



**Stoicism Is The Foundation Of Modern Civilization In John Millington Synge's
'Riders To The Sea'**

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Abstract

This paper attempts to show how stoicism is the foundation of this well- developed civilization. Stoicism makes our life strong enough to face all kinds of challenges posed by either the life or the nature. The whole life is the play of energy. Stoicism blocks the wastage of energy, means wastage of life due to unwanted incidents happening every second in our life. Nature has taught the importance of stoicism to the humanity through experiences in course of journey on this planet since the time immemorial. Existentialism Literary Theory has been applied to show how the heroine of the drama, Maurya is fighting to survive at any rate. Circumstances make our life emotionally disturbed. Emotionally disturbed person starts breaking from inside in all ways into pieces slowly and finally compels the life to reach at the situation of death. Imbalance of emotions is nothing but a kind of slow death. If we become stoic, we can live a peaceful, healthy and prosper life. After losing her father, father-in-law and six sons one by one, Maurya, the heroine of the drama Riders to the Sea has broken completely but as soon as she comes aware with the truth of life, she immediately correlates herself with the rhythm of nature by thinking about the great universal philosophy that "Boats are not with us but Courage is with us." By the end of the drama, Maurya's stoicism is the matter of praiseworthy for her life and to the life of her daughters as well as to the whole humanity for a peaceful, healthy, progressive and dynamic civilization. That is the need of time. That is the beauty of the universe.

Key Words: Stoicism, Civilization, Challenges, Nature, Energy, Existentialism, Universe, Emotion, Dynamic, Progressive, etc.

Introduction

Riders to the Sea is a one act play and is the tragic story of a poor old fisher woman, Maurya. Maurya lives in one of the Aran Islands. Her husband and her father-in-law have already been swallowed by the sea. Five of her six sons have also perished in the sea. Her fifth son, Michael died only nine days ago. Now only Bartley, the six one among her sons, is left alive. Bartley who has left for the fair to sell the horse in spite of repeatedly forbidden by her mother Maurya.

Then Maurya begins to recall the death of her husband, father-in-law and other sons and bewails their loss. The priest tries to console her but in vain. Then some sympathetic old women also speak soothing words to her. Then she is shown the clothes of Michael. But Maurya too dazed to say or believe anything.

Just then the dead body of Bartley is brought by some men. It is reported by one of the women that Bartley was knocked down by the grey pony. The play takes a sudden turn here when Bartley's death seems to give a strange peace to Maurya's mind. All of her sons have died. The sea has swallowed them. Now she has not to worry for any of her sons. The sea or the storm can do no harm to her now. The period of her sleepless nights is over now.

Maurya sprinkles holy water on Bartley's dead body and on Michael's clothes and prays for their souls. Then she prays for the souls of all her sons and for all the creatures on the earth. Whereas other women cry, she is calm and quiet. She has got a tragic dignity and spiritual exaltation at the end of the play. She has become a symbol of supreme stoicism and resignation to the fate.

Research

Existentialism Literary Criticism has been applied in the drama *Riders to the Sea* to show how the heroine of the play Maurya is fighting to survive at any rate by making herself a stoic person. That is the only choice to be a stoic person otherwise dangerous emotional disturbance will kill her slowly without any intimation and her existence will be lost forever on this planet.

Discussion

The universe is the greatest university which has taught to the people of world how emotional disturbance has broken the man into pieces and finally compelling the person to meet the death. So, humanity of this planet has been searching the solution of this emotional disturbance since time immemorial. In course of time, they feel and encounter with a solution like completely surrender before the fate by becoming a stoic person.

Stoicism has been used in the society since 5th century B.C. Athenian Philosopher Socrates (470-to399 B.C) has stated this ethical principle during his age. Stoicism is the philosophy which teaches us to accept the empire of God without any complaint. In the empire of God everything happening is well tested in all respect. In every incident there is a justice of the creator. Whatever you have, you have to accept it without any complaint. This is the right way to live a peaceful and progressive life, otherwise you will be emotionally disturbed. Emotional disturbance breaks the life into pieces slowly. Emotionally disturbed person starts losing everything one by one and finally his life too. Emotionally imbalanced person always thinks how it happen to me. Such type of person always makes himself busy in thinking unnecessary things. And thinking always unnecessary thinking makes wastage of energy. It makes depleted our energy slowly and gradually one day the person becomes energy less and finally becomes the victim of diseases and death.

Circumstances compel us to meet unwanted incidents of life every day in different forms. We have to lose our job, son, daughter, wife, mother, father, friends, hand, leg, native place, husband, wife, native country, wealth, health, honour and to bear the insult of others, etc. In spite of such unwanted abnormal situations, life always makes compromise to survive. Compromise is the only solution of such bigger loss. This

Methodology:

compromise is nothing but to be a stoic person. When we become stoic, we come in the rhythm of nature. Nature never cries for any disaster happening day to day in the life of nature.

After the death of her six sons, Maurya becomes calm and resigns herself to her fate. The truth is that no man can live in the world forever and one must be satisfied with what God wants. Maurya becomes a stoic person by the end of drama. This is the only choice before her to be a stoic person, otherwise she will be disturbed emotionally. If she is disturbed emotionally, destructive emotions will kill her slowly by making her weak day by day like she has taken sweet poison. In such a condition how she will look after her own long standing life and also the life of her two daughters Nora and Cathleen. So, Stoicism is the solution of all unwanted problems of life to live a peaceful and healthy life for himself/herself and for his/her family. Maurya, the heroine of the play *Riders of the Sea* becomes stoic by the end of drama. Maurya has taken no doubt a judicious and positive decision as she is not alone to take such decision, but the whole humanity has taken such types of decisions time to time as per the circumstances. Because it is the base for the whole humanity to survive and to live a progressive life also on this planet.

Conclusion, Findings And Suggestions

In our society we generally hear from the members of the society when something negative happens to any one, 'All is the play of time.' Such statement is spoken only to pacify the family from the destructive emotional imbalance. This is what? It is stoicism, means to accept everything happily what is happening either negative or positive. This is the art of living on this planet otherwise emotional disturbance will kill you slowly without any information.

Time can snatch from you, your son, daughter, husband, wife, mother, father, brother, sister, job, native country, honour, wealth, health, etc. But no one can snatch from you, your power of taking decision, that is very important of your life. Turning point starts from here in your life, you will be either in emotionally balanced or in emotionally imbalanced. When any negative incident happens in your life, it depends upon you how you deal it either in positive or in negative way. If you deal it in negative way, negativity makes you emotionally imbalanced. Emotional disturbance makes

your brain weak day by day. If your brain is weak then automatically that makes your immune system weak. In such a condition if any minor disease attacks, the person will be easily become the victim of diseases and death. But when you deal the problem with positive way. Positivity makes you emotionally balanced. Emotional balance makes your brain in peace. Peaceful brain makes the immune system strong and finally you get a healthy and long life. Continuous feeling of pain and suffering due to unwanted incidents creates fickleness of mind, that is nothing but a kind of death. On the contrary peace creates stability in mind that is nothing but a kind of life.

Maurya, the heroine of the Riders of the Sea has been broken emotionally in pieces due to death of her husband, father-in-law and six sons one by one. But in such a critical situation positive decision as to be taken by Maurya by becoming a stoic person saves her life from this acute crisis.

Stoicism does nothing but makes our mind in stable position by saving from the destructive power of emotional disturbance due to pain, sadness and suffering as to be created by happening of unwanted negative incidents time to time in our life.

To be stoic is not the symbol of weakness but it is the symbol of the strongness because by becoming a stoic we make our mental and physical power strong by keeping them in peace and stable position. Otherwise dangerous emotional disturbance will make our mental and physical power weak by keeping them in unstable position.

When we become stoic, our brain come in peace and stable and naturally our inner power starts functioning properly. There is a Life Force inside to each and every person of this world which can do anything impossible to possible because Life Force has a unique power to get a success at any rate in spite of contrary circumstances such as to be a poor man, not any near and dear and not any good facility to study. These weaker circumstances do not create any obstacle before Life Force for getting a success. Show must go on at any cost is the motto of Life Force. It means a man can get a success at any rate in spite of contrary circumstances. Life Force is not anything but the symbol of inner power of the man which does not need of any compulsion of support from outside to get a success.

When someone dear deserts the man, the man never becomes alone. He is always

complete in all condition either anyone with him or not. Such type of a unique creation has been created by the almighty God. Thinking has a great impact on my mind and body. Thinking (I am alone) makes a man alone otherwise man is always a complete man. How powerful the man is after separation of someone dear permanently is clearly expressed beautifully in such a powerful statement, "Boats are not with us but Courage is with us."

So, Maurya's stoicism is the praiseworthy for her life and to the life of her daughters as well as to the whole humanity for a peaceful, healthy, progressive and dynamic civilization. So, we all have to be a stoic for a constructive and prosperous life. This is the life, this is the truth, this is the need of time and this is the beauty of the universe.

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