

# English literature

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



1. Test-Theodore Thomas By P. Baburaj, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of English, Sherubtse college, Bhutan Author of Language and writing, DSB Publication Thimphu Communicative English, P. K. Books, Calicut A perception on Literary Criticism, P. K. Books, Calicut. A fantasy. The story takes place in an advanced form of hypnosis. On a simple level, the protagonist-Robert Proctor behaves responsibly but he is denied the license. The story is futuristic. Contains the elements of science fiction. Uses technical and scientific facts.

### **Science fiction**

A broad genre of fiction that often involves speculation based on current/future science and technology. It is fiction based on futuristic science. A form of fiction normally set in the future that deals with an imaginary scientific or technological development. It is a kind of writing in any literary piece through a science background but not necessary that everything is written can be based on facts. The writing includes science but it is not a real thing, just an imagination/imaginative work presented through science. Features of science fiction based on technology and science.

### **Futuristic (making prediction about life in the future)**

\*Make-believe the reader. Examples Too bad Isaac Asimov. Robert- Isaac Asimov. Test- Theodore Thomas. Mirror Image Lena Coakley. All summer in a day ray Brad Ben. 'The Test' is a Mixture of action stories and realism. The story explores the theme of the ethics of the power of the state to 'control' its citizens. -Individual versus state. Short and direct sentences are used to maintain the pace of action (esp. during the accident scene). The story shows how writers are using sentence length to create a mood. Short sentences create a sense of tension, urgency, and fast action. Longer

sentences-slow the pace and create a more thoughtful environment. The story has two plots-in two different times or two different states of mind.

1. Accident (Hypnotizing)
2. Action in the testing center

The story brings an interesting platform for discussion of the individual rights and rights of the state. The story is an attack on all forms of totalitarian or authoritarian forms of government that harness individual freedom and identity. A citizen under such governments becomes mere ' cog' in the wheel. " Men are born free but always in the chain"- Jean Jacques Rousseau Chain of religion, cast, region, wealth all these come in the way to check our innate freedom. Thus men are " Robert Proctors". Even though Robert Proctor meets with an accident in the state of hypnotism but he behaves responsibly, but in the end, fails miserably. The emotions expressed here are true but the incident that he imagines never takes place.

The story is about humanity's need for power-power to control others' ideas/opinions/self-identity, through totalitarian governments control because of fear that something may happen. The test is derived from the fear of diversification and self-identity. The foundation of the world is based on ' control'. Hypnotism itself is a form of control.

### **Symbols**

Blue uniform-police and government's dominance over the modern citizen. Robert Proctor-being watched throughout, recorded and observed all his actions. ' Big brother' (authority) always watching him (citizen) Modern man has been observed like a rabbit or a rat in the experiments-unable to show

ones identity and individuality. This is the dilemma of modern man under the totalitarian form of govt. govt. it's like a dictator. By P. Baburaj, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of English, Sherubtse college, Bhutan White uniform-experimentalist in the laboratory. Our ability to take wise decisions is checked and controlled every time. Modern men under authoritarian government are treated like rats and rabbits under experiments in the laboratory. They are living in hypnotic nausea. their life is like a dream under authoritarianism. So they are negated of their reality and unable to live in the world of reality. ? Reality of life is always negated and rejected. The reality of the life they forget or unaware. So story reminds them the power comes with all its might. ? Story reminds us ' man is born free but he is everywhere in the chain' no one is happy to live in cages even if it is made out of gold. ' How can the bird that is born for joy sit in a cage and sing' we should not allow anyone to suppress our innate freedom and ability.

### **Conflicts**

Ethical/emotional/physical character is most alien.

### **Setting**

1. Is on the turn-pike road on a cool morning in May.
2. In the testing centre where Robert Proctor is hypnotized by officials.

Content The totalitarian Govt. ppears like a dictator in a way that completely destroys human diversity.

Diversity (diversification) is what makes this world, an amusing and interesting place to live in, without diversification- people of different races, religion, regional background life would be boring and dull. People should raise their ideas and opinions, all these opinions are to be tolerated,

constructive criticism should be allowed. No one should escape from criticism. -bear all criticism with patience. If our varied ideas and opinions are taken away from us, we would end up our life like Robert Proctor.

Slowly we will be transformed as an automaton and compelled to live a lavish life of obedience that will be the end of all our free-thinking and individuality. “ Test”-the story reminds us of this noble concept. By P. Baburaj, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of English, Sherubtse college, Bhutan (A model essay) Theodore Thomas, one of the vigilant writers, tries to explore the idea that one must come out of one’s shell letting the prevailing dormant dreamsto germinate into reality. He shatters the totalitarian form of government through the story titled “ TEST”.

He provokes the true image of the modern citizen with his true prophetic writing. ‘ Test’ is a fantasy in an advanced form of hypnosis. The story is futuristic and comprises the elements of science fiction. However, the story tries to explore the theme of the ethics of the power of the state to “ control” its citizen. ‘ Test’ is a mixture of action stories and realism whereby the story mainly focuses on humanity's need for power, the power to control others' ideas/opinions /self-identity through government’s control because of the fear that something may happen.

The protagonist, Robert Proctor, though being a good driver, came for applying for the driving license. However, he was made to undergo hypnosis where he had an experience of an accident. But as he opened his eyes and was out of the hypnotic effect the officials refused to provide him with the license as he made an accident. But instead, he was dragged out of the room without a feeling of mercy on his situation. Basically, they hypnotized Robert

Proctor to lower his self-confidence and prove that he's not at all worthy to be a driver. They did so, to harness is individuality because of the fear of getting diversified. The story which is derived from the fear of diversification and self-identity reveals the fact that modern civilization is a cog in the wheel under the totalitarian form of government. He is not provided any privilege to explore his emotions and feelings. The foundation of the world is based on "control" where authoritarian always tries to maintain conformity among its citizens. People under authoritarian are living in hypnotic nausea where their ability to make a wise decisions is checked and controlled.

The modern citizens are no better than a rabbit or rat in the experiments. The charming wishes of modern men is crushed and injured by the policies that 'big brothers' implement on him. He is never provided any liberty to raise his head so that he can create a free society. The story is really relevant in the pretext of the recent developments in countries like Libya, Egypt and Oman. The realities of modern men are always suppressed. He is being watched thoroughly; all his actions are recorded and observed.

Robert Proctor is like a rat or rabbit in the experiments. If he or she shares his or her opinion, the totalitarian government is ever ready to shut him or her down. Story reminds us the power comes with all its might. The time has come for us to teach the totalitarian government to suck the eggs in order to regain the lost liberty. people under authoritarian need to keep their nose to the grindstone and fight. We should remember man is born free but he is everywhere in the chain. No one is glad to live in cages even if it is made out of gold.

The suppressed must rise from ashes and pave the way better for their generations to come. Thus, what they have to do is to find a key for the locked cage. And they are sure that in the long run, they become victorious in their life and become inseparable from free birds. Luckily we the people of Bhutan enjoying a life of Gross National Happiness and let us sing the praise of it now and in the coming time. By P. Baburaj, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of English, Sherubtse college, Bhutan.