



SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL IDENTITY IN RUDOLFO ANAYA'S

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Abstract :

Rudolfo A. Anaya was a well-known Mexican-American novelist and educator. He was born in October 30, 1937. His novels express his Mexican-American heritage. Anaya learned to speak English only when he started school. As a teen, he broke his back and his recovery from that experience affected his worldview. He graduated from the University of New Mexico and worked as a public school teacher in Albuquerque before becoming director of counseling at the university of Albuquerque.

His novels attack on central and important life issues

Key Words – Social, Psychological, Rudolfo Anaya, Identity, Maturation, Mexican- American.

Rationale of the study :

The rationale of the present study of the novel '*Bless Me, Ultima*' indicates that there is a wide scope for it's study. *Bless Me, Ultima* belongs to post-modern era of the Mexican-American literature. This novel plays an important role to understand social, psychological identity, the inner conflict of a Mexican-American or Chicano boy.

Objectives :

1. To study the social place of the characters in the novel, *Bless Me, Ultima*.
2. To analyze social, psychological maturity of the characters.
3. To study social, psychological identity of the characters in the select novel.

Hypothesis :

In the present study, the researcher intends to study Rudolfo Anaya's novel '*Bless Me, Ultima*' in the light of social, psychological identity.

Methodology :

The researcher intends to use a literary review followed by analytical, explanatory, interpretative and comparative methodology in order to highlight social, psychological identity in Rudolfo Anaya's novel '*Bless Me, Ultima*'.

Conclusion :

Identity consists of the sum total of the answers one should give to the question, 'Who am I?' Traditional, social psychologists frequently distinguish between two separate 'sub-systems' of identity personal identity and social identity. Social Maturity is what enables us to function as healthy adults while psychological maturity means bringing a person's various motives together into a purpose in life.

Bless Me, Ultima is about the social, psychological maturation of a Mexican-American or Chicano boy, Antonio. He is six years old. He is preoccupied with and anxious about attending school & having separated from his mother. It is psychological condition of every child while attending the first day of the school. Anaya depicts here universal truth. The child has to go in different social environment. Before school it's world is limited only to home & his some neighbour friends & now it has to enter into new, unknown world. So, the child has anxiety, fear, burden on his mind. So, Anaya depicts here the child's search for social, psychological identity. Anaya also focuses on burden of many expectations of parents of their children. Antonio's mother wishes that he should become priest, while his father wishes that he should become farmer. No one thinks about the desire of the child. Parents don't give scope to their children's natural instincts. Hence, there is social and psychological break up of young siblings. They become victim of the parent's future plans about them & lost their childhood pleasures.

In the school, some students also torture Antonio. That time he becomes aggressive.

Antonio is witness of quarrels, deaths, murders & violence in the society. He observes three deaths. It has great impact on him. It creates anxiety and fear in him. He has many questions in his mind.

Here, *Ultima* guides him & saves him from mental illness. if there is no *Ultima*, Antonio will certainly become mentally ill. Antonio dreams at the event of his birth & his two brothers, who are in military. Here Anaya focuses on children's

incomplete wishes. They complete their wishes in dreams. Antonio wants to live with his brothers, so he fulfills his wish in dream. So here, we can see from social & psychological point of view. Because of Ultima, Antonio starts to go to school happily. His class progress is also improved. Ultima tells him stories. Antonio finds comfort with her. Ultima does not only physical healing but also social and psychological healing. Truly, when a person's mind is happy, his personality becomes versatile. A person gets new social, psychological identity.

Antonio is always happy with Ultima. With her Antonio goes on the river banks to gather herbs & roots for her medicines. At that time she taught him the names of plants, flowers, trees and bushes, birds and animals. It means, Ultima gave him direct experiences. Direct experiences have a great psychological effect on a child's mind. Here, Anaya attacks on the classroom education system.

Antonio has an inner conflict in his mind. He has many questions like, where was Lupito's soul. He had killed a sheriff & so he had died with mortal sin on his soul. He would go to hell or would God forgive him & grant him. Purgatory, the hopeless resting place of those who were neither saved nor damned. Thus, Antonio's psychological condition becomes worst thinking about these questions. He looks at society as a cruel one. Here, Ultima who guides him, for building social & psychological condition. She also guides Antonio about his question 'What is good and what is evil?'

Antonio also learns new Spanish words, 'Nano' meaning 'plain', 'curandera' meant 'healer', It means children like to learn new language & develop their social identity & because of learning new language they become happy. Learning new things is the hunger of the mind. These persons have respect in the society. It helps a person to achieve social, psychological identity.

At first Antonio's father questioned if Ultima's stay was okay for Antonio. It means young couples don't want old people to stay with them. But, children find happy & comfortable in the company of old people, as Antonio feels in the company of Ultima. There are evil persons like Tenorio in the society, who gives trouble to good people like Ultima. Their evilness is so much that they gave trouble to children also. But, in the end every evil person, every evil deed got punishment as, Tenorio's one eye crawled out by Ultima's owl & in the end Tenorio dies. So always stay firm with good deeds in life. It is the message by Anaya for gaining new social &

psychological identity. Antonio notes that Ultima succeeds where the Catholic priest had failed. He sees a golden carp. He wanted to show it to Florence, but when he dies in a swimming accident, he gave up the faith in the golden carp. There are so many superstitions in the society, which has a bad psychological impact, but Antonio gave up the faith in the golden carp. Here is healthy psychological development of Antonio.

Tenorio is sure if he kills the owl, Ultima too will die. So, Tenorio kills the owl & it puts Ultima to the death bed. The death of her owl mortally wounded Ultima, who is on her death bed. Anaya here focuses on psychological issues that even strong persons become psychologically weak when they lose their most favourite things, relatives then there is degradation of them. They go to death bed & lose their lives, some people do suicides & also lose their social, psychological identity. In the end, when Ultima dies, Antonio asks her to bless him. He determines to build his own dream to guide his own life on personal beliefs. He decides to face issues in his life himself. He now becomes psychologically strong & has ability to face society. At last he achieved social, psychological maturity & identity.

Suggestions :

Researcher intends following suggestions for the developments of social, psychological maturation & identity of the children by doing the study of Rudolfo Anaya's novel '*Bless Me, Ultima*'.

1. Parents are advised not to give burden of their own expectations on their children.
2. Children need old people or some counselor to guide them in right direction.
3. Give direct experiences of natural education to children, don't give only classroom education.
4. Don't believe in superstitions.
5. Children are advised to become independent for taking decisions of their life & become able to face the problems.
6. Parents are advised not to make any future plans of your children.
7. Grandparents are the guide and pilot to children.
8. Children feel happy & comfortable in the company of the old people.
9. Practical knowledge is necessary for the children.
10. Learning new things makes children's personality versatile.
11. Happy, comfortable, clean mind is helpful for educational progress.
12. Always stay firm with good deeds.

13. Violence, quarrels have bad impact on children's mind which is responsible for the growth of criminals in society.

14. Children are advised to make their minds strong and face problems with courage.

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