

Chapter –V

Conclusion

Stephen Crane is important novelist of 19th century. Stephen Crane has been seen by his critics as a contemporary innovative naturalist and realist. He has written small novels. Some critics have made comments on the novels and naturalism. This dissertation has seen some aspects in Crane's short novels "*Maggie: A Girl of the Streets*" "*The Red Badge of Courage*" and "*The Monster*". Crane has managed to create beautifully one of the most significant forms of literature in the late 19th century.

Crane's characters, themes, and background made all his novels famous. They could attract the readers and critics only because of the variety in themes and subjects; those are interwoven in the novels by Crane. His themes are suggestive and they are realistic in description. Here are some characters like Maggie Johnson, Henry Fleming, Henry Johnson, Wilson, Dr. Trescott, Mrs. Johnson, Pete and Jimmie who made stories popular. All characters live under great stress of suffering, tension, psychological pressure and social pressure. They tore between a natural need of happiness and requiring effort of demand of luxury that leads to fall of Maggie, tragedy of Henry Johnson and transformation of Henry Fleming.

The novels of Crane cannot be categorized under a single title. Due to the variety of themes they are neither tragedies nor comedies. They change colour like rainbow. They deal with dark side of life, weaknesses and social hypocrisy, but the novelist gives quite different treatment in the point of one's attitude. "*Maggie: A*

Girl of the Streets” and “*The Monster*” deals with the dark side of life. Whereas “*The Red Badge of Courage*” deals with psychology of newly recruited soldier .In Maggie we see some traits of feminism. Maggie is the representative of modern woman in American slum area. The present dissertation assessed the psychology of Maggie from the feministic point of view. Maggie is an independent girl .She gives up all traditional restrictions .She decides to live as a free bird not a cage bird. She leads herself to the modern world. She doesn't believe in traditional rules, customs and morality. She is strongly attracted towards the luxury of modern American society. Like other contemporary females she also likes to lead her family. She tries to improve herself as well as her family. Finally she fails due to lack of education and proper understanding of situation. Her own decision brings her tragedy. Her ideas, thoughts, actions are modern. She herself considers that she is free from all restrictions even family restrictions also. As Jimmie assumes his father's position, Maggie also wants to assume the position of her mother. Unfortunately, she is not considered as mature as Jimmie and neglected. In the male dominated society she remains always behind the curtain in the home. She tries to raise her voice but she fails as she is deceived by her boyfriend, Pete. Maggie is in contrast with her mother. Both belongs to different tradition .Maggie belongs to modern tradition and her mother belongs to an old tradition. The novel deals with the clash between two generations. Crane depicted the psychology of a slum girl attracted towards the luxury of life but failed to fulfill her desires. She doesn't consider she is responsible for her own downfall. She doesn't tolerate injustice. She is victim of ruthless, non progressive society. She is budding modern woman who doesn't give more

importance to the male dominating society. She pretends that she has impact of some modern women on her. Many critics don't blame Maggie but they blame to her mother. Maggie finds the right to survive in the male dominating society. She struggles against social traditions.

Before Stephen Crane only Nathaniel Hawthorne had shown sympathy to Hester Prynne for the feminist point of view in asserting at the end of "*The Scarlet Letter*" that lot of women in society are expressing the hope that in future men and women would understand each other better. Same sympathy has shown to Maggie Johnson in the novel by Crane. Crane's Maggie is studied from naturalistic, realistic point of view. It was Crane who studied and observed the contemporary conditions of women from the city slum area and presented through Maggie. There is no social equality between men and women in Bowery. Only male power is dominant. Women are neglected. They are abused and exploited by the men, Maggie rebels against such customs and tried to live alone after abandoned by Pete but fails. She is the victim of social and economical forces. So Crane said "neither Pete nor her mother is villain but Bowery is the Villain".

Through Maggie we see the ideology of 19th century girl. In 19th century, American society was undergoing tremendous change. It was changing in all fields like, industry, business, building, education, invention and science. But the people of slum area were not wide awakened as there was ignorance, poverty. Younger ones in such society were deeply fascinated by the change in society and were influenced by the luxurious life. Naturally there was fashion to visit bars, hotels, coffee houses and gardens. Though they have not enough money and strong financial support.

Maggie is the representative of such society. So she leads the same role, she is women by nature and hopes to overcome the condition. She dislikes the old tradition and rebels against her family members who are engaged to enjoy themselves.

Maggie is not a character only. It is a type of an individual who has a vision to change ourselves. It shows her modern ideology towards her life.

The total design of "*The Monster*" and "*The Red Badge of Courage*" is so delicate that a single moment changes the mood. People remain defeated by social occurrences and psychological pressure so they silently accept their fate. The important thing here is that from the beginning these characters know that they are living under the world of imagination and insecurity. They try at their level best to deny it, the end is uncontrolled but it doesn't make the novels tragic. Characters know their inner self, the consequences of their deeds finally they accept their fate. They may be happy that they would live under the pseudo happiness for some moments. All characters in all novels are not aware of the situation. Henry Fleming "*The Youth*" has quite different ideas about the war and war situation those are different from real war fare.

Theme is the backbone of the story and characters are the ribs of the story so characters are useful to carry out the themes. Situations are very important to develop the theme. The last scene in "*Maggie: A girl of the streets*" and "*The Monster*" is more painful to the readers not to the mother or to the Trescott's Family as mother and Dr. Trescott both have been aware of the end of Maggie and tragic situation of Henry Johnson respectively. Both

novels end with tragic note and leaves permanent impression on the readers. Whereas "*The Red Badge of Courage*" ends with heroic note showing the transformation of Henry from cowardice to the hero. The novel ends with introspective note. "*The Red Badge of Courage*" has many themes interwoven with each other. All themes help for development of Henry.

The author has mingled many subjects with reality, fear, terror, hypocrisy etc. by his effective language, specific style, themes, and ideas. In *Maggie* he mingled reality, luxury, love and morality to the slum life style and brings *Maggie's* tragedy. In the "*The Monster*" he has interwoven fear and terror with the physical appearance and created Henry as Monster. He successfully mingled the psychology of society with the incident and Henry's physical appearance. In "*The Red Badge of Courage*" he mingled cowardice with bravery and reveals the contrast between illusion of war and real warfare. Further author explains the meaning of courage through the actions and deeds of the Hero i.e. Henry Fleming.

Author put a fine example in front of the reader that life is a puzzle which has no definite answer. It is realistic approach to the life. His themes, characters, situations and dialogues make him realist. Almost all three novels have more than one theme. It creates the complexity as there is an interrelationship of themes in the novel. In *Maggie* there is an interrelationship between drunkenness, morality, poverty, social and economical crises etc.

Many critics say Crane is one of the prominent naturalistic writers in late 19th century only because of his themes, situations, his descriptions, his characters, dialogues, his language, his narrative style, his attitude towards the life, society, psychology of

characters, and his own experience. He could create his naturalistic and realistic masterpieces. The combination of realism and naturalism is the charm of his novels. The development and decay of Maggie, Henry Johnson, and Dr. Trescott reveals its journey from naturalism to realism.

His novels are symbolic to some extent. It cannot be called as completely imaginative so these novels are realistic in the end. All these novels present the reality of Bowery life, warfare and racism.

Relationship is very important In Maggie. This relationship is not so good due to drunkenness, and independent thinking. Almost every character drinks. Alcohol can provide them security and help them to get rid of any difficulty of life. All family members find themselves isolated in the home. As a result it is difficult for them to communicate with each other. Due to lack of face communication they cannot mix up and enjoy the life. The story tells us some moral and social lessons.

In the "*The Monster*" the novelist deals with dark side of life through the serious problem of racism. The novelist allows each character to think only about himself and his cast. So the decision in the past becomes responsible for the present punishment. All people in the story form unity against the Henry & Dr. Trescott. They hate them, they put boycott on them, and they don't mix with them. They put pressure on the doctor to abandon the Henry on doctor. It reveals the dark side of life. Thus the story creates some social awareness among the readers.

In "*The Red Badge of Courage*" the author deals with the issue of honour, courage, bravery. The novel narrates the situation of actual warfare. Here author allows thinking the hero as a truant

initially but as he comes under the impact of nature and the warfare, he realized the meaning of courage and then he becomes a brave soldier. The whole story tells the psychological change of the hero.

The present dissertation studied the life style of common man and the place of common man in Crane's novels. All Crane's characters are belong to the poor class of the society. All major characters are the representative of common man and they state their position, condition in the contemporary world. Crane himself belongs to the middle class family and grown also in it. So his all protagonists are belonging to the middleclass. Maggie Johnson belongs to poor family in slum area of New York. Henry Fleming is poor farm boy recruits in the army and Henry Johnson is the black American Negro he is the representative of slaves. Being a common man Crane observed them and depicted them in his novels. He painted them with suitable background of lower class society. Their life style, their social, economical status and their place in the society is skillfully stated in the novel. All characters from lower class society enriched Crane's novels and helped to explain his themes very well.

All the three novels are rich by themes, backgrounds, situations, and behaviour of characters. Themes are as important as the air to live. This unique design of all novels is great combination of the novelist to the late 19th century American literature.