government is not serious about the employment. There is the novel titled "The Sun Also Rises" by Earnest Hemingway in which the writer has shown that the youth is not following to the religion.

18) The Dowry:

This is the most important social issue. There are many victims in the

society. There is the novel titled "The Dowry ,Bride" by Shoban Bantwal in which the main character Megha suddenly recognises that her husband and mother in law are trying to kill her but she escapes from that hazard and reaches on the flat of Kunal who is her mother in law's relative.

19) The Superstitions:

This is the issue in the society we cannot forget it. There is the story titled "The Astrologer" by R K Narayan and in it the astrologer makes- up of him to attract the people at himself. Several times the society is misguided by the astrologers.

They tell the society to do the various religious rituals and exploits of them with the money.

20) Infanticide:

This is the issue which is very important because by that male female numbers distance is increasing and there is being social imbalance. There is the novel titled "The Forbidden Daughter" by Shobhan Bantwal and in this novel Isha Tilak's stomach is scanned by the doctors with sonography and reported a female child and to remove that Nikhil Tilak her husband and his family give pressure on her.

21) The Rituals:

There are many rituals in the society from birth to death in the various religions. There is the novel titled "Ladies Coupe" by Anita Nair and in that novel Marikolanthu breaks the coconut after moving by the side of the stomach a child of Sujata Akka but she does not eat that broken coconut, because she thinks that evil things would start to come in her life.

22) The Addiction:

There are many people in the society who smoke and drinks. It has shown in the literature. There is the novel titled "The God of Small Things" by

Arundhati Roy and in it the husband of Ammu called Babu/Baba has addiction of drinking.

23) The Crimes:

There are many people in the society who break laws, rules, regulations and commit the crime. There is the story titled "The Astrologer" by RK Narayan and in that the astrologer is a culprit who murders one man and then he becomes a saint.

There are some people in the society who commit the crime through the technology. There is the book titled "Ghost in The Wires: My Adventures as The World's Most Wanted Hacker" by

Kevin Mitnick in which Kingpin is a one hacker who earns billion dollars by the technology.

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