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**A Psychological Crisis of Anglo Indians in the Novel 'The siege of Krishnapur'****Hemangini Mane**

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**Abstract:-**

*The term 'Crisis' has been used in almost all the fields. It is used by psychologists, sociologists, historians etc. 'Crisis is a critical situation in the course of something. There are many types of crises based on procedural use. Psychological as well as social factors define all these crises. A Psychological crisis occurs because of tragic or unexpected life threatening events. Many of the psychologists have described reasons of psychological crisis. It occurs because of stress, anxiety and mental disorders. The factors that create stress are physiological, psychological social etc. A Psychological 'Crisis' is defined as a threatening condition, uncontrolled behavior, and hallucinations. Thus stress induced mental disorder is treated as a psychological crisis. There are many kinds of mental disorders for example, anxiety disorder, mood disorder, personality disorder, schizophrenic disorder etc. Thus any stress related mentally disturbed condition and neurotic behavior are expected to treat as cases of psychological crisis.*

James Garden Farrell a British novelist. His novel 'The siege of Krishnapur' is a booker prize winning novel, which is based on Indian mutiny of 1857. The story is set in the town of Krishnapur, and protagonist of the novel who is an extreme example of Victorian belief in progress. He also believes morals and humanity. But his ideals are destroyed by the siege. By the end of the novel cholera, starvation, killed off most of the inhabitants, even they had to eat flesh of dogs and horses. Violence rape events disturbed them mentally. At the end of the novel the collector Mr. Hopkins returns back to England but in England also he experiences loss of his personality, he loses interest in life.

This paper presents mental and physical problems faced by Anglo Indians.

Mutiny of 1857 was the first war of Independence fought against British Empire. Malcolm Dean calls 'Indian Mutiny' as a 'traumatic event' which disturbed colonizers and native also. Indian mutiny of 1857 is unforgettable event, in Indian and Britain's History. Farrell describes condition of isolated Anglo-Indian community caught up in the crisis situation. Farrell sketched historical incidents, memoirs of the siege of Lucknow; he transferred the action of his novel in the city of Krishnapur. Like his other novels, in "The Siege of Krishnapur", Farrell develops the theme of illness and disease. With physical diseases, Farrell describes psychological condition of his characters. Mutiny disturbed their whole life. Root cause of their mental disorder is the death of nearest one. Mrs. Hopkins loses her youngest child. The child died of ill-health. Dr. McNab's wife died from cholera. Mr. Donnelly dies of heart attack, During the Siege Mrs. Scott gave birth to immature baby and it expired shortly afterwards. In the month of August two babies were born, one of them died immediately. Thus, there are many other incidents of death. In the nineteenth century India was a land with a high mortality rate amongst Europeans. Indian climate was not suitable for English women and children. During the siege people had to suffer from other diseases like cholera, swollen heads etc. All these diseases made psychological effects on them because incidents like death, physical assault lead to psychological crisis in human life. According to modern researches in medical sciences, very basic reason of any disease is hidden in human mind. Empire brought different mental disorders for human being. It was crisis of colonizers and colonized also. Ronald Binns has noted:

*Besieged encampment of Krishnapur is, like Campus's plague, a manifestation of moral decay and sickness. Even the Collector falls ill (though of erysipelas rather than cholera) and becomes delirious. His recovery coincides with the abandonment of his social idealism: in a sense he recovers from the disease of civilization. Some of the other Europeans are not so fortunate (1986:71)*

During mutiny people had to live in threatening condition, in stressful situation. Hopkins' suffered from apprehension and anxiety. Everywhere he was unstable. His decision of digging of a deep trench combined with a thick wall was strange one. Dr. Dunstaple, Harry all had to live in threatening condition. Collector was living in Anglo-Indian colony in Krishnapur. He was fed up by day-today calamities, problems in administration and also because of his domestic problems. He was mentally disturbed he couldn't sleep at night. He was worried about the situation. Many times he was looking, walking aimlessly on the streets of Krishnapur:

*Dark circles had appeared round the Collector's eyes, and the eyes themselves stared more moodily than ever at other members of the congregation during evening service in the Church; at other times during the service he was seen to hold his head unnaturally still; it was as if his features were carved in rock... It was evident that he was having trouble in sleeping for soon he ordered one of the bearers to seek a sleeping for soon he ordered one of the bearers to seek a sleeping draught from the Doctor... (1973:60).*

Women were overwhelmed by the war. They were crest-fallen; even they had lost their balance of mind. They didn't care for their children; they were continuously waiting for their husbands to come:

*...younger ladies... Laughing like children and clapping their hands in anticipation... But they lived such sheltered, useless lives, even their children were given to ayahs to look after. What could one expect of them? And now, during the siege, it was worse; 'They wait all day for their husbands to come. They have no resources of their own...' (1973:157)*

The Collector experienced loss of his personality. The scenes of Killing, cries and tears made him aware of futility of war. Death, slaughtering cries had made effect on his mind; he lost his rational thinking for many days. He was experiencing panic condition of his mind. His face had taken on a more haggard look and he was sometimes heard to be muttering to himself. Once or twice he had even been heard laughing to himself, it was an uncomfortable laugh. If anybody looked at him he would stop immediately; his face would become stern and expressionless. At the end of the novel, colonizers are not happy or they do not celebrate their victory, they are crest-fallen and confused, psychologically disturbed. Margaret Drabble has noted:

*Farrell combined a sense of the pointless absurdity of man with a real and increasing compassion for characters caught up in decay and confusion (191).... (1981:172).*

Farrell write about psychological crisis of the survivors. Britishers returned back to England, started their civilized life but they were no happier. They had attacks of mental disorder. Lars Hartveit writes about this spiritual crisis. He says:

*Back in England the survivors return to the siege in night-mares in which the 'terrible days of the siege .... were like the dark foundation of the civilized life they had returned to' (311). The nightmares echo the fear of regression in the rise and fall of civilization formula. However, their comforting paradise consists of objects representing the normal they missed so much; 'white starched line, a comfortable bed, in peaceful England' (311) (1999:155).*

Thus, Farrell writes about psychological effects of mutiny. People suffered from psychological crisis which remained long last up to the end of their life.

#### **References:-**

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