



# **LITERARY FEATURES OF DYSTOPIA IN "THE CHILDREN OF MEN"**

## **BY P.D.JAMES**

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### **Abstract:**

The aim of the study is to analyze the novel "The Children of Men" by female writer PD James in accordance with the main literary features of dystopia. Dystopian literature was formed in the eighteenth century but became popular in the twentieth century. Apart from the political system, nowadays, dystopian novels display environmental and human health problems which become vital issues. This study is an attempt to reveal the importance of the psychology of characters, considering using psychological methods. This will help readers to explore the essential dystopian features, of the work of P.D.James, studying infertility issues.

**Keywords:** dystopian literature, anti-utopian literature, religion, ideology, text analysis, infertility, psychological method.

## **I INTRODUCTION**

The term dystopia was coined by English philosopher J.S.Mill in a parliamentary speech while he was speaking about the government's Irish land policy and he took inspiration from Thomas More's novel "Utopia". "Utopia" was a pun Greek word ou topos means "no place" or "nowhere" and another word eu-topos means "a good place". He claimed that "if utopia was commonly seen as "too good to be practicable", then dystopia was "too bad to be practicable"<sup>1</sup>. Dystopia means a "bad place" the polar opposite of utopia.

Most of the time the term dystopia is used equally with anti-utopia which means "against utopia", however, they are not quite the same except sharing some elements.

So utopian, dystopian and anti-utopian literature are connected with each other sometimes, we see they may be used instead of another. Both dystopian and utopian literature has common characteristics of science-fiction and fantasy they are both set in the future in which technology developed but neither of them pays attention to the development of technology, the psychology of humans who live their condition, the government structure, and also, the effects of technology to humans. While utopian literature shows the good part of these qualities at the end any utopian society turns into a dystopian society. Early written utopian novels include: "Gulliver's Travels" (1726) by

Jonathan Swift, "Erewhon" (1901) by Samuel Butler ("nowhere" spelled backward), and "News from Nowhere" (1891) by William Morris.

## **II.METHODOLOGY**

In the present analysis, the research problem is to investigate major dystopian literature features that have been utilized to represent P.D. James's literary image as a writer. The data, collected from the detailed analysis of the texts of the novel "The Children of Men" to answer helped the question related to psychological method application infertility problems. They can be the major features of dystopian literature in the example of this writer

## **THE PROCEDURE OF THE RESEARCH**

According to investigated major dystopian literature features, the analysis of P.D. James's novel undertaken at the following:

- 1 Psychological method application
- 2 Infertility

## **III.DISCUSSION**

The objective of the present analysis was to identify the role of dystopian literature and its characteristics in P.D.James's novel by using suggested features of dystopian literature

Psychological method application

<sup>1</sup> Lyman Tower Sargent. The Three Faces of Utopianism  
Revisited, USA: Penn State University Press, 2022.-p 21



Psychology originates from Greece's words. The word "psyche" means soul and "logos" means knowledge. Psychology doesn't learn about the soul or mind directly because its characteristic is abstract, but psychology bounding on manifestation and expression from the soul or mind which is behavior and process

or its activity, until psychology be able to be defined as knowledge that learns about behavior and mental process. However, according to Gerungan (2004), understanding between soul's knowledge and psychology is totally different. The scope of the soul's knowledge is wide, including imagination and speculation about the soul itself. On the other hand, psychology's knowledge is knowledge about the soul that is acquired systematically by scientific methods.

The psychological method is a literature criticism approach that stresses psychological aspects that exist in a literature work. These psychological aspects got attention in literary criticism and research due to the emergence of consciousness for the author and also for the critic. The social development and advancement in this modern age are not solely measured from a material aspect, but also from a spiritual or psychological aspect. Utilization of this theory in the literature that is done by many authors is by taking useful parts and pure for their consideration in researching characteristics and personality of someone. According to the psychological method, The characters will be analyzed below:

Theo- Main protagonist 50 years old Oxford historian, divorced and childless. He is considered the main character of this novel and he partially narrated the story is a round character readers find development in his character in the novel. Readers can see dystopian England through his detailed narrations as a historian he mostly pays attention to historical places and historical events however we may see little development in his character so killing his cousin Xan is the climax of his character. He grew up without his father and this was also another distinctive point of the novel both Theo and Xan's fathers play miserably roles in their children's lives. James used two accidents to reveal his character and gives an understanding of Theo, first one is his relationship with his father. As Theo explains his bond with his father from childhood and it leads another accident that he accidentally killed his daughter. After Natalie-his daughter- death he states He loved his child but he was not a good father because of a lack of experience in how to be a father Also, he had some problems with his mother Theo described his mother as an the main for this is given his mother's words after his father passed away Theo described this situation as He is clever and gives great advice to

everyone. Also, he was really fond of Julian and even idolized her but after hearing the baby's father was not Rolf but a priest Luke he was disappointed however he helped Julian to deliver her child at the end of the novel Theo shoot Xan to protect Julian and the baby and he took Xan's ring as taking power from him .

Xan-self-declared Warden of England, Theo's only relative. He showed some qualities of dictatorship since he was a child . He took power after the shocking news spread all over the country. He had Council whom he believed and they together made laws for the rest of the citizens. Also, in this dying world people rarely pay attention to politics all they want is peace and good conditions to spend the rest of their life. On the one hand, Xan gave people these facilities and we may not see any reactions against Xan's dictatorship. Even after The Five Fishes and their booklets most people simply did not pay attention to these problems. After knowing about Julian's pregnancy he and Council haunted them and killed everyone around them as well as he wanted to marry Julian in order to increase his power but he failed because of Theo. Although he is considered the villain of the novel, he had great qualities to make him a great leader. He stopped the war and all other chaos in the country at the beginning of infertility and somehow gave hope to people to continue their life in peace.

Julian- a mother of a new race, one of the members of Five Fishes. She wanted social justice for everyone including giving civil rights to Sojourners, stopping Quietism, and the end of examinations of men and women. She became the only pregnant woman on Earth for the first time in twenty-five years, she wanted her child to be born without any interruptions that's why she asked help from Theo to escape from Xan and Council. She is a religious person. She genuinely believed in God and prayed with Luke. The reason why she joined the group is also her religious beliefs Her main reason is.

Rolf - Rolf is the head of The Five Fishes, Julian's spouse, and an engineer in the energy supply business. Rolf has a "dark masculinity" about him as well as an impatient, envious, and ambitious nature. Both Theo and him do not especially like or trust each other. Theo views Rolf as a power-hungry individual who truly seeks to seize Xan's "absolute power for himself" as opposed to advancing justice, compassion, or moral outrage like the other members of The Five Fishes.

#### **IV.RESULTS**

P.D. James in her "The Children of Men" wrote about global problems like reducing the number of birth and people's lack of responsibility for their families. There are no definite solutions to infertility and the main plot



does not include any actions toward finding an answer but takes more attention to how global infertility affects humans. Mass infertility affects differently to different groups of people, for example, Omegas who was born in the year 1995. Omegas are considered the last hope of humanity that's why they are treated really well but because of the too much pressure, they developed different habits like spiritual ceremonies when they paint only their face and choose one person and eat them alive. Also, they were not interested in any kind of science despite having natural intelligence. Most of the Omegas are described without hope in the novel because they are the last generation of the dying world. This and a few more passages demonstrate how the terror characters in the book evolve from the Omegas. According to P.D. James, when infertility has a significant negative influence on people occurs, the young lose their lives and turn savage, giving up hope to further their education, find love, and have children. This is significant to the authors' commentary because it demonstrates the detrimental alteration humans adapt to rather than attempting to lead a normal lifestyle, having an effect on other members of society.

## **V.CONCLUSION**

The objective of the present study was to identify the major themes of modern dystopian literature in P.D.James novel "The Children of Men" .The detailed analysis of the texts of the novel, both at the macro level and micro level, revealed that psychological method application played a significant role writer's dystopian novel while in this novel author paid more attention to problems of Christian Ideology and the rising number of infertility both males and females. As a next step, similarities and dissimilarities of dystopia and anti-utopia and features of both genres. One of the issues that emerge from these findings is that P.D. James's novel belongs to dystopian literature, not to anti-utopian.

This research will assist to understand better P.D. James' dystopian novel in terms of dystopian literature. Her warning the world with low level of fertility and how religion can rule people.

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