



THE ICEMAN COMETH (1939) IS THE REPRESENTATION OF THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS BY EUGENE O' NEILL: MODERN AMERICAN DRAMA

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Submission: 27 November 2020

Revised: 28 January 2021

Accepted: 02 February 2021

Peer-review under responsibility of 6th Asia International Conference 2020 (Online) Scientific Committee

<http://connectingasia.org/scientific-committee/>

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Office # 6, First Floor, A & K Plaza, Near D Watson, F-10 Markaz, Islamabad, Pakistan,

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this paper is to trace the social problems in *The Iceman Cometh* by Eugene O'Neill. The social issues are the pipe dream and hopelessness of man in American family and society. These social problems leads to tragic issues. The researcher is going to use the socialism theory by Karl Marx to tackle social issues (the hopelessness of man and the pipe dream) to present the tragic problems. The analysis of data will be qualitative approach and the technique is interpretive as storytelling type. The data is collected by the textual method. In the analysis and discussions part, the researcher will use the play (*The Iceman Cometh*) as the main idea of analysing. In conclusion, the findings will be analysed the speech of the characters in the play such as the actions of the plot, setting and characters. This study will contribute/ add to academic, social, cultural and literary in modern American drama. For example, literary contribution will be generalized as new study about the social problems in O'Neill's plays. This study adds the literary background to modern American drama.

Keywords: *The Iceman Cometh, Social Problems, The Socialism Theory, Eugene O'Neill, Modern American Drama*

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

This paper aims to examine the social problem in *The Iceman Cometh* as social views to present tragic actions in modern American drama. The social issues are defined as the problems which face the individuals during their actions of the play. In other words, social problems refer to social conditions that disrupt or damage society such as crime. The social problems are poverty, drug abuse, discrimination, alcohol abuse the social conflict, political corruption and depredations. These social issues are caused by certain factors such as poverty, urbanization, the lacking of education, gender discrimination and the social discrimination, unemployment and rapid population's growth (James, 2020; Twilhaar et al., 2019)

O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh* is a modern and social play in modern American drama. This play is the portrait of the social issues in presenting the tragic actions in modern American drama. In this play, O'Neill is a great realistic dramatist in focusing or concentrating on the social issues (social issues) in his plays about life. The social issues are drinking alcohol, the hopelessness of man and the pipe dream which lead to tragic actions. The pipe dream is defined as one of the themes of *The Iceman Cometh* which makes the characters indulge in fantasy and illusions or the characters are envision of quilts. Another term, hopelessness means the despair, disappointed, lack of hope and aimless actions. The hopelessness and pipe dream present all the social problems by the hero, the character Harry Hope. The characters are twelve men and two women. The male characters are Harry Hope, Joe Motte, Captain Lewis, Rockey, Don Parrit and Jimmy so on. The female characters are Margie and Pearl. In this play, the characters play the most critical role in suffering from hopelessness, drinking alcoholism and the pipe dream. They spend their time in tragic situations because they think about their future life. The concepts are the pipe dream and hopelessness of man which represent the features in modern American drama. All these actions happens in Hairy Hope's saloon (bar) because of committing the social problems in life such as the killing or death of the characters (Huo, 2020; Palmer, 2020; Yadav)

GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT

Table 1. The social concepts of O'Neill's plays

NO.	The selected Quotations	The evidence
1	Hickey" (simply) so I kill her. There is a time of dead stillness. Even the detectives are caught in it and stand motionless. Parritt (suddenly) grants up and relaxes him". (p.12)	In this quotation, the character Hickey kills his wife because she has an erotic relationship with the character, the iceman.
2	Willie" He raped and tapped. Sufficient to wake the dead. Till he has heard a damsel (rape rap, rap). On a window right never his head". (p.18)	The social problem (rape) happens to the characters of the play as it reflects O'Neill's views in expressing the social and tragic actions in modern American drama.

Research Objectives

To explore the social problems in *The Iceman Cometh* by O'Neill in modern American drama.

Methodology

The methodology of this paper is that the researcher uses the socialism theory to investigate by many previous researchers to justify the social problems in American society. The theory is used to tackle the social problems in modern American society. The data of this research is analysed in descriptive and narrative approach as well as the data is collected by textual analysis. Both narrative and descriptive analysis are selected because the researcher narrates and describes the actions of the entire play. The textual analysis is conducted as the researcher deals with the text (*The Iceman Cometh*).

Results

Table 1 highlights the results and findings, the present findings suggest that these social problems (The pipe dream and hopelessness) lead to social (tragic) actions in modern American drama. These actions lead to the death of the characters. *In the Iceman Cometh*, the characters play a crucial role in portraying the social problems in modern American drama. These social actions bring tragic actions as the death to the characters. Critically comment, *The Iceman Cometh* presents the social issues in modern times. The character, Harry Hope is the hero of the play because he makes all the characters imitate his style, opinion, behavior, attitude in presenting social issues. The character, Willy has practised rape. The character, Parritt has killed his wife. *The Iceman Cometh* has tragic action (rape) as well as killings. These tragic actions are aroused by the pipe dream and hopelessness.

Findings

In sum, the researcher finds out all the social problems in *The Iceman Cometh*. The social problems represent the most critical role in O'Neill's plays as modern American drama. It is concluded that O'Neill mentions the social problems that lead to the tragic action (death,

killing and rape) of the characters. For instance, the character Harry Hope shows a dramatic role in depicting all the social issues in *The Iceman Cometh*. Many characters commit tragic problems such as the death, rape and murder of the characters.

Acknowledgement

After praising Allah for giving me the ability to write this paper. I would like to thank Asia for connecting conferences 2020 and my supervisors Dr. Abdullah Mohd Nawi as well as asst. prof. Dr. Ansam Ali Flefil for their supports and encouragement during my study.

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Yadav, S. THE ROLE OF FORTUITY IN THE FAULT IN OUR STARS

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Haider Ibrahim Khalil is a Ph.D scholar in Language academy in University Technolgy Malaysia. He is studying literature. His interesting area American literatur or American drama. He is a teacher in Ministry of education in Iraq. He teaches English language since 2007. He get his Bacholar from Thi-Qar University and his M.A in literature from B.A.M.U University in india.



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