A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ‘SLUM CHILD’ BY BINA SHAH, UNDER THE MARXIST THEORY OF REFLECTIONISM BY GEORG LUKACS

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Abstract

Slum child by Bina Shah is a reflection of class struggle in Pakistan; it reflects how the residents of Issa colony and Ansari house represent their class. This aspect of the novel invites attention that the novel be read from Marxist perspective. Georg Lukacs’ theory of Reflectionism can aptly be used as a tool to analyse the novel for new interpretation(s). Reflectionism theory emphasizes the negative effects of capitalism and maintains that art is a “reflection” of the base and a piece of the superstructure, making literature a tool to perpetuate class structure. The research is qualitative in nature: it makes textual analysis of the novel whether or not it conforms to the claim that literature is part of the meta narrative or the status quo. The novel portrays the plight condition of zainab and her family who face problems after problems because of being a low working class and having no access to medical treatment, education, satisfactory food and even basic necessities of life unlike the Ansari’s who enjoy unlimited wealth, the most modern facilities and fame in Pakistan and abroad. Bena Shah looks, through the novel, raises her voice against the bourgeoisie’s exploitation that seems determined not to provide any chance to the working class to come out of their downtrodden miserable condition.

Keywords: Bina Shah, the bourgeoisie, the proletariat, Reflectionism