

Sayyid qutbs milestones

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Reading Response: The Magzub Affiliated Reading Response: The Magzub

The “ Magzub”, is a short story narrated by Sayyid Qutb’s in the form of back flash on behalf of the protagonist. The author describes incidents that took place when the protagonist was a six-year-old boy. Even though, twenty-five years have passed since the incidents took place but the protagonist cannot recall them without feeling shudder that penetrates the bone turning the blood into ice water (Qutb, 2004, p. 1). Sayyid Qutb catches reader’s attention right at the beging of the story by using the abve analogy. It is easy to imagine that the story is going to describe fearful incidents that shook the little six-year boy and other children. The story unfolds that faith and beliefs in adult peoples minds are predetermined while a child poises questions to these faith and beliefs.

The story has two principal characters; a six-year-old boy and a man by the name Shaykh Naqib. Naqib is an adult with bizarre demeanor who walks around naked, pour dust and mud over his naked body, run through streets screaming in a shrill and terrifying voice. The adults of the village describe Naqib’s behavior as an approach to reach the sainthood after taking a particular medicine. The protagonist, then a six-year-old boy who also once took the same foul-smelling, foul-testing bitter medicine fails to understand why the same medicine turned Naqib into a fearsome wandering devil. The adult believes Naqib is favored by God because only those who are favored by the God can have the special medicine. It cleans soul, purifies spirit, and the human becomes a Magzub. Thus, Naqib is a Magzub. In Arabic, Magzub represents an individual who lives in a divine attraction. A Magzub does not adhere to social norms. Thus by walking naked and performing other bizarre things, Naqib never violated social norms. Naqib is a saint in adults’ minds,

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but for children he is a devil who can reach them with his terrible stick from any distance; then burn their backs, and break their ribs.

The author in this story uses perception conflict of the same fact or phenomenon by two different generations; adults perceive through wisdom, children through instinct. Furthermore, the author in this regard does not provide an answer as to who is right and who is wrong. He leaves it under reader's judgment; how to find the truth - through wisdom or instinct? The culmination of the story is dramatic, even revolutionary to a certain extent. Protagonist becomes sick; another woman recommends his mother to send him for a night to the Magzub. Protagonist waits for mother's verdict as a death sentence or acquittal. His mother says, " No, No. Am I so crazy that I would make my son spend the night with the Magzub (Qutb, 2004, p. 6)? " Protagonist accepts it as blessings and cannot forget about it for a period of next twenty-five years.

The story describes individual belief and norms that existed in the last century in a small village of an Arabian country. People in similar societies believed that God selected Magzub type individuals, so they were divine, and they could help others from various problems including diseases. The writer successfully portrayed the said society and presented the story in a well-structured framework maintaining a smooth, coherent, logical flow. I believe that the western reader will like the story because it represents a foreign culture and their social norms. Furthermore, it teaches the truth as said by the protagonist's mother, " We leave the matter to the knowledge and power of God and not Magzub (Qutb, 2004, p. 6)."

Reference

Qutb, Syid. (2004). A child from the village. Syracuse University Press.

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