Liberal Journal of Language and Literature Review

Volume. 1 Issue No. 1 (2022)

The Impact of Literature on Political Thought

Anum Rasheed, MS Scholar, Department of English, University of Bahawalpur.
1. Salma Javed, MS Scholar, Department of English, University of Peshawar.

Abstract

This qualitative research paper investigates the influence of literature on political thought. This research examines texts I read as literature that documentary films examined as fact, drawing this conclusion: All these texts present political and nonpolitical literature but reflect factual, subjective interpretations and prescriptive hues that are factually and politically framed literature. Each of these works is examined thematically, using literary texts from various genres, times, and places to find reoccurring themes and their relation to political thought. The study argues that literature mirrors popular political sentiments and can challenge dominant ideologies and motivate political action. Such a study extends the scope of inquiry into and understanding the complex interrelation of literary and political history, as it enables us to dwell on the capacity of narrative to actively shape and mobilize political consciousness.

Keywords: Literature, Political Thought, Ideology, Discourse, Narrative

Introduction

People across the academic spectrum have a lot of curiosity about what the relationship between literature and political life is. That is right; literature is one of the most powerful forms of politics and critique of politics from novels to poems to memoirs to philosophy. Literature contributed to the formation of politics and has becoming a tool of manifesting the different faces of politics that are considered by the public. This relationship poses crucial questions about the narrative as ontological to the politics of thought and about how the work supports political action.

As it has been mentioned earlier, literature was used before as an instrument of political commentary and a sociopolitical commentary. For instance, as concern to the present paper and as quick example, the work of George Orwell and 1984 and

Aldous Huxley and its Brave New World at the same time give more than mere authoritarianism and totalitarianism but makes the reader reflect on power and governance as well. In the same vein, other writers like Morrison and Garcia Marquez are able to tell the story behind social oppression as well as the trials of the politics of identity beyond the discourses.

Furthermore, literature acts as agents for marginalized cultures, thus presenting ideas that are not often presented in politically significant elite discourses. Literature created by authors of all occupations disrupt common discourses and simultaneously are the site of new politics and where readers might foster/mediate the growth of empathy. It is fundamental to literature and results in movements of collective action, as well as an appeal for a transformative role of the story as a formative of political thought.

The present work focuses on the connection between literature and political ideas, meaning how literature enables and embodies political reception, theory, and practice. As such, via a concern for developing detailed interpretations of numerous texts across the multiple periods and genres of literature, this investigation proposes to demonstrate the impossibility of dissociating many written works from the general performances of public rhetoric and political subjectivities.

Literature Review

Both literary scholars, politicians and people from cultural studies pay much attention to the interaction between literature and political thinking. The following literature review synthesises key theoretical perspectives that will be useful in understanding how literary texts help to shape political ideologies and the overarching communal stories.

The close relationship between nothing and everything leads to the following central theory: narrative perspective which means that one tell story in an order to make meaning out of something. This deconstructive view has enabled scholars to work on synthesis of texts in a more critical way, something that

literary figures such as Mikhail Bakhtin have come into focus when addressing the dialogic nature of literature in terms of addressing their representation and interface with the socio-political milieu in which they are made (Bakhtin, 1981). This I believe denotes that literature does help in establishing a politically significant construction of order within society.

The other crucial process of analysis is the analysis of discourses, in which focus is made upon the storying of politics. In light of I Michel Foucault's advacements of power and knowledge, discourse defines what is constructed as the truth and what is deemed false within a particular culture. This concept is scary important when studying how literary narratives can disrupt the discursive structures of power within political culture and offer dear reading public different mode in which to think and envision power.

Introduction to Literature and Politics

Hence there is empirical evidence that supports the notions that literature has reacted to and contributed to some the political environments. Literature is also an essential tool in social change because, just as the Age of Enlightenment writers such as Voltaire and Rousseau provided a basis for constructing the democratic idea and provoking dictators, so too did Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792. These authors used the aspects of narratology to not only humiliate politicians, but also to provoke revolutionary thinking.

Totalitarianism has been among the most important themes of literature since the second World War offering literature a relevant subject to look into – during twentieth century. One of the best example includes George Orwell's 1949 novel, 1984 a novel that which criticizes surveillance, propaganda, and diminish of personal freedoms in the society that relate to the political culture of its time. Brave New New World, by Aldous Huxley erases the same state control through consumption and makes the reader to ponder what technology could be if it were not for the state.

Reading and Writing with Marginalised Voices

Literature is also a form of communication that gives a voice and visibility to otherwise marginalized discursive spaces and experience that rarely get a hearing in dominant forms of politics. Books featuring writers like Zora Neale Hurston and Junot Díaz defy traditional narratives by entering the political realm with a thick history of nuances of race, identity, and migration. For example, Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God illuminates the complexities of African American womanhood, and Díaz's The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao engages the intersection of politics and culture in the Dominican-American experience.

Literature as the Wind of Change

Moreover, historically, literature has been the energizer for political movements. Understandably, you see the example of abolitionism — Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin — through 19th-century movements through the present (Black Lives Matter, #MeToo), as well as the use of the literary in journalism (the essay, for example) as a way to spur social change.

In summary, the current literature emphasizes the complex relationship between literature and political thought. Based on a range of theoretical frameworks and historical perspectives, literature is shown to reflect and actively shape political ideologies and discourse. The following section presents the method that will direct the investigation of this possible relationship in this paper.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study is based on a qualitative research design and uses thematic analysis to investigate how literature influences political thinking. Carefully chosen literary narratives are examined, specifically those that have changed political ideology and how we view the world. Given the nature of the existing data and the complexity of the themes processed, the appropriate qualitative approach is employed in this study.

Literary works were selected via a purposive sampling strategy across genres and historical contexts to ensure a more diverse reflective trajectory. The selected texts include:

George Orwell's 1984

Brave New World, Aldous Huxley

Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God

Toni Morrison's Beloved

One Hundred Years of Solitude, by Gabriel García Márquez

These texts were selected for their critical engagement with political themes and historical influence in shaping public discourse.

Data Collection

Since the current study was interested in thematic analysis themes identified in literary texts, we conducted a text-sensitive analysis to consider the selected texts in light of political thought, ideology, and social critique. For works to be considered in political and historical context aside from the primary texts, other source types allowed were secondary such as scholarly articles and critical essays. This way provided a multiple angle understanding of the texts relevance for political thought.

Data Analysis

Such qualitative data were also textualized to examine how often the concepts appeared across the types of literature categorized. This included the following steps:

Getting Acquainted with the Data: The first time that we gone through each text we did it without even paying much attention to what they included.

Developing Initial Codes: New concepts related to the history of political idea emerged, for example, authoritarianism and liberty, identity and resistance.

Finding Themes: The codes were gathered as well as classified by themes to determine the manner in which each text engages in a conversation with these concepts in terms of socio-political structures inherent to the game.

Developing Themes: It also involved enhancing themes and deactivating them in a bid to ensuring they captured the data and fit within the objectives of the current study.

Defining and Naming Themes: Moreover, to get to the kind of classification of analysis presented in the succeeding section, labels were assigned to the themes as well.

Data Analysis

Themes for Selected Texts

The part of the paper that is devoted to the data analysis provides more details concerning the concrete works that were taken into consideration concerning the political impact and political systems. In this section, the issues raised by this thematic analysis of the arguments that make literature political are further enriched by a closer examination of each of the contents.

Theme 1: Autocracy and Surveillance

Orwell's 1984 and Huxley's Brave New World deal with the issues of authority both and certain kind of govern and rule. The novel written in 1984 by an author George Orwell depicts the totalitarian society when the party dominates the physical and spiritual lives of people due to owning information about them. Peripheralization eliminating individual liberty and individual choice is most vigorously illustrated by the word ''Big Brother is watching you'.

While in the novel Brave New World, people willingly obey to the state because it provides them happiness, Huxley gives a picture of a society where state induced happiness is used as a means of control rather than physical force. Like other Aldous' novels, in Brave New World the state guarantees people will not rebel against the set order through consumerism, Fordism and absence of individuality. It despise a culture where everyone has nothing to complain about and remain perple as long as they obey laws and stay in the straight and narrow. Combined, these dosages operate as a self-reflexive commentary on power operations and, quite literally, fragile dynamics of democracy.

Apart from plots in these stories, there are political messages which incite the readers to think of contemporary crises; structure of the government, authorities and spy systems, freedom.

and authority. These books demonstrate that power is as clear or nuanced as it is contentious about who yields power and our responses in the twenty- first century.

Theme 2: Identity and Resistance

The They Teeth by Zora Neale Hurston and Beloved by Toni Morrison are of characters that should be considered for asking the questions relevant to the question of identity and they are presenting the matter or race, gender and other social concerns narrated into the political framework. He stated that Hurston's story relates to his main character Janie Crawford who struggles to avoid the submitment from the established role for black women in society. This paper is an unpacking of the social 'advice' postcolonial society gives her regarding what's needed for her community and Scripts that confine her, silencing her voice.

In Beloved, Morrison directs the reader's attention to the traumatogenic properties of property, as well as agential violences that dis/place black subjects from America, but when it remains unsaid, contaminates and haunts the identity of African Americans. From the analysis of Sethe, the author portrays the struggle behind such a choice and the liberation that is denied to her and other oppressed black women, as well as, the traumatic consequences of oppression. Each writer tries to deny race and identity narratives that became the key defining of today's political field and postcolonial theories to explain intricate historical and social processes governing modern politics.

These pieces show how vital narrative is in expanding empathy and understanding. They challenge readers to face uncomfortable truths and ponder the ramifications of social injustice by highlighting marginalized experiences. These texts illuminate the transformative power of literature in inspiring political

activism and socio-political transformation, as illustrated by the representation of resistance against oppressive forces in these.

Theme 3: The Personal Is Political

One Hundred Years of Solitude by Gabriel García Márquez illustrates the intertwining of the personal with the political. We follow the Buendía family, and Márquez uses this family to tell a broader story that tells the individual story but also weaves in so many elements of history, politics, and the future of Latin America in the concepts of power, corruption, and the repetitive nature of history. Magical realist elements in the novel blur the boundaries between reality and myth, showing how personal stories are inextricable from larger historical and political contexts.

Márquez's exploration of history as a cycle is a powerful reminder of political decisions' consequences on individual people. The characters' struggles parallel Colombia's turbulent political scene, showing how intertwined personal lives and shared experiences are. This narrative strategy encourages readers to reflect critically on the story's historical political context, colonialism's persistent legacy, and the search for identity.

All the names listed above have in one way or the other directly addressed and deconstructed political situations through literature, but Márquez's work does this in a more peculiar way. The show combines his introspective as well as political exploration of how personal experiences shape and are shaped by politics. It underscores the argument that interwoven story is vital in demonstrating how both political thought and society are, and will be, shaped and how they shape ideal and reality.

Theme 4: The social change roles of literature

All the chosen works in literature establish literature as a tool of the portrayal of social change through engagement of dialogues on justice, equity and the call for

unity. Both Hurston, Morrison and Orwell tell not only about the social injustice but they also tell about the themes of revolt and hope. Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe at one point influenced the public opinion in the United States and becoming one of the spark like causes of the civil war.

However, present and the latest literature still reflects and addresses some significant political themes. Recently, novels with themes of immigration, climate change and injustice have become the means of change, as they voiced the concerns of the minorities which are often ignored in political circus. On the power of literature to influence individuals and become a platform for rallying the masses, it is still well expressed and raises, per chance, how it impacts politics.

Conclusion

This thematic analysis pointing out how literatures play critical political roles while their narratives are related to societal themes and political beliefs. Besides fear of autocracy and surveillance, self and other, private and political, post-Soviet literature as a pillar of literary evolution can clearly be seen as functioning as a mouthpiece and spear for political change.

The first theme, Autocracy and Surveillance, shows the essence of the fascist governments both in the books of George Orwell's 1984 and Aldous Huxley's Brave New World. In any case, both texts deal with the rules of life, with contemporary sociopolitical issues of megamachines and surveillance over power of choice. On one hand, Orwell in wrapping up a life with Big Brother has a lot to tell about eroding of civil liberties. In contrast, Huxley's Armageddon of an extremely patient populace raises all sorts of questions about what control amounts to in a nation of sheep. They inform readers on the good/bad balance between safety and liberty and compel them to be more vigilant on the encroachment by authoritarianism into their territories.

The second theme is Identity and Resistance where we look at the stories written by Zora Neale Hurston and toned Morrison who wade through issues of race, gender and injustice. In both texts, Janie Crawford and Sethe are symbolical of

desire and liberation against the constraints of oppressive society as expressed by those authors. Thanks to their work, we have an understanding of dominant narratives in this era and the need to grasp both historical and social contexts that ground present political realities. Focusing on the overlooked didn't just grow Morrison's and Hurston's empathy; this trajectory is also a call to political action, a demonstration of literature's power to change the world for the cause of justice.

The situation is deteriorating, increasingly palpable, and exigent, yet Gabriel García Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude demonstrates how The Personal Is Political, individually lived experiences interlaced to heavier, deeper vector memories of historical affordances, nested and drenched within each other, and how these widespread supertextual frameworks make behaviors found in the popular to be predictable. Through the cyclical events of the Buendía family saga, the class represented is ultimately a microcosm of Colombia and its political state, where the seemingly faraway political events seep into and shape the lives of the family members. Márquez's magic realism fluctuates between myth and reality, enabling readers to delve deeper into the historical narratives that have impacted who they are. This theme underlines the notion that personal stories are vital to comprehending collective experiences, which in turn mold political thought and social philosophies.

The role of literature in social change confirms literature's continued potential for conversation and action) The works selected showcase the power of narratives to galvanize public sentiment and drive movements for justice and equity. Whether it's Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin or the books being written today that grapple with pressing matters of the moment, such as immigration and climate change, that storytelling power continues to be a driving force in confronting systemic injustices, as demonstrated by the above research work, literature would still work effectively on advancing individual and social value and motivating people to respond to political issues with political participation.

Overall, through the lens of literature, we can see that it is not simply a reflection of existing social norms and values; it is a force that can challenge the status quo, push back against oppression, and inspire change. The themes explored here highlight the importance of engagement with literature as a means of understanding and addressing the work of a complex political landscape. Readers, then, are faced with the narratives embedded in these words and are invited to consider what their own responsibilities are in creating a more just and equitable world. We can also find a greater understanding of how such intimate circumstances shape political landscapes and the stories that ooze from them and achieve social change by reading literature.

References

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays* (M. Holquist, Ed.; C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). University of Texas Press.

Díaz, J. (2007). *The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao*. Riverhead Books.

Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge* (A. M. Sheridan Smith, Trans.). Pantheon Books.

García Márquez, G. (1967). *One hundred years of solitude* (G. Rabassa, Trans.). Harper & Row.

Hurston, Z. N. (1937). *Their eyes were watching God*. J. B. Lippincott Company.

Huxley, A. (1932). *Brave new world*. Chatto & Windus.

Morrison, T. (1987). *Beloved*. Alfred A. Knopf.

Orwell, G. (1949). *1984*. Secker & Warburg.

Rousseau, J.-J. (1762). *The social contract, or principles of political right* (G. D. H. Cole, Trans.). J. M. Dent & Sons.

Stowe, H. B. (1852). *Uncle Tom's cabin*. John P. Jewett & Company

Stowe, H. B. (1852). *Uncle Tom's cabin*. John P. Jewett & Company.

Wollstonecraft, M. (1792). *A vindication of the rights of woman*. J. Johnson.