

Galsworthy's Realism: Reevaluation

Dr. Arti Ajabrao Chorey

Associate Professor Department of Agri. Extension Education and Languages. Shri Shivaji Agriculture College, Amravati, Maharashtra, India.

ABSTRACT:

Galsworthy has plainly brought out a peculiar realism in the dramatic situation. He creates a dramatic panorama which is worth noting. The realism that a man sometimes commits a crime but the compelling situation are again the creations of social environment which again is the creation of social, political, legal, economical complexities existing in society at a particular point of time. The world is torned by dissentions class interest, selfishness, cruel social conventions, the machinery of law and such other well established interest in society. The social forces are constantly at war and the weak individual is over whelmed by these man made social forces. John Galsworthy has realistically brought out the picture of jail administration specially solitary confinement. He condemns the administration and says that it won't do any good to those for whose reformation it is meant. Solitary confinement is considered necessary to break the will of the criminals and the deep mental and spiritual anguish which it causes not taken into account. The prisoners have a soul also, besides body, but the suffering of the soul cannot be gauged or treated by any doctor. The prisoners suffering is terribly borne out by the fact that they do strike their heads against the walls of their cells every day. Their spiritual anguish is an undeniable fact.

Circumstances, necessities force a man to steal or to commit a crime and should not forget that a thief is not born but made and therefore generous sympathetic understanding is always required while handling cases. Galsworthy has artistically focused the attention of the people to very intricate social realism.

Keywords:

Humdrum, Honesty, Passion, Awakening, Charity, Sympathy, Toleration, Suffering, Moral Ferment.

Galsworthy occupies a conspicuous place as a writer of realistic plays in modern English drama. His plays deal with the problem of contemporary life in its familiar everyday aspects. Galsworthy aims at the representation of the humdrum world around us, with all its conflicting forces, provides sufficient dramatic material for artistic purpose, his presentation and criticism of social questions earned for him the reputation of a powerful social realist in English drama.

He was fundamentally a modern realist. His plays mirror contemporary society. He had a profound humanitarian outlook of life and he tried to the best of his ability to adopt a realistic attitude. His realism was faithful adherence to actual facts, and he depicted life with objective honesty "to show things as they really are." Realism of content is concerned with the truth of the experience which it conveys. He had an excellent sense of dramatic architecture and although his emphasis was not on individuals he had the power to give the realistic quality to the persons with whom he dealt. Galsworthy adopted a realistic and ethic oriented approach to uphold social problem. In order to reveal social realism he used characters as living creatures of flesh and blood aroused by the elemental passions in their nature.

The minutest details about the gestures, movements, dresses of the people on stage are noted and recorded. He creates such an illusion of actual life being lived on the stage that the spectator begins to think, feel and move with those in front of him he makes people think and understand the inartisticity of realism. He spreads realism and demolish all that is false and irrational by focusing on it the searchlight of logic and reason. There is also much heightening of reality in order to achieve the purpose of awakening the conscience in the mind of the masses to abolish social problems. His realistic plays are poignantly shaped and inspired by high intention and imagination. He dealt with social reality like a social reformer. He suggested reformative measures directly or indirectly. The social problem was the raw stuff of realism --- a means to through which he made his communication, evaluation and expression. To a large extent his imagination is enlivened by constructive imagination. He gave us impressive close-ups of life at its most damnable, but he had the artist love of design, his eye for detail.

As a writer of realistic play Galsworthy skillfully reproduced an atmosphere of absolute reality. His plays are based on an inexorable incompatibility between the justice of society and what is actually just. Galsworthy upheld various pictures of society in his plays. A society and its institutions which are set up to punish wrong doer and maintain law and order, may inflict inexpressible misery and even injustice on innocent

people. He also portrays social deterioration which arises inevitably out of social injustice. The drunkard, the swindler, the criminal and the prostitute were not so to begin with. Social injustice done to them has done them incalculable damage and has turned them into what they are.

Galsworthy very subtly and cleverly championed the cause of the downtrodden, the poor, the underdog, the suppressed and the oppressed. He was opposed to blind materialism and took umbrage against the wealthy, leisured people. The verisimilitude and impartiality in the plays is very remarkable. He suggested no practical reforms, though reform appeared in his constant indication of existing wrongs in one form or the other. His solution was not practical but ethical.

One of his major play 'Justice' had a direct impact on reformatory measures suggested by Galsworthy. Due to the play there were incredible repercussions on society, a great sensation in parliament and official circles could be traced and embodied reformatory zeal to prison administration, solitary confinement, welfare of ex-convicts and divorce laws were amended. The source of evil for him laid in failure of imagination and sympathy. Galsworthy because of his sympathy and humanitarian outlook, would ultimately find himself constrained to bless.

His emotionalism led to charity, sympathy and toleration. Thus a new spirit must be created of kindness, of gentleness, of love and understanding which can reduce human suffering and misery and make life, a bit more worth living. Hence Galsworthy's only ambition in drama as presented in the plays, were to present truth the realist culture, to produce in them a sort of mental and moral ferment, whereby vision might be enlarged and imagination livened and understanding promoted.

References :

- [1]. Evans, I (1948), A short history of English Drama, London : Penquin Books.
- [2]. Downer, A. S. (1950), The British Drama, New York : Appleton Century Crafts Inc.
- [3]. Nicoll, Allardyce (1925), British Drama. London. George G. Harraps Co. Ltd.
- [4]. Phelps, W. L. (1921), Essays on Modern Dramatist, New York : The Macmillan Company.
- [5]. Marriott, J. W. (1945), The Theatre, London : George G. Harraps Co. Ltd.
- [6]. Schalit, Leon (1929), John Galsworthy : A Survey, London, William Heinmann Ltd.