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THE DRIVER'S SEAT: STRONG VOICE OF POSTMODERNISM

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'The Driver's Seat' by Muriel Spark became popular as a 'metaphysical shocker' and a 'psychological thriller'. The psychic fragmentation, alienation, loss of traditional values, instability, and paranoia are reflected in the novel. These are the features of postmodernism. This paper intends to focus on these features. It attempts to highlight the novel as a strong voice of postmodernism.

Key Words: Alienation, Instability, Paranoia, Postmodernism, Voice

I

The heroine of the novel, *The Driver's Seat* Lise plans a tour to celebrate her vacation in a South European city. She does the shopping for it and completes the packing and leaves for the airport. On the plane she encounters a stranger, Bill. Bill drops her to the hotel. At the hotel she decides to go for some shopping with Mrs. Fiedke. Next day Bill takes Lise to a park and attempts to rape her. Lise returns to the hotel and meets Mrs. Fiedke's nephew Richard. She takes him to the park and insists him to tie her hands and legs and stab her to death. Richard follows her instructions accordingly.

The study of how the features of postmodernism are reflected in the novel can be divided into two parts : i) The behaviour of Lise before her meeting with Bill ii) The behaviour of Lise after her meeting with Bill.

II

The behaviour of Lise before her meeting with Bill can be observed

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ROLE OF COMPELLING IMAGERY IN DIALOGIC DISCOURSE USED BY BERTOLT BRECHT IN HIS RENAISSANCE COUNTER PLAYS

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German Playwright Brecht loved to adapt and modify the plays of others. He probably needed the challenge of another mind to get the best use out of his own talent. He based many of his plays on the existing originals. Brecht lifted and borrowed excessively no doubt but according to Bentley, anything that Brecht touched became inalienably his own. He produced a variety of Classics over the course of his career which include Sophocles' Antigone, Marlowe's 'Edward II,' Shakespeare's 'Coriolanus' (Brecht called it Coriolan), Webster's Duchess of Malfi, John Gay's 'Beggar's' Opera (Brecht's version is called Threepenny Opera) and Shaw's 'St. Joan' (St. Joan of Stockyards).

My paper incisively focuses on Brecht's adaptations of Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II* and John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*. These Brechtian "counter plays" particularly in relation to the reading of Renaissance literary texts do not conform to the conventional norms of Renaissance drama. My paper questions as to what extent it might be possible for us to understand and appreciate both the Renaissance tragedies of different ages and cultures in the modern set up. Brecht as a playwright of these literary masterpieces has been strong and modern enough to bring out consciously, his view of the Renaissance drama and an attitude of society in which he lived. My paper makes a sincere endeavour to show how the Brechtian adaptations are different from the originals and suitable for a comparative analysis.

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In order to arrive at some interpretation of Brecht's vision of life, I study the imagery used by him, which is impregnable with striking significance, especially in comparison to Marlowe and Webster. Images help a reader to mentally experience what the characters in the play are actually experiencing. Thus my paper would conclude with Brecht's re examination of life already presented by Marlowe and Webster and his effort to rebuild a classical building in his age so that his audience could live in it and find in it something relevant for themselves.

The primary function of imagery in literature is to bring a lifelike quality to scenery, people, or circumstances. Imagery is generally viewed as a "literary device," which basically means that it is a way of using language to achieve a specific end. Writers use imagery to give life to their words in a way that is both realistic and authentic; it enables them to evoke certain feelings and images in the reader's mind that give the illusion of having originated from the reader himself or herself. Experts sometimes refer to this sort of writing as "showing not telling," which basically means that the writer is able to use language artfully enough to produce results without directly stating them or spelling them out. Imagery in literature is normally broken into two broad categories, namely descriptive and figurative language. There are many examples and variations, but all generally serve the same purpose, which is to add depth and a more vivid feel to the writing at hand.

The Duchess of Malfi

Images of Rotting

Ugly images that bespatter Webster's play, occur in Brecht's version too: horse dung, rotten bladders, dung hill, 'ulcerous wolf', lice and worms to name a few. They represent the element of decay: the Polluted state, the corrupted Arragonian brothers and the unscrupulous Bosola.

Animal Imagery

Animal imagery is frequent in both Webster and Brecht. It is an expression of the degeneration of man. The destructive and predatory animals are called up in the speeches of the characters in both the plays.

Bosola sees man as 'eaten up of lice and worms' and the Duchess' greed for apricots as 'vulturous'.

Brecht too, like Webster repeats the 'horse' imagery a number of times. There are references to 'horseman', 'Grecian horse', horsemanship, horse leech, horse dung and cock horse. A 'horse' could be a symbol of male vitality, sexuality and potency in Brecht's play too like Webster's.

Imagery of Disease

In both the plays, be it Webster's or Brecht's, the imagery of bodily rot and disease is quite frequently used. There are references to poison, blood and diseases like dead palsy, plague, ulcerous wolf, swinish measles, deformity, leprosy and scurvy adapted by Brecht from Webster's play. The imagery of disease indicated the diseased nature of the Calabrian Duke and the Cardinal, the sickness of their minds and may also suggest that their state is not in a state of health.

The 'war' Imagery

The 'war' imagery is common in both Webster and Brecht, but more prominent in the latter. There are frequent references to the science of gunnery, great battles, leaden bullets, armour, alarms and sounds, visors and wooden knives. The 'war' imagery occurs more often in Brecht as he attached excessive importance to Duke Ferdinand's foreign wars to explain the time gap.

The Supernatural Imagery

The 'devil' imagery is important in Webster because of the Elizabethan interest in the Supernatural element. Both in Webster and Brecht, there are references to witchcraft, witches, sorcery, to show Ferdinand's interest in the witchcraft. However, in Brecht, there are no direct or indirect references made to ghosts, waxen effigies, dead man's hand, etc. This is probably because of lack of belief in the supernatural on the part of Brecht.

The Biblical Imagery

The biblical imagery occurs quite frequently in Webster. There are a handful of references to Ishmael, Laban, Doom's day, Helvetian

translation and the holy book just once in the play. Brecht's is a more secular / less Christian version.

Webster's use of imagery does not only reveal character. It emphasizes mood and creates atmosphere. It draws our attention to the central action of the play and foreshadows events to come. The image clusters revolve around certain central themes of the play and their rich suggestiveness recalls Shakespeare.

It is very clear that with Ferdinand, Brecht retained, like Webster, the traditional concept of a choleric man; just as he based the Cardinal on the phlegmatic, the Duchess on the sanguine and Bosola on the melancholic. Therefore, the images of 'fire' which characterize the Duke's statements, mirror his fierce energy, turbulence and cantankerous temper.

Be it Webster's or Brecht's play, Ferdinand in his obsessive love for his twin sister, link fire with her:

Ferdinand: Apply desperate physic:

We must now use balsamum, but fire,
The smarting cupping-glass, for that's the mean
To purge infected blood, such as hers.

Webster Act II Scene v

Brecht Act II, Scene v

The link between fire and blood is significant

As we have seen, in the case of Webster's Ferdinand, the list is unconscious. In Brecht's Ferdinand, the passion is Conscious, and the conflagration in him symbolizes the rage inside him because of lust and of choler.

The complex pattern of emotions resting on the connotations of fire, are metaphors for jealousy and incest present both in Webster and in Brecht.

Ferdinand:

I would have their bodies burnt in a cool pit with the ventages
topped

That their cursed smoke might not ascend to heaven;
 Or dip the sheets they lie on in pitch of sulphur,
 Wrap them in it and then light them like a match;
 Or else boil their bastards to a cullice
 And give it to their lecherous father to renew
 The sin of his back.

Webster, Act II Scene

Brecht, Act IV, Scene iv

Like Webster, Brecht too draws on the traditional association of fire and wind with hell to reinforce the frequent images of devils and witchcraft and to establish them on the pattern of meaning and motive.

Ferdinand's violence suits the demonic imagery used by Webster and Brecht. It helps us to know various hidden motives for the brother's persecution of his sister. The line "witchcraft lies in her rank blood" in Webster tells us more about Ferdinand than about the Duchess.

There are frequent references to witchcraft in Jacobean Drama, as people belonging to this era believed in antiquated ideas, superstitions and magic. It was a general belief in the seventeenth century that witches are demonically possessed. In Webster, the severed hand and the waxen effigies are related to the ritualistic practices associated with Witchcraft. Webster's Ferdinand is himself "possessed" by the devil and his torment of his sister is to jeopardize her life through destructive magic. Incestuous feelings are implicitly present in Webster's Duke's behaviour and the choleric element is also vindicated.

One does not find one image superimposed on the other in Brecht. However, one does find animal imagery to show characters as they really are, the relationship between the natural and the supernatural, people and devils and people and debased objects.

Edward II

Brecht's *Edward II* allows us to share the emotions of Marlowe's Edward written about in bygone period. The old tradition leads Brecht to adopt a critical attitude towards it. In his *Edward II*, Brecht has

endeavoured to re examine life already presented by Marlowe.

Images of Rotting

There are a number of images of rotting in Marlowe's *Edward II* namely, stench, dungeon, puddle water, foul excrements. They represent the element of decay: the decadence of Edward, the polluted state, the corrupted Queen and the unscrupulous barons. Images of rotting bespatter Brecht's play too: spit, nauseous swamp, rotten tooth, gutter, stench, human algae, gutter water, sweaty market place, decay, sewage water, etc. Brecht has the images of the "rotten tooth and spit" which may show a concern with the oral processes. The "market place" that is sweaty should refer to his view of "business transactions". In Brecht there are end number of references to diseases like Goiter, White skin, limp, groan, discoloured temples, stoppage of blood in brain, leprosy, shrinking of skin, falling of hair, dyspepsia and cancer. The imagery of disease indicates the diseased nature of *Edward II* – the sickness of his mind and may also suggest that England is not in a state of health.

Animal Imagery

In Marlowe's *Edward II*, the animal imagery is quite prominent. There are references to horses, geese, flying fish, eagles, lambs, wolves, snakes, tiger's claws, an old wolf, winged fowls, and Imperial Lion's flesh. The 'lion' stands for kingly strength and power, as it is the national animal of England.

The other animals in Marlowe may mean widely different things. Depending on the context, I can think of the following associations.

- Horses- vitality, male sexuality
- Lambs- innocence, helplessness
- Geese- folly
- Eagles- sharp eyes, loftiness, etc
- Wolves- predatory beings
- Snakes- treachery, poisoning
- Tiger- strength, ferocity

In Brecht's play, we find a litany of animal images viz. hens, reptiles, horses, geese, fish, worms, ant heaps, a hundred swine, tigers, chickens, vultures, lions, bitches, lice, crabs, tuna fish, fangs, tigers, oxen, vipers, flock of storks, frozen cod fish, evil birds, trapped beats, shot deer, she-wolf, wolves, rats, eels, cocks, wounded deer, lap dogs, lambs, fleas, slaughtered hens, crows, ravens, bulls and five sharks.

Compared to Marlowe, Brecht, we observe, uses many images of lower animals eg. worms, ants, hens, chickens, lice, crabs, etc. They all suggest that Brecht's world has less majesty and his play presents a more commonplace reality.

Classical Imagery

In Marlowe's Play, there are a number of references to classical mythology. Most of them are put in the mouth of Mortimer. Some of the classical images that can be found in the play revolve around sylvan settings: nymphs, satyrs and myths about Diana, Actaeon, Hylas, Hercules, Phaedon, Tiber, Circe, Hymen, Juno, Ephesten, Achilles, Tullie, Alcibadwes, Midas, Proteus, Danae, Phoebus, Catiline, Charon, Tisiphon and Aristarchus. Marlowe, as we knew was a University Wit, so we are not bewildered to find Classical imagery in his plays.

In Brecht too we find hordes of classical images. Most of them are put in the mouth of Mortimer, depicted as a great scholar. He refers to the great Alexander, Hephaeston, Alcibades, Socrates, Achilles, Patroclus, Paris, Menelaus, Helen, Hector, Priam and the Trojan War. In Brecht's Play the classical references include a larger number of "lovers" eg. Paris, Helen, Menelaus, Patroclus etc. This is because his characters are more overtly erotic.

The sea imagery is worth noticing in Marlowe.

Lancaster: For his repeale? Madam, he comes not back, unless the sea cast up his shipwreck body.

Mortimer Junior: I meane that vile Torpedo Gaveston that now I hope flotes in the Irish seas.

In the Elizabethan age, the sea has a closer association with death.

Drowning was more common then.

In Brecht's play, the "wind" imagery is quite prominent.

Rice Asp Howell: A following wind is pearing the king toward Ireland,

On a tiny vessel, abandones by the people.

Mortimer: May the wind drown him or leave him in the lurch.

Spencer: The wind left us in the lurch, it almost drowned us.

Baldock: What's that noise?

Spencer: Nothing. The Snow Wind.

Edward: Tell them Edward at Shrewsbury did not wish to ear the snow—wind among wolves and gave this in return for a roof in Winter which was at the door.

In Brecht's *Edward II*, 'wind' stands for a kind of a destructive power which might bring about a downfall of the characters.

The 'sun' Imagery

The sun and fire imagery is particularly functional in both Marlowe's as well as Brecht's plays which contribute to the nature of the play and significance of the major theme. The sun imagery occurs frequently in both the plays and probably stands for 'the happiness of the kingdom' or the 'divine rule' (The Royalty)

Edward: Courageous Lancaster embrace thy King, and

As grosse vapours perish by the sunne, even so let hatred with thy sovereigns smile:

Live thou with me as my companion.

Baldock: Spencer, I see our soules are fleeted hence,

We are deprived the sun shine of our life.

Later, Edward, in his long speech to Leicester says:

Edward: But what are Kings, when regiment is gone,

But perfect shadows in a sun- shine day.

In Brecht's play, the 'sun' imagery does not appear frequently but it is very much present.

Edward: Although we Kings, when all our power is gone,

are but sharp shadows on a sunny day.

Edward: Shine on, O Sun! Don't let the black moon take possession of England!

Mortimer: Mainly where no people are nor sun.

Anne: Our sun is setting, Mortimer, Oh, look, he's coming, and they're with him!

Marlowe was more conscious in his age of the 'sun' as a symbol of royalty.

Imagery of light and darkness

Brecht's play is replete with Imagery of light and darkness.

Edward: Rain was good. Not eating filled the belly but the best was the darkness. All were irresolute, many reluctant, but the best betrayed me. Therefore who is dark, let him stay unclean. Praise deficiency, praise cruelty, praise the darkness.

Younger Gurney: Here's a light for the cage.

Edward: Who's that? What's that light?

Lightborn comes to kill the King. Here 'Light' becomes the symbol of the King's death.

Brecht has attached excessive importance to fish and fishing.

Anne: Will you come fishing in Tynemouth next week, Kent?

Mortimer: And though I have to cast a great fish net over the whole land, I'll find that witness.

Here, Mortimer is trying to trap his enemies.

References to the animal 'eel' are repeated several times in the play.

Edward: Who's the eel? Is this Westminster and are you the eel?

Mortimer: You fight well as one who knows good orators.

And whom they call the eel.

Respecting your good taste request from you none the less.

In both the plays (Marlowe's and Brecht's *Edward II*), the Images add scope and depth to the overall meaning in their respective texts. Their applications range all the way from the "mental pictures" to the totality of the components which signify sense perception by literal description or in the vehicles i.e. secondary references of its similes and metaphors. The term 'imagery' not only refers to visual images

but explicitness and details of the pictures. Marlowe and Brecht, in this usage of imagery include qualities that are auditory, tactile, thermal, olfactory, gustatory and kinesthetic (sensations and movement) so as to appeal to many sense organs.

Auditory Images

The unnerving sound of the drum disturbing Edward in imprisonment is common in both the plays. As described by John Fuegi in his book *Chaos According to Plan*, we are told that the dungeon scene in Brecht has an electrifying effect on the audience as the king scraped out an empty mess tin with a lead spoon, (a sound similar to that of a scraping chalk) and he shook a metal net, shows that Brecht used more auditory effects and images to establish actor- spectator relationship and also to contribute to *Verfremdungseffekt*.

Tactile Images

The tactile images are more common in Brecht. Images like stoppage of blood in brain, falling of hair, numbed body, snow bind hardening of limbs, shrinking of skin and thorn in the eye occur in Brecht prominently. They create a stronger sense of distaste in the audience.

The Olfactory Images

The olfactory images like puddle water, excrements, stench, human algae and other images of rotting as shown earlier, are present in both Marlowe's as well as Brecht's play, indicating that the latter felt no need to add to the powerful impression of odour conveyed by the original.

The Thermal Images

The oft repeated thermal image found in Marlowe is the 'Sun'. Brecht seldom uses the thermal images like sun and cold in his play. This is partly because the telling association of the Royalty with the sun did not continue to remain prominent till Brecht's time.

The Gustatory Images

Gustatory images like drinking of an ale, beer drinking, watery food, frozen cod fish, raw egg, half- eaten chicken leftovers, child suckled with she wolf's milk are repeatedly mentioned in Brecht.

In Brecht's production of *Edward II*, we have the lead actor playing Mortimer drink Cognac: in Brecht's play we have Anne telling Mortimer "I eat drink and make love to you". Further, *Edward III* also asks his mother to drink less. Mortimer too mentions once, that he sleeps soundly and digests his food well.

Kinesthetic Images

As shown earlier, the Sea imagery is remarkable in Marlowe and the "Wind: imagery is oft recurring in Brecht.

Conclusion

As we have seen in this paper, *Edward II* and *The Duchess of Malfi* communicate Brecht's style of painting word pictures and images. Brecht as a playwright of *Edward II* and *The Duchess of Malfi* has been strong and modern enough to bring out consciously his view of the Elizabethan drama and Jacobean drama and adapt the plays to suit the requirements of society in which he lived. Thus it is to be found that the image – evoking value through discourses / dialogues by Renaissance playwrights is obviously quite different from Brecht and conveys his vision of life and unique interpretation.

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LET'S ENHANCE OUR LISTENING POWER WITH MUSICAL NOTES

Sharmistha Basu*

With the advent of globalized culture the need of the hour is English communication. It is not possible for a second language learner of English to comprehend the language in a natural way. The ESL learner needs to get acclimatized with the language through proper activities and the task of listening can be a very useful method. The musical notes serve as an authentic resource material for enhancement of listening power if correct selection and appropriate application is made. The songs help us to understand the lyrics, accent and rhythm through a relaxed lesson. Moreover, songs can also help the learners in becoming an active listener because they provide a listening practice to different forms of intonation and pronunciation and promotes the development of vocabulary. This paper aims to discuss the scope of English songs in motivating the second language English learners towards improving their listening potential.

Key expressions: active listener, English songs, listening power

Introduction

All the four language skills-LSRW(Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) are undoubtedly important and require special focus however a close analysis reflects that 'listening' is thought to be a natural process and does not require any special attention. The process of acquiring the mother tongue takes place at an early age by listening spontaneously from the sounds all around. However the situation becomes difficult when a person tries to get attuned to a foreign language. In our everyday life unless we listen and interpret a message properly there would be a

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