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The Theme of Social unrest in *Troubles* by J.G.Farrell

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Abstract:-

Crises between the colonizers and the colonized is the major concern for many of the writers almost all over the world. England had almost three hundred colonies in the beginning decades of the 20th century and in the ending decades of the 20th century England had to leave almost all of them. Racial Conflict, exploitation of the colonized countries, violence thrust upon natives, wars and its long lasting effects, cultural crisis these are some major themes of empire novels. J.G.Farrell, the British novelist wrote *Empire Trilogy* based on crises between the colonizers and the colonized. *The Singapore Grip*, *The Siege of Krishnapur* and *Troubles* these are the three novels included in *Empire Trilogy*. Actually Ireland's freedom movement against England was called as *Troubles*. It is very popular phrase in Ireland and Farrell used it as the title for his first novel in *Empire Trilogy*. Farrell describes class conflict, religious crisis, violence, many social abuses etc. in his novel *Troubles*.

The novel *Troubles* was published in 1970. It is about Irish Civil War of 1919 to 1921, Ireland's struggle for independence. Both Ireland and England are local yet Irish people were ruled by the British people for many years. The novel describes social violence, brutal deeds of colonizers and its psychological effects.

The plot of the novel is centered on 'Majestic Hotel'. Edward Spencer is the owner of the hotel and his daughter Angela is the fiancée of Major Brendan, the protagonist of the novel. Major is returned back to 'Majestic' to meet his fiancée and to get mental peace. But nobody is interested in listening his war experiences. War still continues and daily newspapers published social unrest violence, death, rape events happened in Ireland and also in Africa, India, Afghanistan etc. Major concludes that empire is not better for common man. It is a system and common man becomes victim of this system. Angela dies and Major who goes to 'Majestic' to bring back his Angela but he returns back with only the Statue of Venus made from white marble. Social crises stir his whole life. He experiences futility of human life. War destroyed everything. Farrell describes social unrest which made everlasting effect on the lives of common people.

The novel *Troubles* describes class conflicts, religious crisis, economic and physical exploitation, riots, diseases, unrest in Ireland, Many national movements took place against the British Empire; 'Easter rising of 1916' was one of the historical events. After many years struggle at last in 1927, Ireland became a Free State. Ralph J. Crane and Jennifer Livett say:

... the phrase 'the troubles' applies in the novel to many kinds of unrest, disease, and difficulty, from unrequited love to race riots, bicycle accidents, illness, financial problems, and unexpected pregnancy, but above all to the complex Irish struggle for independence from British rule, a struggle central to the novel. 'Troubles' originally meant the violence of the first Irish civil war between 1919 and 1921 (1997:68).

The title itself suggests the theme of the novel. According to historical documents, Ireland was ruled by England for many years. Originally, Ireland was a part of United Kingdom. The English from the 'Dublin castle' governed it. In January 1919, the Republican Army was formed. Thus, Guerilla war was fought against the English administration.

He concentrated on empire crises. He describes hunger-stricken people, miseries of peasants, famished children. Major witnesses all these miseries of peasants, famished children.



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Major witnesses all these miseries and he becomes hopeless. Ronald Binns notices Farrell's concern with poverty-stricken people in Ireland. The novel is about problems of empire, human suffering. Farrell writes about persecution of Ireland and the tendency of Anglo-Irish people and their feelings of superior race and religion. Wartime experiences are sketched by Farrell. Killing, violence was common picture during the war. The novel tells about crises of both colonizers and colonized, all over the world.

Farrell describes how common people were troubled for no fault in them, he writes about miseries of the people. They were living in threatening conditions. They were not safe anywhere. Farrell describes:

..it was absurd that in Ireland an old man consulting his watch should be killed. In wartime innocent old people were killed-but Ireland was a peaceful country (92).

It is ironical comment. The fact was that there was troubles and violence everywhere. Britishers tortured Irish people and in return Irish also attacked them and common people were made victim of it:

Seven men entered the girl's house about a quarter to one in the morning. One of them had a revolver and the others had what looked like revolvers. They took the girl, who had fainted, in her night-dress out to the yard, and cut her hair off with a shears, telling her sister, whom they threatened with the same fate, that was what she got for going with Tommies. While the man with the shears was cutting off the hair, he sang; 'We are all out for Ireland free' (159).

With Irish *Troubles* Farrell describes empire crises, happened in South Africa, India, Afghanistan, He also describes rampant behavior of colonizers. In South Africa, several people were killed inhumanly.

Farrell describes how Englishmen were engaged in defending England against Irishmen. Many of the patriots died in Easter rising 1916. Farrell gives the historical record and crises happened during the war. Patriots like Markievicz were tortured by the British people.

Major catches incidents of torment, murder, bloodshed, horror in the newspaper while returning to Kilnalough in the middle of May.

In Ireland, social life was very distressed. Suffering, violence had reached to worst position and to save themselves people had become alert and suffered from anxiety, depression. Bolton gives instructions about crisis to Major and others in Majestic: Major, any of whom may instantly become a hero by pulling a gun from his pocket and shooting you I the back without fear of being caught... (245).

Farrell further writes about economic crisis of Irish people. They had no work at all. Those who were working in some places were whipped as dumb-driven-cattle. They were wearied by grievous life. They had always apprehension of becoming jobless. Therefore, they accepted any frivolous work at any cost. They were persecuted brutally by the colonizers:

Thus, he writes about social unrest threatening condition, violence and inhuman deeds; psychology behind it is masculinity. He writes about ideologies and policies used by British Empire.

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