Name

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**Religion in Oryx and Crake**

Religion plays a critical role in the lives of individuals that choose to pursue it. Their religious beliefs help shape their values. ???

Margaret Atwood’s novel *Oryx and Crake* makes several religious references. Jimmy, the main protagonist in the novel later referred to as Snowman, relies on storytelling indicating biblical occurrences such as the creation myth. As an unintended consequence he turns ordinary humans into gods and takes on the prophet and messenger status.

Before Crake wipes out most of humanity with a virus and commits suicide, he entrusts Snowman to take care of the Crakers, genetically modified humans. They are a result of a project lead and supervised by Crake, intended to get rid of humanities’ many flaws. One of them is the belief is religion, the so-called G[od]-spot.

Giving the Crakers, humanity 2.0, a fresh start does not seem to turn out well in regard to the G-spot. In *Oryx and Crake*, the presence of God can be a result of two things, either God created man or man creates God. This is enabled by a universal hard-wired belief system that cannot be removed, not even genetically.

This term paper will focus on the universal human belief system as discussed in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* by Emilie Durkheim. First, her theory will be explained, and then applied to the text and analyzed. This followed by a brief discussion of God created man or man creates God and ends with a religious conclusion.

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People believed that perfection only existed within God, before an ontological argument came up with a concept of perfection as the ability in proving His existence. Nevertheless, in the present modern world the whole idea has been distorted and it even proves more difficult to prove on whether really perfection itself exists (Frew 34).

The first theme is metaphor; Snowman can be argued to represent Adam that is the first man to be created in the bible by God. The main protagonist in Oryx and Crave, Snowman who is named who is the isolated survivor of the destruction of humanity from the Homo sapiens (Ingersoll 162). This again represent the biblical story of Noah who survived the human destruction by the flood catastrophe.

There is an instance of foreseeing. Jimmy who was later named Snowman in most cases is thought to be constantly meditating and contemplating on various issues ???. The forecast on the possibility of the future occurrences on the human behavior has an interrelation on the biblical theme on how the human fate is portrayed. In biblical teachings, there is equal chances of the human fate is constantly predetermined as per the teachings and revelations that has always been predicted in the human exploitation and progress.

Crake unquestionably has godlike abilities (Mosca 38). Through the technological advances, Crake is able to control and alter creation. Creation of totally chosen babies that could incorporate any feature, physical or mental or spiritual as per the buyers wish and aspirations (Atwood, 304). The character is that of a geneticist who has a plan to create a new race of humans to replace the current Homo sapiens who are very destructive. Crake plays god because the novel shows us that he can create and also destroy life (Banerjee 236). CrakeCrake

The very way Noah in the biblical story was instructed to march all the animals in pairs into the ark, is the same way Snowman leads the Crakers, the children, women and men piled from both sides the women and children (Adami 249) The manner in which the creatures were reserved ensured the procreation were continued to avoid extinction. The most visible similarity between Snowman and the patriarch Noah is that each is selected by a greater power to survive the destruction that occurred. Noah tucked safely in the ark, and Snowman in the Crake. Atwood portrays Snowman as being the last survivor of the Homo sapiens. He is compelled by his promise to look after the Paradise project when Crake was absent; this has great significance to the story of Noah and the Ark in the bible.

The reference of bringing forth created beings shows presence of a higher being (Crake) who is even the provider of his creation: ‘This is the one fish chosen for you tonight this is the fish Oryx gives you.’ ”. The Crakers are also told that Crake their crater was not born but came down from heaven like thunder. “Oh Snowman, tell us about when Crake was born, ‘ says one the women, ” and Snowman responds, “Crake was never born. He came down out of the sky, like thunder.

Considering Oryx, she is portrayed by Snowman as the mother of animals and words. This can compare to Gaias the Greek goddess of earth and the earth itself being the mother of all. Just in the same way Gaias is the mother of nature and animals Oryx is also portrayed in the same manner. Oryx also gave the Crakers words according to Snowman, and in paradise dome, she taught them about nature and animals she can be seen as a goddess of wisdom. This is similar to Athena in Greek mythology.

When the children of Crake start enquiring of their heritage and history out of curiosity, Snowman concocts stories that show Crake as the savior of the human race and to assure the Crakers that they have a purpose. "Crake took the chaos, and he poured it away… He cleared away the dirt; he cleared room… For his children! For the Children of Crake!" (Atwood 103).

He puts himself as the bridge between Oryx and Crake and the Crakers that he is seen as some prophet to relay messages to and from. Snowman needs to be listened to and be believed although most of what comes out of his mouth are usually made up stories.

When Crake creates his new species, he says he would remove a cluster of neurons which he refers to ‘the god neuron’ so that the new creation will be devoid of believe and religion.

Though Crake pushes to destroy all institutions that seek to advance society, including religion, the Crakers had by this time learned and started practicing religion in their day to day life. This, therefore, makes religion an essential part of life. The Crakers are seen asking about their creator and even going into the trances to talk to Oryx or Crake almost in a similar way to prayer. It is evident that this community with which Snowman lives is centered in a sort of religion which revolves around Oryx and Crake whereas Snowman acts as if he is the prophet or messenger. This is a clear testament that Crake failed to remove the ‘god spot’ from the Crakers. They still found a way to incorporate religion and worship through this is understood naturally to be more of human nature.

Eventually shows that religion is important and that humans will always find a way to worship or will most likely look for a higher power. The behavior of Crakers can demonstrate this idea of looking for a higher being. The ultimate question of ‘’who are we”? The fact that human beings are quick to associate what they do not understand to religion and what they are afraid to venture into is usually hidden under the huge bracket that is a religion to warn those who may be curious about the topic. This does not necessarily provide take away the curiosity. The other question that we can devise from the novel is ‘’ does our humanness reside in our physical, mental, moral or social being?’’ or perhaps it's in our relationship with the higher being.

‘’In the beginning, there was chaos’’. That is how Snowman started his story to the Crakers. This story involved mythologies or religion about what lead the world into chaos. In the same way as the Greek mythology where chaos started after Eros was born and the god Eros gave life to Gaias the mother of earth and Uranus the god of the sky; chaos brought about the existence of Crakers. According to Snowman’s story, things were mixed, individuals and dirt. That the individuals were vicious and full of chaos killing and eating Oryx’s children. Oryx was unhappy about this, and she, therefore, petitioned Crake to do something about it. Crake then took away the chaos and poured it away. He made the great emptiness and created space for his children. This is the second myth that Snowman created for the Crakers to explain the world around them.

Rituals are an important part of worship. A sacrifice of animals or something from the harvest is ordinarily done. It sometimes may be rituals to welcome a new season or sending away bad omen. The Crakes also appeared to have one ritual where once in a week women call fish from the water then men kill it with stones and sticks. They then prepare it for Snowman who then eats it. He then tells them about Crake or his words. The Crakers are not allowed to eat fish, nor they would be killers. They are made to understand that this is the will of Crake. The fish bones are then wrapped and returned to the sea to be used in making other children or Oryx. This is considered a ritual because the Crakers have to sacrifice a fish to hear the words of Crake through Snowman.

As Snowman returned from his trip, he enters the compound and finds that the Crakers had created an idol of him and were shouting his name in a manner that sounded like they were saying Amen, he thought that next they would invent idols and grave goods and eventually sin. This can be related to the story of Moses from the bible who had gone to the mountains to pray, and when he returned he found the Israelites had created false gods whom they were now praising, he was so angry with them because of this. The nature of humans to be existential and also to wonder where he came from and how creation came to be. It is natural to invent possible answers to these questions although some answers do not exist. One possible result is men creates god to get those answers.

They are seated around some picture playing some instrument, and he sees that they are made of old things such as bottles and strings. The Crakes explain that they were calling him. Crake saw a great danger in this. The picture of the Snowman created by the Crakers shows that they were thinking of representative objects of their higher beings. The tradition of making images and effigies represent something exists in many mythologies.

Conclusion

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