

SYNOPSIS

The title of the Thesis :

COLONIAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN M. M. KAYE'S THE FAR PAVILIONS

This thesis is presented in four chapters viz.

I. Introduction

II. Theoretical Aspects of Colonialism

III. Colonial Consciousness Reflected in The Far Pavilions

IV. Conclusion

I In the first introductory chapter I have discussed in detail the career of M. M. Kaye as a writer, explaining her contribution to Anglo-Indian fiction. It is interesting to note that M. M. Kaye was born in India and has an emotional bond with this country and the people of this country. She is different from many other Anglo-Indian writers because she is almost free from the superiority feeling of a colonizer community.

In the second section of this chapter I have examined the definitions of Anglo-Indian literature given by critics such as E. F. Oaten, Bhupal Singh and Greenberger. After examining these definitions and delimiting the meaning of Anglo-Indian fiction, I have given a brief history of Anglo-Indian fiction, beginning with the Romance writers of the first phase and ending with the fiction writers such as E. M. Forster and Paul Scott in the third section .I have

tried to place M. M. Kaye's fiction within this historical perspective of Anglo-Indian fiction. I have specially noted here Greenberger's proposal of dividing Anglo-Indian fiction into three eras viz, the Era of Confidence, the Era of Doubt and the Era of Melancholy which I have discussed in the last chapter.

II. In the second chapter I have dealt with the theory of colonialism in some detail, starting with the definitions of 'colony' and 'colonialism'. I have explained how modern colonialism is the manifestation of the European Capitalism which creates political dependency by force or through passive acceptance by the colonized community.

I have noted that colonial literature cannot be explained merely in terms of binary oppositions such as colonizer-colonized, black and white, etc. It is a complex phenomenon, which needs to be explained with different aspects of colonial consciousness. I have also taken into account the concept of post-coloniality and its reflection in the Anglo-Indian fiction roughly after 1960. I have noted that post-colonial attitudes need not be restricted to the dimension of time. Post-colonial has also the ideological meaning of 'supplanting', in the sense that some third world countries, though politically independent, remain economically and culturally dependent on the colonizer country.

After the discussion of theoretical aspects of colonialism and post-colonialism I have explained different forms the colonial consciousness takes

specially in colonized country, the forms such as imperialism, racial superiority, colour prejudice, social separation, etc. I have shown how these aspects of colonial consciousness are reflected in the literature of countries such as America, Australia, African Countries and India. I have observed that most of the Anglo-Indian fiction reflects colonial consciousness of the British i.e. of the colonizer rather than the colonial consciousness of the colonized country, in this case India.

III. In the third chapter I have examined in detail the aspects of colonial consciousness reflected in M. M. Kaye's novel ,– The Far Pavilions.

Though this is an imaginary work of fiction, the writer has faithfully traced the advent and growth of the colonial consciousness of the British, who came to India first as the agents of the East India Company and then as officers of the British Raj. The colonial feeling of racial superiority among them came up only when the trading company tasted political power after succession of victories over the quarreling kings and princes. I have shown how various aspects of this consciousness viz. Imperialism, Racial Prejudice, Contempt for the Life Style and customs of the colonized country, Social Priorities, Preconception, about values ,Social Separation and the Colonial Consciousness felt by the colonized people have been reflected in this novel.

M. M. Kaye's novel deals with the historical period roughly between 1857-1880, which is the first phase of the British Raj. The colonial consciousness of the British was reflected in this period with great intensity. We notice this in the characters created by M. M. Kaye. However, it is noted here that the writer herself is situated in the post-colonial period, as this novel was being written by her during 1960s and it was actually published in 1976. M. M. Kaye is therefore a post-colonial writer in the sense that she remains a mature observer, without taking sides and shows her understanding of the British point of view as well as Indian predicament and Indian tradition and culture. She exposes imperialistic arrogance of the British, and at the same time she shows how conscious they were of their responsibility for the maintenance of law and order, impartial judicial system, prohibition of cruel customs, etc. The most important post-colonial aspect of her novel is the creation of a hero, who is born English but brought up as an Indian by a Hindu ayah and a Muslim horse-trainer whom he called his uncle. This dual identity of a hero, who is torn between two ways of life enables the writer to present her novel from post colonial point of view.

I have discussed coloniality not only in the dealings of the British with the Indians, but also the dealings of the high-caste Hindus with the Low-caste ones, which is reflected in this novel. M. M. Kaye shows how this colonial domination operates between man and woman relationship in the Indian

community. She shows how the Indian women are the worst sufferers in the male-dominated cultural system. It is also noted that the English society in England is not free from this internal coloniality. Young Ashton schooling in England becomes aware of it in his own household and points it out to his uncle Matthews.

I have shown how in this novel colonial feeling of superiority existed even among the British officers belonging to different ranks, class and trade. M. M. Kaye is quite honest in her portrayal of the British characters, inadequacy of the British officers, their ignorance and their being opinionated in many respects.

I have shown how the writer explores all the aspects of colonial consciousness operating in the British as well as the Indian community. However, it is also noted here that the novel mainly and extensively deals with the colonial consciousness of the British rather than of the Indians.

IV In the fourth and the final chapter I conclude the thesis with my observations and comments on Anglo-Indian fiction in general and the coloniality reflected in this novel in particular. Here, I briefly state that ;

1. The Anglo-Indian fiction is better explained in terms of the aspects of colonial consciousness reflected in it. I do not agree with Greenberger's periodization which classifies the Anglo-Indian fiction into three eras viz. the

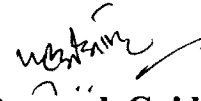
Era of Confidence, the Era of Doubt and the Era of Melancholy. I have argued that there have been British officers in India in all the phases of the British Raj, belonging to two groups, the liberals and crudely imperialistic ones. The fiction writers of the early phase were only romance writers and barring Kipling, their fiction cannot be taken too seriously. They were not primarily concerned with the British presence in India or the relationship between the British and the Indian on the background of the Raj. In the second phase, the fiction of the writers like Edward Thompson and E. M. Forster does not have any doubt about the continuance of the British Empire. The doubt could be only about the behaviour of British civil officers and how such behaviour can sustain good relations necessary for this continuance. Besides such a doubt was present in the minds of the liberals even in the early phase of the British Raj, but the Romance writers of this phase were not concerned with it.

2. I have also argued that M. M. Kaye's novel reflects varied aspects of colonial consciousness, and she has been able to do it because of the historical perspective she has of the British Raj, from the vantage point of post-colonial India. She is free from racial prejudice, though she belongs to the colonizing community.

3. I have also noted that M. M. Kaye's post-colonial point of view is reflected in her narration, in her faithful description of Indian customs and traditions, in her understanding of the Hindu and Muslim cultures and sympathetic presentation of Indian characters. She has been able to express the Indian point of view strongly through the character of her hero, Ashton.



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