

Passage analysis

Literature



of Passage Analysis Dihua looked around. Fivery was nowhere to be seen; it was Bohe who was standing beside her. Her grief turned to joy again, and she was just about to say something, when a mule in one of the passing traps suddenly came up to her and began to bray, giving her quite a start . She turned and looked again-and this time found nothing but darkness. Bohe had vanished, but the mule was still there, braying as loudly as ever . she forced her mind to concentrate: she was still lying on the platform bed, that much was clear, and the lamp on the table had gone out. The mules of the other guests had been tied up in the courtyard and it was they who were braying . It had all been a dream. (Wu Jianren, *Sea of Regret*, 114)

The given passage can be analyzed in many ways. One of the more significant ways in which this can be done is through a class-based perspective. In order to make a clear analysis of the above passage through such a perspective, one would need to understand a class-based perspective first. Class-based analyses of literature were initiated largely by Marxist literary critics who felt that the history of human civilization was also the history of class struggles. They sought to view in literature a representation of such struggle and incidents within novels were seen as concrete representations or imaginings of real-life situations that depicted the struggles between the classes.

Class-based literary theory also operates on the basis of viewing struggles in the society as being dialectically modified. This means that such critics view struggles in society as being dialectically resolved between two parties through a synthesis of two points of view. Such a synthesis plays a role in the emergence of new societies and new modes of production. This then becomes another aspect of such analyses. An understanding of the modes of <https://assignbuster.com/passage-analysis/>

production within a society is sought to be effected through such critiques. They seek to analyze the manner in which the history of a particular society has shaped up through class-based processes. They also seek to analyze the reasons as to why certain syntheses were brought about and not others in particular historical settings.

It is however, not true that such critics do not pay adequate attention to other aspects of the society like its culture and political environments. What they do however, argue, are that these are connected to class and ultimately depend on class for the changes that they undergo. Class becomes the basis of the society and everything else becomes a superstructural construct. Such concepts have been employed by critics for the purpose of understanding texts created by both leftist authors and others. The power of such critiques lies in their ability to unearth stories of resistance where none lay and in this sense, they are often able to be of great importance to subaltern communities. Such critiques have often helped in the oppressed and marginalized groups of the world gaining a voice.

The given passage begins with a description of a girl who feels lonely but is happy to see another character named Bohe. She is however, then surprised to find that Bohe too has vanished and in his place she finds a mule. The substitution of Bohe with a mule is interesting in this context. One may then conclude that this is a deliberate act of symbolism on the part of the author who may have sought to portray Bohe as a member of the working classes or the proletariat. The abysmal conditions that the working classes had to live through are indicated through the conflation of an animal and a human being. It is significant here that the beast that is referred to is a beast of burden. The conditions of the working classes in the society being described

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can then be understood as abysmal and inhuman.

The fact that the mule is not silent is also extremely important. The fact that the mule has found a voice for itself and seeks to make itself heard can be seen as an indication of its dissatisfaction with its lot in life. This can be taken to be a foreshadowing of an actual revolution that would be a violent synthesis of material interests in a particular society. Apart from this, it also indicates an awareness of oppression on the part of the oppressed which is the first step towards an attempt to remove oppression.

Another significant aspect of the braying of the mule is that it is not a single mule that brays but a collective of mules. This can be interpreted as a protest on the part of an entire collective rather than a single individual.

Class-based literary analyses usually look for changes that are brought about by such collectives that can then be seen as historical movements rather than isolated incidents. The fact that such braying is also a part of a dream indicates the fact that such class-based uprisings may occur in the future at a time when class consciousness may arise amongst the working classes. The passage makes clear that such consciousness of one's class does not exist at that point of time. The dream then indicates possibility rather than having a mirage-like quality that may indicate the tedium in the lives of the lower classes in a society.

Works Cited

Jianren, Wu. *The Sea of Regret*. Tr. Hanan, Patrick. Honolulu: U of Hawaii P, 2009. Print.