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Dr. Nanasaheb Suryawanshi

Mr. Shankar H. Bhoir 2021-22,

# **AKSHAR WANGMAY**

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## Portrayal of Racial Discrimination in Andre Brink's 'A Dry White Season'

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### Abstract-

Race played a significant role in literature, especially in African-American literature and literary criticism. The representation of racial differences had been covered variety of notions and critical point of views. From the usages of the word 'race' to the significant and variety of meanings have covered many centuries and many types of literary fields like Anthropology, Biology, Social Science and literatures in various languages, still it has been remained unclassified with accuracy. It has many ups and downs into the actual social livings and it has been continuously creating discrimination within people. It became the subject matters of many literary genres throughout all countries literature.

**Key words-** Race, discrimination, power, sufferings, Black.

### Introduction-

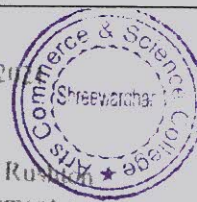
The literature grows severally, significantly and profoundly, not only in writings but also in the every ways in arts, apparatus, paintings, sculpture, and many more. The end of 20<sup>th</sup> and beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century have acquainted with variety of thinking in educational, social, economic, political and scientific fields. Literature originated variety of literary genres and notions based on social subjects, issues and changes society has gone through. The literature, Vasta examined, "as an imitation of human action, often presents a picture of what people think, say and do in the society" and observed, "the literature indeed reflected the society; good values and ills of the society with a view to making the society realized its mistakes and make amends for the corrective functions". (Vasta:2016:10) The genres in different fields of knowledge were managed to discussed, defined, being brainstormed; manufactured different branches of knowledge and then criticism were geared up by scholars and experts. What writers do is to transport the real-life events of their society into fictions and present it as a mirror with which people can glance and make amends where necessary.

As Yudell complimented, "At the dawn of the 21st century, the idea of race—the belief that the peoples of the world can be organized into biologically distinctive groups, each with their own physical, social, and intellectual characteristics—is understood by most natural and social scientists to be an unsound concept." (Yudell:2011:13) The closing phases of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the notion of discrimination ever attempted and deeply argued throughout the world. The concept of race have widely discussed, examined and defined by Socialist, Biologist, Anthropologist, Humanist and Literary scholars with different opinions about its origin, philosophies, thoughts and the arenas.

### Usage and Definitions-

Ashcroft, et.al. enunciated, "Race is first used in the English language in 1508 in a poem by William Dunbar, and through the seventh and eighteenth centuries, it remained essentially a literary word denoting a class of persons or things", also emphasized, "Humans had been categorized by Europeans on physical grounds from the late 1600s, when Francois Bernier postulated a number of distinctive categories, based largely on facial character and skin colour and the Negro or black African category was usually relegated to the bottom, in part because of black African's colour and allegedly 'primitive' culture, and known as 'slaves' to Europeans." (Ashcroft, et.al:2007:181) On the basis of physically or biologically distinctive categories, the term firstly used by Emmanuel Kant in Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime (1764) as 'races of mankind'. (Ashcroft, et.al:182)

Soni noted, Race purely states as "a societal paradigm that exaggeratedly splits persons into diverse groups based on features such as bodily appearance (principally colour), inherited birthright, traditional relationship, cultural antiquity, ethnic cataloguing, and the social, commercial, and dogmatic requirements of a civilization at a prearranged dated." (Soni:2017:822) Darwin had considered races as subspecies; saw species as fairly fluid entities, subspecies had therefore to be even more labile a fortiori. Linnaeus "Natural System" became the basis for the classification of all species, which divided humanity into four groups/races: Americanus, Asiaticus, Africanus, and Europeaeus. He ascribed typological (physical & behavioural) characteristics to these groups. (Hannaford:1996:123) King and Stansfield's Dictionary of Genetics(1990) defined race as, "A phenotypically and/or geographically distinctive sub-specific group, composed of individuals inhabiting a defined geographical and/or ecological region, and possessing characteristic phenotypic and gene frequencies that distinguish it from other such groups. The number of racial groups that one wishes to recognize within a species is usually arbitrary but suitable for the purposes under investigation." (Pigliucci:2003:1162) Ballard demonstrated scientific observation which



confirms that 'homo sapiens' is a single species/race (Hallard:2002:3) The Canadian psychologist Rushton in a talk on racial theories for the American Association of Physical Anthropologists' on "Statement on Biological Aspects of Race" where the AAPA decided that it was high time to take an official stand against scientific racism, and so they asked Executive Committee to establish a committee to work on that. (Carmill:1998:651) This study observed race on the basis of physical structure, facial differences and geographical diversities. MacPherson defined institutional racism as, 'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.' (Macpherson:1999:28) UNESCO had published 'Four Statements on Race Question' between 1950 & 1969 and evaluated various proportions about concept, meaning and use.

#### **A Dry White Season- A Short Introduction-**

What matters, where and how the origin and stream of the race notion had? Also it didn't care who invented or where used, in the present scenario, from the ending of the 20<sup>th</sup> cen, it had been continuously creating discrimination into societies and persons on the basis of geography, skin colours, languages, physical structures, cultures and traditions, and so on. The novel, *A Dry White Season* (1979) by an Afrikaner, Andre Brink (1935-2015), discussed the details of racial discriminations between White-Black Skin Colour and Powered White- Black Oriented/Helping White People, on the basis of traditional activities, cultural deeds, language spoken and settled locations. It is a narrating story of an ordinary, decent and harmless Afrikaner, Ben du Toit, who for the sake of justice for black family, exhausted his life. The Soweto revolt against the fluctuating educational policies of the government, Gordon's teenager boy, Jonathan was detained, subsequently declared as deceased and mysteriously buried without proclaiming any reason by police. Sturdy investigations about a boy and the purpose of his demise with the help of Ben, Gordon had similarly arrested, tortured and later declared as dead because of deceased in the police station. In search of the truth about suspicious deaths, Ben's sense of justice has initiated, that investigation further revolved into curiosity which became labeled rebellion.

#### **Racial Discrimination in a Dry White Season-**

The racial discrimination started with the title itself of the novel where the season has depicted as White. Throughout the novel and his writing, Brink symbolized his main character, who have supported towards the black people. The usage of the white season can represent the depravedness of British White people (season) towards Non-British Whites and Blacks in the Africa. The title introduce the way of 'race' and its being importance in the contexts of writing as Edward Said's viewed in *Orientalism* (1977), that "writing is the matter of colonizers" and might be Brink himself believed on the significance of using the racial utterance in the very beginning. John McLeod pronounced, 'skin colour has often been the primary sign of racial difference and a frequent target of racialising discourses ...' (McLeod:2013:110) Brink's narrator felt it necessary to introduce Gordon with skin colour, as "Gordon was a black cleaner in the school where Ben taught History and Geography to the senior classes." (Brink:1998:37) Not even, another, specifically black characters had been introduced by their skin colour and throughout the novel they were entitled with similar identity. Stanley, the black and constantly helping to both Gordon and later Ben, were too introduced with his skin color, as, "Gordon went to see a friend, a black taxi-driver, Stanley Makhaya, [...]" (p.41)

Where there has a fraction of the racial community, it has always been shackled with fallacious victims and proceedings. McLeod's assessment about reasons of racial difference has '... and a frequent target of racialising discourses ...[...]' and '[...]'... is the ideology that upholds the discrimination against certain people... [...]' (McLeod:110) The manner of the deprived class according to the superior class population has the offensive, amazing and unbelievable category. They always have seen in an immoral/unlawful position of observation. Oriental has depicted as, "some-thing one judges (as in a court of law), something one studies and depicts (as in a curriculum), something one disciplines (as in a school or prison), something one illustrates (as in a zoological manual)". (Said:1977:41) Gordon was so straightforward but deprived man; he was always victimized and blamed for any depraved occurrence in school, as mentioned, "Once, when some money disappeared from the classrooms and one or two of the teachers immediately blamed Gordon for it, it was Ben who took the cleaner under his wing and instituted inquiries which revealed a group of matric boys to be the culprits". (p.37)

David Welsh stated, "the Soweto uprising of 1976, 'a seminal event in the decline of apartheid,' was triggered by the compulsory use of the Afrikaans language at African schools." (Welsh:2009:147) African Black people were going against all the changes that took place by British, Afrikaners or the White people. They were pressurized to follow the customs, progress and change through different ways.

Learning their language was the one issue where Jonathan refused to follow and learn their language which increased his fatality. The narrator explained the crisis as "But according to Gordon he'd become resentful against the "Boere" and refused to learn Afrikaans". ( p.40)"Racial differences are best thought of as political constructions which serve the interests of certain groups of people". (McLeod 110). The separations had created and maintained by the power on the basis of race. Stanley told Ben about the white supremacy and the activities converted tranquil, where White people had entire authority, as, 'You're white.'As if that summarized everything.'Hope comes easy to you. You're used to it' (p.83) About a month after Jonathan's disappearance, "the young black nurse" (p.44) visited Gordon at his home and told that, "ten days ago a black boy (Jonathan) of about seventeen or eighteen had been admitted to a private ward". (p.44) The supremacy continued, when Gordon and his wife went to enquire about body of Jonathan, 'they send Gordon "from one office to another, from Special Branch to CID, told to wait, told to come again'.(p.46) As somebody provided assistance beside the supremacy, they were either kept away or punished or tortured or killed, explained by Stanley as, 'Julius Nqakula (a Black lawyer who'd helped Gordon with the affidavits) got his banning orders three days ago, man. First round knock-out.'"(p.69) and again, 'Knock on the door. When he opened they fired five shots at point-blank range. Face, chest, stomach'. (p.266)

At the end of the novel the Afrikaner, Ben was vanished everything, family, job and life. It suggested that the racial discrimination was deeply rooted in the mentality of White people and also tortured to those who provided the help to the Black/ Racial discriminated people in the African countries.

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