

## ESCAPISM AS AN ELEMENT IN ALDOUS HUXLEY'S *BRAVE NEW WORLD AND THE ISLAND*

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Aldous Huxley's works mostly deals with the themes like alienation, religion, science, etc, but one of his favourite element was escapism. 'Escapism' is an inclination to retreat from unpleasant realities through diversion or fantasy. Escapism is nothing but escaping from the moment/ situation. Escapism is moreover found in his modern utopias, they are *Brave New World* and *The Island*. People try to escape when they don't have any interest upon a particular activity, situation, relationship or regulation. Aldous Huxley also repeats the same by including the element escapism in order to distract or don't want to give preference to the sociological norms. They are family, parents, religion, sin, controlled and destabilised society, technology, violence and determinacy.

**Keywords:** Escapism, destabilised, determinacy, actualism, utopia, capitalist, communist, evolution and medication.

Aldous Huxley was born into a prominent intellectual family in Godalming, England, in 1894. After a serious illness left him partially blind as a youth, Huxley abandoned his dreams of becoming a scientist to pursue a literary career. His grandfather, T. H. Huxley was an early proponent of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. He also had a lasting friendship with Virginia Woolf, Bertrand Russell, T. S. Eliot and D. H. Lawrence.

In 1916 he published his first book, a collection of poems titled *The Burning Wheel*. *Brave New World* (1932) unveils the apogee of Huxley's abilities as a satirist. Huxley turned to be one of the most important writers of the era, after the great success of *Brave new world*. *Brave New World* deals with the social and economic division between the haves and have nots, which is legally enforced and discontent is quelled by advertising, medication, sex and entertainment.

Aldous Huxley died on November 22, 1963, at the age of 69. He wrote more than 50 books, including one of the most significant of the 20th century, as well as innumerable works of criticism, poetry and drama. His passing went largely unnoticed at the time, because it occurred on the same day that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

### Escape from the control of the parents

The citizens of the World State are born by genetic or artificial means, so they don't have parents. Father and mother are called parents. Father, who always seems to be controlling the child and always prefer something other than that of the child's Wish. There comes the problem of dominating. Secondly mother, who always

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seemed to be very responsible. That results in control of actions, since she is responsible for the actions of her child, she controls and neglect some of the children ideas. But to the society of parent less one like in world state, they are set to be free and they are uncontrolled which results in ultimate enjoyment.

### **Escape from the bond of family**

The citizens of world state won't prefer marriage since they don't have the practice of marriage in World state. Even the common people are trying to escape from family. Some of the escapisms are priests, nuns, and yogi's etc. They refuse their marital life and trying to live as single. But in world state, people will have promiscuity. Since it is one of their primary duty, the citizens should have their promiscuity. The problems in family life are responsive, caring, loving, etc. The wife has to be loved and given importance. Even for the girl friend, boys have to commit themselves. They have to care their children and be the responsible for the actions of the family. These are found to be the problems in family life. The qualities like responsible, care and love which deviate a person's idea towards narrowed stream which results in lack of enjoyment. So they find themselves as discomfort.

In order to enjoy their life and to make themselves comfort, family life is restricted by the world state. They were structured to unlike marital life that makes stability.

### **Escape from the norms of Religion**

The citizens of world state are not following any religion because they are given no solitude to realise the loneliness. That results in elimination of god. If they are allowed to be in solitude, then they will start thinking about their future life. Future indicates death. If the fear of death comes, then they began to follow religion / god. So the elimination of solitude, results in elimination of god.

### **Escape from the humanly attitude of Sin**

The people in the world state don't follow any religion and as a result they also never consider anything as sin. They were also conditioned to undo sins, which some of the common qualities of humans are considered as sins in world state. According to the people of the world state they never have to be in solitude. "Being in solitude is sin." (*Brave New world*) The maintenance of stability in world state is because of neglecting some characteristics of ordinary humans.

- Chastity
- Motherhood
- No marital life
- Equality.

These elements have been eradicated in the society of world state in order for the betterment (enjoyment) of the people and as well as for the stability of the state.

#### **Escape from the Controlled society**

The citizens of Pala have their own freedom and they also have their liberty to express their sexual expressions. Generally the people in the present day are not allowed to express their sexual expressions in the society. If the country is a capitalistic country it will have a set of controls towards its capitalistic people. If the country is a communist based one it will also have a set of limitations and control for its communist people.

But here the society is allowing its people to have their own freedom except one thing that is the people of Pala are not allowed to go away from *the island*. The society also allows the children to choose their own parents through a club called Mutual Adaptation Club (MAC). The people of Pala are allowed to choose and follow their own religion. The children of Pala are taught with the idea that the world is possible without the existence of god. They are left to choose their own path whether to follow a religion or not.

#### **Escape from Destabilised society**

The longstanding hostility of the people of Pala makes it as a habitual action in their life. Because of habitual hostility the culture and society is stabilised and remained to unchanged. Moreover, the culture and tradition of Pala is kept alive because of the stabilised society. Pala don't follow either capitalism or communism, it just stays on its own actualism. Actualism means the act of actualisation or following the reality. So it is clear that the society does the stability through its longstanding hostility and actualism.

#### **Escape from Technologies**

The people of Pala are not relying upon technologies in ISLAND, whereas the citizens of world state in *BRAVE NEW WORLD* are fully relying upon technologies. The citizens of Pala rely only upon nature and traditional elements, so their focuses are giving importance to the culture which automatically results in elimination of technologies. These people give importance to the lifestyle provided by nature and they also focus on protecting the nature. If there is an involvement of technology in the society which will automatically leads towards the destruction of nature.

#### **Escape from Violence**

The people of Pala are generally non-violence in nature. They are pacifists, rational and humanist thinkers. Because of their rational and humanist attitude it is possible for a country to exist without harm. The people of Pala shows love towards everyone

in the country and they don't show any hatred towards others. If the people thought that the country is not utopia, the Optimistic vision in the society leads and pushes the people towards utopia.

### **Escape from Determinacy**

Huxley ends up his novel in a freeway. He left the end towards the audience / readers wish. So, one cannot determine the act or incidents of the end of the novel which result in escape of determinacy. There is no assurance that the utopia will survive in the future among the dystopian countries for their greedily oil-guzzling motives towards Pala. In the end of the novel *the island* anything may happen and it is left to perception and wish of the readers.

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