



EXPLICATING THE NUANCES OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN ERIC D GOODMAN'S *WOMB*

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Abstract

Pregnancy is not a sickness besides it is must be a celebration to be cherished. The amount of criticism which overshadows Freudian concepts has never reduced the relevance it carries in the assessment of human consciousness. It successfully explains the reasons behind the consciousness of human behaviour. Eric D. Goodman, who is known for his vivid, picturesque, striking narrative style, is a prodigy in exploring the human psyche. His prestigious work *Womb* remarkably stands out in its portrayal of the interior realms and unpredictable work of the socially conscious. This research article attempts a detailed study of the behavioural patterns of the characters and the role of the unconsciousness in controlling them. This research article concludes that, though humans are the victims of unconscious trauma, a positive sublimation can unquestionably save individuals and make them fit for society.

Key words: Prenatal joy, Consciousness, Environments, *Womb*, Eric. D. Goodman

Introduction

Great exploration begins in pursuit of novel ideas or places. Literature, as a medium which bears witness to this struggle and preserves its imprints through the emergence of newer literary expression through inscape. Journey to the interior or search for the inner realms of human mind has been a part of literature from time immemorial. Goodman's novel is a perfect medium in recounting the stories of such explorations. Novelists' interest in human psychology forms the raw material for his creations. There are researchers of

human consciousness, Eric D. Goodman is no exception in this attribute. He is a master craftsman in detailing the consciousness which intricates the essence of human mind. He pursues his matter with more scientific rigour than the job strictly requires. *Womb* (2017) is proof of his inner layers of human behaviour.

In *Womb* Goodman makes a comprehensive study of human behaviour. It exposes the most familiar yet extremely complex side of human beings. Every character portrayed in the novel are the prototypes of rational convolutions. Goodman, a maestro adventurer of human nature with his intricate detail, vivid expression, and literary brilliance exhibits the manifold layers of human thoughts and actions. The unique yet strange behaviours of his character get feelings thus. The narrative techniques used in the novel is in favour of this behavioural study. Fetal narrates of the same incident from diverse angles throw light upon the way individual characters perceive and process the occurrence of their daily lives. The Unborn narrator emphasises this aspect in its analysis of the novel. The Unborn narrator suggests. “Yes, friends, family, environment, and outside factors will have an effect – don’t worry, sociologists of the world, your jobs are secure. But I am by no means a blank page” (17).

Goodman’s expertise lies in its meticulous narration of the innermost thought process of unusual narrator. From a close reading of the novel, reader could fathom the peculiar pretexts which control every individual. A systematic analysis of the novel concludes that Freudian unconscious, the deciding factor of individual, human behaviours, have an extremely significant role in regulating fetus’s good or bad practices. Hence, this paper attempts to derive a thorough study of the fetus’s consciousness inside the mother’s womb experiences and external environment backing of Freudian concepts.

Human awareness is different from morality where the initial one is awareness, and other one is ethical judgement. Consciousness starts even before one’s birth, but conscience comes only through one’s experience. Fetus’s inside the mother’s womb world is more similar to the create an explicit order in a chaotic world, the fetus narrator is also conscious in his mother’s womb, “His voice was muffle by the ammonitic fluid and skin I’m listening through it” (21). plans for her play fulfilled her need to exert control over her environment; Goodman emphasises that the baby’s mind is fully filled with tension and straggling of triggered thoughts. In a message to his father, he states that “To hell with this. I’m out of here. And in an instant, he was. Wait, Mom cried. Dad! Come back! Dad!” (174).

Goodman is hugely concerned about justifying his protagonists' behaviour. The novel has its beginning with the narrator of the smart, lovely, and assertive Unborn twins. From their narrations readers begin to for a kind of fondness towards their character. The unborn narrator is so conscious in the womb of the mother through his auditory mechanism. It is very visible from his preparations that he is excited to come to outside world very soon. Goodman through his narrator states "I have a sense of right and wrong" (13). Goodman's narration of the external environment is proof of his admiration for order. Goodman depicts it "I'm connected to that were all connected to in utero (13). Everything in him place possessed a specific curiousness and excitement towards the outside environment "I've observed things about my parents that the they don't know about themselves (9). The maternal activities of the mother influence the baby. The love, diet, communication and maternal affection for baby help to build the later behaviours of baby much earlier in time. the fetus inside the mother's womb is acquiring basic information even inside the womb.

The pathway of consciousness leads to knowledge about self, Parents, environment and society. It helps for baby to adapt to the environment and circumstances, also to prepare for its future life. In the novel *Womb*, a nine-months old fetus is undergoing some stress inside the womb. His mental process is much faster comparing to his physical movements. Diet of the pregnant mother plays a vital role in development of fetus healthy life. The cigarette that Penny smokes, goes to the baby through the uterus, both are sharing the feel of intoxication. Though it gives happiness to one, it affects other, the smokes that goes into the baby at the time of pregnancy affects the physical and mental growth of the child. It affects the child's attention, memory, intelligence and physical growth. Goodman makes it clear through the narration of fetus.

Mom's voice is like the voice of God- it echoes all around me and within me. One cigarette won't hurt, now and then. But it does hurt. The smoke hurts like hot pins and needles poking my body. It may relieve her stress, but only at the cost of my own. And while alcohol lulls me into a cloudy stupor at first, it usually results in a powerful headache later. (21)

The unborn child's perception and behaviour are shaped by the influences of the outer world and maternal care, mother's mental thought process and through babies' experience in the womb. The environment that the mother and the child are experiencing creates innumerable changes in the mind of the unborn child. Thomas Verny, one of the disciples of Sigmund Freud in his work *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child*, states that experience that a child gets in the mother's womb, influence much of his character and decides one's

personality. The child's perception changes according to their environment or based on the information presented before. Goodman pictures the clear knowledge of the fetus stress when the child mother is stressed.

Her shudders and spasms reverberated throughout her body, all around me. What Mom feels, I feel. Not just the movement of her crying waves upon waves within my home but the emotions of it. Mom's sadness was mine, but I didn't always understand why she was sad. I suppose it was the hormones of her changing body. And when Mom was low, I felt like sinking. (33)

The negative thoughts of the human beings at the time of pregnancy leads to the fear, stress, anxiety and trauma. In that way, a mother's thought process affects the baby at the time of pregnancy. Because both are connected with one another and they share their blood, food, thoughts and fate. The lives of the mother and child during the process of gestation are intertwined, both share the same soul, but the mind is a separate one. One lives within another, listening to the thoughts, working like a conscience to the other at times. But still the baby feels the mother's mental and physical changes, even when it is in the womb. Their sensory perceptions and a set of nerves are still connected, thus, the mother's bodily changes and the sense of shock also affects the baby.

The personality of the human beings is mostly resolved by his mother's maternal care and experience, when the fetus is inside the mother's womb. It evidently prompts that the conversations of the mother affect the baby's mental psyche. The babies are always listening to the conversation of their parents when they are in the womb, whenever there is an unwanted situation, they will react to such kind of stimulation to perceive things in the light of her knowledge. Thus, the babies are acquiring necessary preconceived knowledge even in the womb. There is also a sequel to the continuation of events, that is, in Goodman's words: "That noise I mentioned? The sound of my heart beat bouncing back to me? It's not an echo. I'm not alone in here It took time for me to realize it (175)." This is the suggestion that the babies are capable of imaginative realms expects. But when something unexpected turns up, the unborn babies falls into a state of dilemma and later reaches into a wrong conclusion.

Conclusion

The mental trauma which the narrator of the novel undergo is the result of the repressed feelings in the unconscious. Each of them has their own ways of ventilating it. Penny sublimates her repressed feelings that creates an impact Kapur, Manju. Home. Random House India, 2007 and becomes a successful writer. But other characters are not that successful in turning their bitter experiences into salvific ones. Jack is the representative of the flawed humans who needs redemption through sublimation. Thus, through Eric D. Goodman's Womb, the unborn fetus inside the mother's is very active.

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