

Free research paper about transition to modernity

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The 20th century saw a wake in the, in modernization where change embraced all forms of institutions in the world. The societies in the west and the east were no exceptions as seen from the literatures of these regions. Since the literature is a representation of the society, it is apparent that all societies in the 20th century were undergoing some form of transformation be it social, economic or political. From the novella, ' Love in A Fallen City' witnesses a social change in family relationships and matters of love. The Drowning of an Old Cat depicts a political transformation and western influence in the eastern politics. Xiao Xiao, on the other hand, depicts a social transformation in the cultural beliefs that seem inhuman in the modern world (Camilleri, Anthony & Albert, 64). As seen from the three stories, social change is a major theme that is progressively evident. The writers show how modernization is slowly taking root in the eastern region which for a long time was a conservative.

Xiao Xiao by Shen Congwen

The culture of Xiao's society believes that a woman is to be married to her husband at a young age. The culture demands that girls to be ushered in a

strange life where they share a bed with someone they do not know so that they can carry on the ancestral line. The culture requires for the girl to take care of a young boy who is to be her husband when he reaches maturity (Camilleri, Anthony & Albert, 124). For example, in the story, Xiao is married to a two year old boy Sonny. She is supposed to take care of him like a nanny. At eleven, she moves to her husband's home to live with the family. Among her duties is to soothe him, entertain him and clean his diapers. Through this way, Sonny, the little husband will get affectionate with her. The most striking and shocking social practice that needs and is transformed in the story is the culture that calls for drowning of girls who get pregnant. It is a major social change in the story; a social transformation from a cruel practice to a more modern and acceptable faith. It occurs after Motley Mutt lures little husband with songs and successfully sends him away and he gets a good time with Xiao and she gets impregnated. According to the culture and rules of the society, Xiao is to be drowned according to the Confucian precepts. Xiao is fully aware of the consequences given that, in the day, she was wed, she did not cry like the other girls because she knew what she was getting into and what the tradition required from her and other girls. When she made love to Mutt, she knew so well that she had done something that was not right and in the event that she becomes pregnant, she knew that she would be punished for her mistake. In that accord, she is worried when Motley abandons her and she becomes desperate and afraid. She, therefore, sought to commit suicide but was unsuccessful (Camilleri, Anthony & Albert, 164). It can be attributed to the fear of being drowned or being married away to someone else.

The family does not find it necessary to marry her off or drown her. She is given a chance to live in the family and after she gives birth to a baby boy, she is fully accepted back to the family and continuous with her duties to serve little husband. The society makes a significant social change of accepting premarital sex or illegitimate children without punishing the mother. It is an adaptation of the western modernization that was spreading in the world through globalization. The coed also helped in spreading western culture and the grandfather's awareness on the coed must have contributed greatly in the final verdict of Xiao.

Love in a fallen city by Eileen Chang

In the novella, Eileen tries to show the transformation in the family relationship and the liberation of women. Set in a time when Japan invaded Hong Kong, the story shows the transformation of the society politically and also shows the ties of family relationship. Women are depicted as in great of material security than in need of love and affection. Compared to the traditional faith and stereotype about women as weak creatures who constantly seek love from men, Eileen shows that the world is experiencing changes and women are after other things apart from men.

The fallen city is a symbolic title which shows the development of Hong Kong in the hands of the Japanese. The city of Hong Kong falls as so does the relation of Liusu and her family. Her marriage ends in divorce after which she falls in love with Fan although her love for him is centered at obtaining life security (Camilleri, Anthony & Albert, 178). The whole courtship is a gamble to her as Fan does not show interest to her. However, she is patient and plays her card well to win his love. After several failed marriages, she was

tired of the relationships without benefits and resolved that this be the base on which she would get married.

The change comes out in the transformation on the meaning of marriage to women. Traditionally, marriage was meant to propagate human society. However, modernization has corrupted this prime purpose to include material benefit and security. Marriage has turned out to be an asset that one assesses what gains they will yield from the institution. Secondly, civilization had settled in and the Chinese culture and its people looked awful and that necessitated an acceptance of western modernization.

The drowning of an old cat by Huang Chunming

Chunming presents a development in the whole society where civilization and modernization are setting foot in the traditional China. The drowning of an old cat is a symbolic representation of a Chinese traditional culture that is being corrupted westernization. Despite various characters led by Uncle Ah-Zhuan trying to stop the encroachment, their efforts are fruitless as the transformation fully takes over (Camilleri, Anthony & Albert, 234). This period is characterised by transitional activities that were of western origin in all aspects of the social life. The efforts to preserve nativism were futile as the modernist movement was strong and efficiently corrupted the country's political ideology. This was made hard due to the blind admiration of the western culture and consequently created room for its establishment and encroachment

Huang focused on the rural society and criticized the modernists who had a pro-western mentality. These were the people who accepted and encouraged the modernization, westernization and urbanization. The process was a

tsunami of change that could not be stopped by the conservatives. The swimming pool represents westernization that is corrupting native culture. The wind of change has settled and the natives fear that their sacred well called Clear Spring, which represents their culture, will dry up.

Works Cited

Camilleri, Joseph A, Anthony P. Jarvis, and Albert J. Paolini. A State in Transition: Reimagining Political Space. Boulder, Colo: L. Rienner, 1995. Print.