

Satire as a Tool for Social Commentary in Terry Pratchett's *Equal Rites*
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استخدام اسلوب الهجاء كأداة للنقد الاجتماعي في رواية المساوات في الحقوق للكاتب تيري براتجيت

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Abstract:

Satire is a literary device for the artful ridicule of folly or vice as a means of exposing or correcting it. Satire utilizes tones of amusement, contempt, scorn, or indignation towards a flawed subject with the hope of creating awareness and subsequent change. It helps us confront the unpleasant reality and see the world as it is, so that we can improve it. Through Terry Pratchett's novel "Equal Rites", the study seeks to answer the question of whether the satire reflects flaws and follies which encompassed in human nature. Terry Pratchett is a keen observer of social and political happenings around him. He satirizes different cultural, social, political and literary patterns. Thus, this study focuses on examining the mission of a satirist which is to draw the attention to the follies, failings, and vices of individuals, as well as the whole society. Horatian satire targets the vices and shortcomings with a mild and gentle humour. As opposed to the Juvenalian satirists whose aim is to create an atmosphere of anger, the Horatian satirists expose the follies to laughter. The third type is Menippean satire which attacks mental attitudes. Terry Pratchett is a typical Horatian satirist.

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يعتبر الهجاء وسيلة ادبية تستخدم لنقد اخطاء وعيوب المجتمع بطريقة



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ادبية بارعة للحد من الظواهر السلبية ومحاولة تصحيحها.

يستخدم الهجاء انماط مختلفة منها الهزل او الازدراء او السخرية او السخط ازاء عيوب المجتمع من اجل خلق وعي لدى الجماهير على امل ان تغيير وضعها. يقوم الهجاء النقدي الساخر بكشف الحقيقة المؤلمة ورؤية الاشياء كما هي بصورة واضحة وغير ضبابية لغرض تصحيح المسار الخاطيء الذي تسير عليه الامة. لذا يهدف البحث الى دراسة رواية تيري براتشيت "المساواة في الحقوق" لتحليل اسلوب الكاتب النقدي من خلال استخدامه للهجاء الساخر والذي من خلاله يصل الى هدفه وراء كتابة هذه الرواية وهو نقد العيوب والسلبيات والممارسات الخاطئة التي تمارسها البشرية في المجتمع. يمتاز تيري براتشيت بملاحظته الدقيقة الحاذقة لنقد وهجاء ما يدور حوله من قضايا سياسية واجتماعية وثقافية. يقوم هذا البحث في دراسة اهمية دور الكاتب الادبي من خلال تسليط الضوء على فضح ونقد الممارسات الخاطئة والسلبية للفرد والمجتمع على حد سواء. هنالك ثلاثة انواع من اساليب الهجاء: اولها هو الهجاء الهوراسي الذي يسخر من سلبيات واخطاء المجتمع بروح الدعابة اللطيفة والفكاهة الذي يجلب المتعة ويسبب الضحك. على العكس منه نجد اسلوب الهجاء الجوفينالي الذي ينقد بأسلوب غاضب ولاذع فض، اما النوع الثالث هو الهجاء المينيبي الذي يهاجم وينقد الفكر والتوجهات وليس التصرفات. علما ان تيري براتشيت هو كاتب ساخر نموذجي يتبع النوع الاول وهو الهجاء الساخر الهوراشي.

1. Introduction

British author Terry Pratchett has gained worldwide acclaim for his fiction. However, due to his reputation as a fantasy author, he is often neglected in his position as a satirist. He is actually very much influenced by his career in journalism. This study focuses on examining some of the satire and how it is used to convey the critical commentary on its targets. The satire created in his Discworld novels is timeless, oddly relevant and often comical. Discworld is the world that serves as the setting for Pratchett's Disc world series novels. The world itself is built on characteristics taken from real world eras and locations. It is also claimed to be ruled by magic, but the magic that appears on Discworld is logical in its existence: "The reason it is fantasy is that it is logical about the wrong things, about those parts of human experience where, by tacit agreement, we don't use logic because it doesn't work properly" (Pratchett, 2000, p.160). Equal Rites is created in such a way to resemble the real world, thus making it the ideal platform for satire even if it is hidden among fantasy. By deciding to connect his satire with fantasy genre Pratchett created for himself the ideal platform to reflect our world and plant his satire in it.

The intention of this study is to pick some examples of satire from the Terry Pratchett's novel *Equal Rites* and to examine it in connection to both general views on the problematic and in connection to the views of Terry Pratchett. Making the main concerns of the satire be social interactions and politics. On the concept and role of satire, Akingbe (2014, p. 48) notes that it is a form of literary art which may be used to critique modes of social standards which are aimed at keeping up with social change. The study, therefore, looks at the satire through the viewpoint of Discworld characters and population.

Pratchett is known as a satirist of enormous talent. He is not the only writer who introduces satire as a significant element of fantasy literature, however, what makes him unique among the other fantasy writers is that rather than a completely fantastical world the Discworld universe is close to our real world. As a result of his careful observation, Pratchett presents a commentary on our world in order to satirize it. Pratchett distorts the cliché of the real world and the well-established norms and perspectives in his fictional world.

2. Conceptual Framework:

2.1 The Theory of Satire

Satire is basically a genre of literature but it is the popular genre of performing arts too. Satire mocks at the immoralities, stupidities, abuses and shortcomings prevalent in the contemporary world. Hornby (2000, p.112) asserts that "satire is a way of criticizing a person, and or institution which uses humor to show their faults or weaknesses, a piece of writing that uses this type of criticism". Satire intends to improve individuals, establishments, government and society at large. Main purpose of satire is constructive social criticism, though it is usually humorous. By using wit, it points towards both the specific and broader issues in society. Strong irony and sarcasm are the main weapons of satire but the supplementary weapons like parody, exaggeration, burlesque, comparison, juxtaposition, double entendre and analogy are also usually used. Apart from literary satire, satire is also found in many art forms including television shows, internet memes, plays, commentary and media such as lyrics. Abrams (1999, p.275) defines satire as follows:

“Satire can be described as the [literary art of diminishing] or derogating a subject by making it [ridiculous and evoking] toward it [attitudes of amusement], contempt, scorn, or indignation.”

Satire is basically a literary technique in which manners and establishments are ridiculed with an objective of improving society. At its center, Simpson (2003) argues that there lies the element of humor and wit in the practice of satire. Humor sets satire apart from other forms of social and political protest. Satirists make use of irony and exaggeration to make fun of human errors and foolishness in order to correct human behavior. In satirical writing, the author frequently uses sarcasm, irony, parody, exaggeration, burlesque, double entendre, analogy, juxtaposition and comparison.

A satirist has a moral purpose to correct and to restore the world; this is what makes satire different from all other writings. The writer, the scriptwriter, the playwright or the stand-up comedian observe and interpret the world, and have firm views about how the society should behave morally.

John Vanburgh (1664-1726) in his comedy *The Provoked Wife* (1697) clarifies the purpose of satire very succinctly. According to him, satire is a faithful mirror in which every individual can see his/her true self. Satire mirrors society and assists people to view others differently. Purpose of satire is to bring reforms and positive changes in society. Satire presents the points that are applicable to everybody. Satire points out hypocrisy and helps understand the difference between folly and vice. Satire has a high aim to appreciate the good to improve the world.

2.2 Types of Satire

Satire is of two types, Formal or Direct and Indirect Satire. According to Abram (1999, pp.168-169) “critics make a broad division between formal and indirect satire. In formal satire, satiric voice speaks out in the first person that is “I”, may address himself either to the reader or else to a character within the work itself, who is called the adversaries”. Satire being a diverse genre with an extensive range of satiric methods makes it complex to classify and define. Generally, scholars have categorized satirical literature as Horatian, Juvenalian and Menippean.

2.2.1 Horatian satire

Horatian satire is named after the Roman satirist Horace (65–8 BCE) which light-heartedly evaluates some social evil through tender and cheerful humor. Horace tenderly ridicules the dominant thoughts and philosophical beliefs of ancient Rome and Greece. He addresses the issues with a clever mocking tone, without using severe or accusing words. Horatian satire uses the same form of moderately criticizing the incongruities and idiocies of human beings. Horatian satire is gentler and becomes more amusing after observing idiocy.

Horatian satire with a sympathetic tone administers exaggeration, wit and self-critical humour toward what it identifies as folly. A Horatian satirist tries to rectify the condition with smiles, rather than by rage. By evoking a wry smile, Horatian satire reminds people to take life less seriously. Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*, Thomas More's *Utopia*, Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are some examples of Horatian satire.

2.2.2 Juvenalian satire

Juvenalian satire is termed after the Roman satirist Juvenal (late first century – early second century AD). Juvenal was upset with the views of the public figures and establishments of the Republic and aggressively condemned them through his literature. His satire is more scornful and harsher than the Horatian. Juvenalian satire is very aggressive and savage in condemning failure.

Juvenal's satire ridicules societal structures. Juvenal also, unlike Horace, condemned public officers and constitutional organizations through his satires, regarding their opinions as not just wrong, but evil.

Juvenalian satire targets apparent social evil with the help of derision, disgrace and savage ridicule. This form is often negative, characterized by the use of sarcasm, irony, moral indignation and personal invective, with less emphasis on humor. Strongly split political satire can often be classified as Juvenalian.

Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal* (1729), William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954), George Orwell's *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story* (1945) and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) are examples of Juvenalian satire.

2.2.3 Menippean satire

Menippean satire is named after the Greek philosopher Menippus (third century BC) whose works are now lost. Menippean satire is indirect satire in which different speakers and genres are mixed together to discredit a single viewpoint. According to M. H. Abrams, Menippean satire is a form of indirect satire.

Menippean satire is a prose satire that attacks mental attitudes. Menippean satire uses different forms of parody, mythological burlesque, a fragmented narrative, the combination of many different targets and moves rapidly between styles and points of view. Typical mental attitudes criticized by Menippean satires are the miser, the quack, the bigot, the crank, the enthusiast, the pedant, the braggart, etc. which are considered as ailments of the intellect. The term Menippean satire differentiates it from the earlier satire initiated by Aristophanes, which was based on individual attacks.

A novelist may treat evil and folly as social diseases, but a Menippean satirist observes them as diseases of the intellect. In the early 17th century, Donne Hall and Marston followed the rambling, loquacious satire of Horace and Persius in English literature. Influenced by Juvenal, Dryden wrote his greatest satire *Absalom and Achitophel* in the 1680s. In the 20th century, works like Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* or George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and 1984 aroused interest in satiric fantasy.

One of the bases for satirical writing is the almost arrogance of author because they assume a position of moral superiority over their targets. Satire is a method of recording reality in a twisted way to make the flaws more apparent. The danger of satire lies in the fact that if the subject is challenged and parodied in a convincing way it can be taken seriously and cause issues with the readers. The general goal of satire is to shock through the usage of imagery and language and humour. The essential element of humour in satire is what separates it from the more serious genres. As such satire can be described as a weapon against stupidity and absurdity.

In his pursuit of satire Terry Pratchett creates a neutral setting for his novels to criticize and parody nearly any subject possible. Although by picking fantasy setting he hinders himself as fantasy setting is often seen as a lesser platform and thus, it outshines the critique produced in such works. In the case of Pratchett, his examining of surprisingly many topics from benefits of

dictatorship to racial issues his commentary offers thoughtful commentary on the human condition and institutional policy. As a profound satirist, Pratchett writes his novels to comment on many issues and ideas. Even the world on which his novels are based is a parody of an ancient belief. One that the world is flat and that it rides on the back of a turtle through space. This ancient belief was founded in places where people and turtles lived together and the four elephants are based on the Indo-European variation of the said myth. Within this world, Pratchett creates imitations of political and social organizations and reflects the way people usually thinks about problems. Characters created in his stories often possess characteristics of real figures and are used for satirist purposes while also fitting into the story. These characters are evolved as the times go on through the narration thus, allowing themselves to remain topical even if the sphere they were used to comment on changed. The satire and real world imagery are used by Pratchett to create compelling stories and not to hinder the contents of the novel.

Pratchett combines fantasy and satire in a way that enables him to be both creative and politically charged within an alternate reality, giving him total freedom and adaptability in his satire. He creates a lasting form of satire that is more of a ridicule than an actual attack on the values. His satire serves as both reflections on current events and portrayal of human nature and reactions.

3. Methodology

The study is qualitative because the process of data analysis involved analyzing the novel according to the elements of satire. The qualitative research approach is appropriate because it allows for an in-depth analysis of elements of satire. This research also uses a sociological approach. The principle of this approach is to analyze humans in society with a process of understanding ranging from society to individuals. This approach also considers literary works as belonging to the community.

Mega (2017) revealed that literature displays a picture of life, and life itself is a social reality. In this sense, life encompasses relationships between people, and between events that occur within a person. Similarly, Pradopo (1993, p.34) stated that the purpose of sociological studies in the literature is to get a complete picture of the relationship between authors, literary works, and

society. He gives an understanding that the sociology of literature is a research that focused on human problems because literature often reveals the struggle of humanity in determining its future, based on imagination, feelings, and intuition.

Thus, this study answers the social problems implicit in this novel as literary responses to social phenomena and the complexity of the problems that surround them owing to literature is a product of society.

4. Discussion (Satire as a social criticism)

4.1 Class Division

Equal Rites, the third novel in the Discworld series is full with social commentary. Throughout the novel, Pratchett mocks at the traditional rites and supports equal rights for both men and women. In the title of the novel itself, Pratchett creates pun on the words “Equal Rites”.

Throughout the novel, in different incidents and descriptions, Pratchett creates a sense of sarcastic humour. The wizard is walking through the Ramtop mountains. By humorously commenting on goats, Pratchett actually indirectly mocks at the onlookers. The wizard disappears and then the goats go back to grazing. This sense of humour and mockery is generated with the help of very minute description. The wizard Drum Billet meets the blacksmith at the village Bad Ass.

The wizard who specializes in magic and the blacksmith both treat each other equally. This meet between the two individuals from different social classes is symbolic of social equality. Both of them sit and watch the rain and the mist which was the equal natural scenery for them. Pratchett promotes a sense of natural equality among different social classes. (Özbay,2022).

Billet is guided by magic; he knows he is going to die, so he wants to pass on his wizardness to his successor. According to Billet, magic has selected the blacksmith’s son being the eighth son of an eighth son. Bad Ass is a small ordinary village and a wizard in Bad Ass is an extraordinary achievement. So, here, Pratchett promotes geographical equality too Gifford, et al, (2018).

Granny, the midwife, comes with the child wrapped in a blanket. The wizard tells them that the child should hold the staff. The smith guides the child's hand and then it grips the staff tightly. To everyone's surprise, later it is noticed that the child is a girl. Granny explains this historical reversal of the tradition by appreciating the wizard Drum Billet for giving first female wizard to the world.

4.2 Urban vs. rural life

Pratchett's mocking style can be clearly observed in different descriptions. Through Granny, Pratchett mocks at the use of books. Moreover, he satirizes the human nature as he favors human life that is closer to nature. He also mocks at the lack of knowledge.

Pratchett presents picturesque natural scenery of Ramtop mountains and the villages there. The simplicity in village life is presented through different situations. Contrary to this, Pratchett is very critical about the city life. Granny accompanying Esk to Unseen University, provides an opportunity for Pratchett to criticize the city life. Ankh-Morpork functions as a representative city from the real world. Pratchett mocks at the real-life cities when he criticizes the water pollution of the river Ankh and the city waste being carried to the sea.

Granny and Esk get a lift on a cart and they start their journey towards the town of Ohulan Cutash. According to Granny, a cosmopolitan Bad Assian visits Ohulan Cutash only once or twice a year. In her entire life, Granny has visited this town only once and she does not like it because of the bad smells. Granny distrusts the city folk and their flashy ways.

After reaching Ohulan, Granny and Esk see people burdened by the pressures of urban life. As it was the market day at Ohulan, they have to find their way through crowd full with noise, color and smell. Granny maintains vigilance against pickpockets and traffickers in the erotic. There is a small inconspicuous stall that is black draped which does a very busy trade by selling medicines. Majority of its customers are women. Esk concludes that the town must be having more number of sick people.

Granny and Esk find thick herbal scent inside the stall, and find amusing labels like Maiden's Prayer, Tiger oil and Husband's Helper on the bottles. They meet Hilta Goatfounder, the owner of the stall and the fortune teller. Hilta describes

her life. Hilta explains Esk that the potions give freedom to people. Hilta takes Esk's hand and inspects her palm but Granny disapproves it. Though Granny too does fortune telling, she knows that it is just guessing. According to her, people do their own fortune-telling, and everything should not be believed. Ohulan market is open after sunset too. Light is lit at every booth and stall. Hilta, Granny and Esk walk in the market, but Esk loses her way.

The genre of humoristic fantasy allows Pratchett to create settings perfectly fit for pointing out the exact problematics, and to joke at the expense of what he sees as unjust. The ever-present humour only underlines passages where Pratchett suddenly takes on a more serious tone, giving even more weight to the arguments presented (Hájek, 2020)

4.3 Slavery and Exploitation vs. Humanity and Freedom.

Esk demands milk from the landlord of the Fiddler's Riddle bar Mr. Skiller. Mr. Skiller informs her that only beer was available. When Esk gets a glass of beer, the magic staff converts the beer into milk. When Esk is drinking milk, she keeps the staff in the corner of a bar; the staff makes Mr. Skiller uncomfortable. He realizes that his other guests are leaving quietly. The general opinion of Mr. Skiller and his guests is that they do not like magic performed by women especially. So, here we find that magic is downgraded to logical thinking and women are downgraded to men.

As Esk loses her way, Granny searches for her. Granny even uses mind magic to locate her, but thousands of human brains thinking at the same time convince Granny that the world is a silly place. She compares animal mind with human mind. Pratchett's humanitarian views are explicit here. He favours human life that is closer to nature.

Esk carrying the magic staff loses her way in the Ohulan market. The crowd is surprised to see a four feet tall girl wizard carrying the magic staff. Strange things happen wherever she passes. A man with three upturned cups invites people to explore chance and probability of a small dried pea. Esk watches this and suddenly every cup is full with peas. Then the man owes every individual a lot of money. In the second instance, a small wretched monkey that is tied to a chain for years used to perform acts while its master played on a pipe-organ. With a sudden magical effect, the monkey bit its owner, snapped the chain and

jumped over the rooftops with the night's collection in a cup. Pratchett comments that the history remains silent about where the monkey's earnings have been spent. In yet another instance, when Esk is passing a stall, a boxful of marzipan ducks come to life and then they are found in the river quacking happily. By next morning, they all had melted. That is natural selection.

In these incidents, Pratchett uses magic and creates fantastic scenarios wherein symbolically he protests slavery and exploitation; and favours humanitarian natural selection and freedom. Esk travels in a barge with a Zoon family. Traditionally Zoon tribe is known for their honesty and straightforward approach. Their rigid adherence to the truth is because of their genetic base. Zoon, being a trading race, the elders of the race over the millennia understand that the adherence to truth is a drawback. They decide to overcome this drawback and start encouraging the youths who could bend the Truth on a competitive basis. Gradually the Zoon become habitual to speaking lie and consequently the office of tribal Liar is established. Zoon have great respect for any Zoon who can lie and they feel very proud of their Liars. The Liar as the representative of the tribe deals with the outside world. Amschat Bhal Zoon, the Liar lives on the raft with his three wives and three children. Other races feel that the Zoon are poking fun by using the title "Liar"; instead of using "the title Liar" they feel the Zoon should use the titles like "diplomat" or "public relations officer". (Pratchett, 1987, p. 87).

Pratchett ascribes a fantastic genetic quality to the Zoon tribe that is their adherence to truth. For the sake of trade and money-making, the Zoon give up their genetic quality. Pratchett mocks at this and according to him giving up genetic quality is against nature. Pratchett equating the Zoon title "Liar"; with the titles used by other races "diplomat" and "public relations officer" is very satirical. In a way, Pratchett satirizes the human greed and the role of diplomats and public relations officers. The many varieties of art represented emphasize the way in which contemplating or creating art helps one "confront and critique the notion of the Other and the tensions [...] that obscure the commonality of the human" (Croft, 2018, p.240), by encouraging a change of perspective

4.4 Patriarchal Dominance and Women's Rights

Esk travels in a barge where she meets Amschat B'hal Zoon. He wants to know why Esk was traveling in the barge. If she would have been a boy, he would have asked if he was going to seek his fortune. Esk firmly asks him, "Can't girls seek their fortune?" (Pratchett, 1987, p. 119). His reply to Esk is that a girl should find out a boy with a fortune. Amschat's views suggest male dominance and Esk protests against it.

Pratchett uses epigram, "One has to move with the times" (Pratchett, 1987, p. 121) to promote female emancipation. Esk travels in a barge wherein she has conversation with Amschat B'hal Zoon. Esk is a different girl; she seeks equality between men and women. She attempts to reverse the traditions and customs by rewriting the rules. Esk was wandering in the Zemphis market place. Through humorous description Pratchett criticizes human nature.

Pratchett uses antithesis as a tool for social commentary; "never trust an honest man" (Pratchett, 1987, p. 137). Esk meets Simon and Treatle and asks them if a woman can become a wizard. They feel the idea to be very funny and they reject it. Esk presents Granny's views to both of them that men can be wizards and women can be witches. According to Granny women should do the job they are good at. Treatle, the Vice-Chancellor of Unseen University ironically respects witches and believes that witchcraft is a good career for a woman.

I never really felt like a wizard, so I never really worried about what anyone said. [.] That's what I learned at university: to be me, just what I am and not worry about it. That knowledge is an invisible magical staff, all by itself. (Pratchett, 1987, p. 169)

Treatle further elaborates that, witches are not equivalent to wizards, and though nature has gifted witchcraft to women, it is not high magic. On one side Treatle says that he has highest respect for women and on the other side, he underestimates women by saying that they are good for having babies and household work only. According to him, women are unsettling and excitable, so they are not fit for high magic. He believes that high magic requires clarity of thoughts and women do not possess this talent. Further, he highlights women's incapability to be wizard.

Further, Treatle adds that high magic is able to give us everything we want. He advises Esk to be away from wizardry. Esk tells him that she is going to Ankh to

seek her fortune. Treatle thinks that girls do not have fortunes to seek. Esk is deeply hurt by the way Treatle underestimates women. Esk becomes very furious, tears flow her eyes, she takes the staff and runs away. She decides to be a witch and a wizard too, the more the people try to stop her, the more determined she became.

Granny and Esk reach Ankh-Morpork and find lodgings in the area called “The Shades” which is an ancient part of the city. The inhabitants in this area are described as nocturnal and they never enquire about each other’s business. Pratchett combines humour and satire while describing the surrounding of the lodgings.

Granny and Esk visit different sights of Ankh-Morpork and find that there are several temples. Granny’s observation is that the gods are always demanding and expect that their followers don't follow their true nature. Consequently, this has given lot of work for witches. Granny is happy that the people at Ankh-Morpork respect witches. Esk and Granny discuss about the fat lady called Mrs. Palm who lives with all the young ladies. Esk has observed that people come to visit the young ladies throughout the night. Granny realises that it must be a whorehouse, and she understands the predicament of Mrs. Palm.

Simon gives demonstration of his magic skills to Archchancellor Cutangle, Archmage of the Wizards of the Silver Star and the wizards present in the great hall of the Unseen University. All appreciate Simon and Cutangle feels that it would be an honour to admit Simon to the university. Nine-year-old little girl Esk tugs at Cutangle’s robe and enquires if he is important. As Cutangle agrees he is important, Esk informs him that she wants to be a wizard. Cutangle becomes red with anger initially and then starts laughing loudly. He stops laughing when he faces Esk’s determined stare.

Esk is determined to be a wizard. Cutangle suggests her to be a witch because it would be against the lore for a woman to be a wizard. Treatle intervenes and makes it clear that Esk is the only one female who wants to be a wizard. According to Cutangle the idea of a female wizard is completely laughable and against the lore. Though Esk firmly tells him that she can do wizard magic, he repeatedly tells her that women are not wizards. Esk spots the statue of Malich

the Wise, the founder of the University and with full concentration conveys her determination to be a wizard.

Granny enters the Unseen University and meets the housekeeper Mrs. Whitlow. The witchmarks on the doorpost indicate Granny that Mrs. Whitlow welcomes witches and she is anxious for news of her four husbands. Moreover, Mrs. Whitlow is in pursuit of a fifth husband. Mrs. Whitlow calls herself to be psychic and believes that women are underestimated by men. "They gave pink a bad name" (Pratchett, 1987, p. 188).

Though Esk repeatedly insists to Treatle and Cutangle that she wants to be a wizard, she is disappointed. Esk comes running through the gates in tears and meets Granny. She informs that her magic did not work.

Why was it that when she heard Granny ramble on about witchcraft she longed for the cutting magic of wizardry, but whenever she heard Treatle speak in his high-pitched voice she would fight to the death for witchcraft? She'd be both or none at all. And the more they intended to stop her, the more she wanted it. (Pratchett, 1987, p. 111)

Granny explains to her that she should let the magic happen naturally. Granny encourages Esk, even she appreciates her for facing the chief wizard. Granny presents another way to enter the university: a witches 'way. Her plan is that Esk will work as a cleaning staff under the housekeeper Mrs. Whitlow. Though it is not a respectable way, Esk accepts it as part of her struggle to gain social equality.

Joule underlines the satirical endeavor of the novel and remarks that: "Equal Rites is not a story written for children or teenagers; Equal Rites is an exploration of gender roles in literature and a critique of deeply embedded misogyny and sexism within the fantasy genre and wider society" (2021, p.27). Further, Marc Burrows emphasizes the distinctiveness of Equal Rites compared to earlier Discworld novels as such:

Pratchett realized that turning fantasy on its head could do more than generate a cheap laugh, and from its title onwards, Equal Rites

is a story with a strong moral centre, focused on a feminist message; that despite every obstacle set in their way, women are capable of (and possibly better at) everything men are (Burrows, 2020, p.117).

Pratchett mocks at Shakespeare's famous saying "What's in the name?". Wizard magic is governed by words. Wizards strongly believe that names are same as things and if you change the name, you change the thing. Granny explains to Esk that the city people consume unnatural food and that is why they are always worried about the future. Shadow creatures take control of Simon's mind, so Granny wants to meet Cutangle. Esk informs Granny that women are not allowed in the Great Hall, but Granny is determined to meet Cutangle. So, Granny and Esk enter the Great Hall. At this time the faculty of the university were dining; one of the faculty members catches Granny a crack on the shin. Though Granny hops, she hops with dignity. All stare at Granny and Esk. A medium grade wizard who is lecturer in Applied Astrology rushes forward and tries to stop Granny and Esk. He tells them that it is against the lore for ladies to enter the hall. Granny ignores him and tells him that she is a witch and she wants to meet an important wizard. Overall, we find that Granny and Esk do not get respectable treatment at the Great Hall.

Granny and Esk come to the Great Hall to meet Cutangle. The description of Cutangle's personality creates humour. Granny and Cutangle search for the staff that Esk had thrown into the river. Granny had written some letters to the Archchancellor Cutangle requesting for Esk's admission to the Unseen University, but Cutangle did not reply at all. When Granny asks about these letters to Cutangle, she finds that he had not read the letters fully and he did not know even that those letters were sent by Granny. Granny had signed the letters at the bottom, but Cutangle did not see the sign even. He had treated those letters as a joke because applications from female candidates were never received at the university. Moreover, he had thrown those letters away. Cutangle's behaviour shows disrespect for women. "Granny has a philosophical objection to reading, but she'd be the last to say that books, especially books with nice thin pages, didn't have their uses" (Pratchett,1987, p.23). It is expressed in Weatherwax's previous remark that women are unable to understand books.

Later, Granny and Cutangle search for Esk's staff. They come with the staff and go to the room where Esk and Simon's bodies were lying. Cutangle suggested that the staff should be given to Simon, but Granny strongly protests it. Then Cutangle keeps the staff near Esk's body.

As there is no precedent, Cutangle hesitates to declare Esk as a wizard. Granny explains to him that we are born once, so lots of things have never happened before. Cutangle thinks that it is against the lore to declare a woman as a wizard. Granny triumphantly questions him if there is any written rule that women cannot become wizards. Cutangle faces a dilemma whether he should be recalled as the first Archchancellor to permit females into the university or not.

With the help of the power of the staff Esk and Simon get rid of the Things and come back to their original self. Granny welcomes Esk. Esk wore a pointed hat, it was a wizard hat. Finally, Granny declares that Archchancellor Cutangle has changed the lore and Esk is now a wizard.

Cutangle intends to allow a few more girls into the University. Further, he is in favour of co-education and offers a Chair to Granny. As Granny was good at herbs and headology, she would deliver some lectures to students. Moreover, Cutangle had plans of student visits to Granny's cottage for extra-mural studies. Esk and Simon start developing a new kind of magic that would comfort everyone. Granny and Esk's struggle wins them equal status in the society. Witches and wizards, men and women work in collaboration and write a new lore.

Witches acting as protagonists is the main subseries in the Discworld novels. *Equal Rites* is Pratchett's first feminist witch novel in which the disorganized witches challenge the organized misogynist wizards. Pratchett presents the patriarchal view about women and promotes the liberatory alternatives. Pratchett's presentation of traditional oppressive patriarchy, the issue of gender equality and its association with environmental issues can be analyzed with the point of view of feminist ecocriticism. Therefore, the witches series not only intervenes in the patriarchal consensus fantasy universe, but also in our own gendered historical imagination by opening up the possibility of women existing outside strict gender roles. In his essay *Why Gandalf Never Married*, Pratchett states that

there is a generally very clear division between magic done by women and magic done by men. [...] Strangely enough, that's also the case in this world. You don't have to believe in magic to notice that. Wizards get to do a better class of magic, while witches give you warts. (Sinclair, 2015, p.97).

Main theme presented throughout the novel *Equal Rites* is of equal rights for women. There is word play on the phrase “equal rights”, as Pratchett deliberately spells it as “equal rites”. Pratchett mocks at the traditional rites and supports equal rights for men, women and nature. In the opening of the novel itself Pratchett informs the readers that the novel presents a story about magic and a story about sex. The image of the Discworld carried on the backs of four giant elephants who stand on the back of gigantic turtle that moves in the universe suggests that the world is balanced by different natural elements. Though the villages located in the Ramtop mountains are full of scenic beauty of nature, they are considered inferior to urban places. The village name „Bad Ass“ itself is abusive, but the revolt against class and gender inequalities is taking place here. Pratchett describes the meeting between the wizard Drum Billet and the blacksmith as the meeting between equals. Traditionally, a wizard’s social class was considered to be superior to a blacksmith; but Pratchett makes them sit together and describes the rain and the mist that both of them were watching. The natural view was equal to both of them because nature does not have class discrimination. Moreover, Pratchett introduces the fantastic character of Death who symbolizes equality and natural justice.

Though Esk is denied entry to the Unseen University, the school of magic, she enters it as a servant and takes lessons in practical magic. Women’s entry to the Great Hall of the university was considered to be trespassing, but Granny and Esk enter the hall and meet Archchancellor Cutangle. Granny challenges Cutangle and has a magical duel with him. All these examples are symbolic of women’s fight for liberty and equality.

Pratchett satirizes the mentality that a woman should be a mother or a wife in order to be respected in her society. The dialogue below between the wizard Treatle and Esk exemplifies such a selfish patriarchal mindset as well:

‘I have nothing but the highest respect for women,’ said Treacle, who hadn't noticed the fresh edge to Esk's tone. ‘They are without parallel when, when

–’ ‘For having babies and so forth?’

’ ‘There is that, yes,’ the wizard conceded generously (Pratchett ,1987, p.109).

Pratchett criticizes the fact that women are respected only when they are a wife or a mother who is expected to give birth, serve men as well as do all the housework. The fact that Treacle does not complete his sentence implies that he is unable to offer any other reason why the women should be respected except for ‘having babies and so forth’.

4.5 Violation of the natural Environment

Pratchett is very much critical about the human encroachment in the natural environment. When Granny and Esk stay at the town of Ohulan, Pratchett gets an opportunity to criticise the people burdened by the pressures of urban life. On the contrary, he appreciates natural scenery of Ramtop mountains and the simplicity of village life. Moreover, Pratchett favours human life that is closer to nature. To simplify his point, he presents comparison between the animal mind and the human mind. According to him, the animal mind is simple, sharp and focused; and it understands the universe very well.

The novel ends with Esk and Simon beginning to develop a new kind of magic that would comfort everyone. Granny and Esk's struggle wins them equal status in the society. Wizards and witches, men and women work in collaboration and write a new lore. Similarly, Pratchett suggests that human beings should collaborate with environment and not exploit it. Pratchett presents the relationship of women with environment with the help of female witches who are in touch with nature, herbs and headology (Zulfa, 2020).

Ecofeminism is not only used by female scholars but male writers also use it, and it is relevant for them also. Oppressive dichotomies of male/female and nature/culture are the basis of the contemporary environmental problems. Feminist ecocriticism specially focuses the emancipatory strategies for

overcoming oppression. (Ormond, 2011). Pratchett promotes a sense of interrelationship with both community and the land through the novel *Equal Rites*. The novel articulates aspects of cultural ecofeminism. Granny and Esk are connected to one another and to nature in a manner unknowable to men. Pratchett attempts to challenge the oppression of women and nature. He highlights the kinship between humans, animals and plants. Pratchett clearly understands the way social, political and economic power is used to subordinate women. So, he firmly supports social justice and presents the need to restructure social practices. Moreover, he suggests that world can sustain itself by moving beyond hierarchical domination.

5. Conclusion

Human nature is diverse in its capacities and inclinations and as such satire as a cultural institution has an important place. Satire brings pleasure by combining aggressive denunciation with aesthetic features like patterns of sound and meaning, wit etc. Intellectual power of human beings makes us strongly believe that it is impossible to imagine the world and world history without satire. Laughter and indignation are surely not the right responses towards the world, but it is the way of satire. Satire is basically human and social because a satirist requires high commitment and full engrossment with the sore realities of the world. Satire is found in common life and culture, such as the folklore and oral traditions. So, satire is basically ephemeral. That is why, the bulk satire produced in the past several centuries is not available for study. Satire has a great power of language; it makes things happen. According to Alexander Pope (1688-1744), law, religion and politics are powerful domains, but satire too is an alternative form of power. If crime escapes the purview of law, religion and politics or it inhabits these domains itself, then the situation compels the satirist to write. Potentially, satire is a strong tactic for social policing.

The study of satire has been taken up with a new vigor presently by critics and scholars like Gilbert Highet, Dustin Griffin, Matthew Hodgart and Jonathan Greenberg. Satire is omnipresent. It is there in our day today life in the form of cartoons, political cartoons, comedy shows on television etc

After analyzing the select novels by applying the theory of satire, the researcher concludes that Pratchett's creation of the *Discworld* as a secondary world gives

readers an escape from reality. This Discworld, which is internally consistent, seems plausible with its natural laws, geography, culture, politics and government. Because of this plausibility, the readers can logically connect the secondary world with the real world. For Pratchett, the secondary world functions as a safe space for retranslating real world issues. Pratchett's cast of characters represents inhabitants from the real world.

Throughout the novel, Pratchett mocks at the traditional rites and supports equal rights for both men and women. In the title of the novel itself, Pratchett creates pun on the words "equal rites". Throughout the novel, in different incidents and descriptions, Pratchett creates a sense of sarcastic humour.

The general opinion of Mr. Skiller and his guests is that they do not like magic performed by women especially. So, here we find that magic is downgraded to logical thinking and women are downgraded to men. Pratchett uses magic and creates some fantastic scenarios wherein symbolically he protests slavery and exploitation, and favours humanitarian natural selection and freedom.

Pratchett introduces the fantastic character of Death who symbolizes equality and natural justice. He attempts to challenge the oppression of women and nature. He highlights the kinship between humans, animals and plants. He clearly understands the way social, political and economic power is used to subordinate women. So, he firmly supports social justice and presents the need to restructure social practices. Moreover, he suggests that world can sustain itself by moving beyond hierarchical domination.

Pratchett's comedy allows readers to see the reality as it is and this helps the readers understand reality fully. Pratchett has an ethical purpose to reform the culprit. He employs Horatian satire by maintaining humorous tone. His critiques are not harsh; they are the thoughtful comments about routine human life. With the use of laughter, Pratchett's satirical blows become soft. With the help of slapstick, wit, puns and parody along with the fantasy tropes Pratchett's social critique becomes multi-layered.

Pratchett's views are apparent in all of his satire. In some of the satire the influence is very light but if his views are in clash with the problematic discussed, they become much more profound and outward. Pratchett masterful work with satire allows him to project his ideas and ideals through his

fantastically mundane world that is so similar to ours. The similarities between the two worlds work as both tools to hide such satires and also allows him to be much more precise in picking his targets. The usual satire Pratchett produces is light-hearted mockery rather than attack aimed at the perpetrators. But even then his satire is on point and offers an insightful look at the problematic even if being masked in his fantasy setting.

Pratchett uses the Discworld as a parallel of Earth to create commentary on human culture and social ideologies. While the work itself is fictional, many of his points are meant to apply to our own world and the social climate Pratchett experienced during his life. Different series within the greater Discworld setting look at ideas or aspects of life in greater detail.

Generally, a satirist offers us a travesty of the situation which at the same time directs our attention to reality and allows an escape from it. Pratchett's skill lies in the mixture of humour, parody and a fantastic vision of the world.

In *Equal Rites*, as far satire is concerned, some debatable subjects like gender equality, racism, class discrimination, slavery, unemployment, taxation, despotism, poverty, environmental degradation, urbanization and water pollution are chosen on which differences of opinion are sharp and clear. The subject matter is put into a framework that is hypothetical. An account is told in the hypothetical that illumines the actual. By using satire, Pratchett pokes fun at society's quirks.

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