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FACULTY OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
A319A/B **TMA** COVER FORM (2009/2010)

TMA No: ... 2

Part (I): STUDENT INFORMATION (to be completed by student)

1. Name:

3. Section No:

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I confirm that the work presented here is my own and is not copied from any source.

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Part (II): TUTOR'S REMARKS (to be completed by tutor)

Tutor name:

Date TMA received:

Signature:

Date returned:

TUTOR'S REMARKS:

Excellent TMA. It reflects an excellent understanding of the story and the critical material you related it to. A bit too extensive on the historical background, but still of benefit to the reader. The reference to Tocqueville is insightful. The same re Orwell and Forster. The reference to "the Malverns" is ~~very~~ excellent and fits well with the topic.

| Mark Allocated to TMA | STUDENT MARK | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|---|
| | 15% | for content : a max of 15 marks | marks deducted for lang. & communication errors: a maximum of 4.5 marks |

OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION

Thesis: This essay intends to discuss the ideology of Englishness as reflected in two texts of two different genres; namely, a short story, "A Sahibs' War", by Rudyard Kipling and a poem, "Perhaps", by W. H. Auden.

II. BODY

- A.
 - 1. Definition of ideology
 - 2. The Meaning of "Englishness"
 - a) Idiosyncrasies of the English people
 - b) The cultural/national identity
 - c) Englishness as an ideology

- B. "A Sahibs' War"
 - 1. Historical background
 - 2. The characters
 - 3. The story

- a) Racial tone
- b) Englishness
- c) What the text doesn't say?

C. "The Malverns"

- 1. The natural setting
- 2. Flash- back
- 3. The state of England
 - a) Debating responsibilities
 - b) Criticizing Modernism
 - c) Satirizing Englishness
 - d) Call for Action

Excellent outline

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Kipling endorsed Englishness
- B. Auden satirized Englishness
- C. They are both modernist and committed at the same time

This essay intends to discuss the ideology of Englishness as reflected in two texts of two different genres; namely, a short story, "A Sahibs' War", by Rudyard Kipling and a poem, "The Malverns", by W. H. Auden.

*Your argument could be stated in the
Intro. paragraph.*

A good place to start in the aforementioned endeavor is to begin by defining the term ideology and how Englishness came to be considered an ideology.

Ideology can be defined as any set of beliefs that are adopted by certain people, which differentiate them from those holding dissimilar set of beliefs. ✓

Based on this definition, the people who believe in Marxism are at an opposite end to those who believe in the virtues of Capitalism. → ?

Hence, ideologies tend to give their holders distinctive identities (e.g.: I'm a liberal, I'm a conservative, I'm an atheist, etc...) and, at the same time, have a tendency to bond together people with similar points of view; this can be pointedly summed up by the idiom, "Birds of a feather flock together".

Good on ideology

In a similar line of reasoning, the ideology of Englishness came to being!

*But there is more to it than just
flocking together*

The concept of Englishness, which became popular during the twenties and thirties of the last century, mainly denotes the idiosyncrasies of the English people (i.e. what came to be referred to as stiff upper lip or stuffed shirt

character), or their cultural/national identity; the proliferation of English, as a global language, has certainly contributed to the latter.

You need to comment more here.

Given the fact that Englishness can be classified as an ideology, makes it fall under the suspicion of being a construct of the ruling class in its quest to

subject.

further its interests and manipulate its subjects (dominant ideology). Another political dimension to Englishness is evident in the fact that the majority of texts of English literature, which are being taught in schools and universities, were written by white, middle-class men; this version of Englishness is also sometimes referred to as the 'dominant ideology'.

source?

The aforementioned background is a good prelude for the introduction of "A Sahibs' War", by Rudyard Kipling; the first of the two texts that need to be discussed in this essay.

Kipling was an English writer who descended from a middle class family.

He was born in Mumbai, India in 1865; however, he studied in Britain

before going back to India to work as a journalist. Kipling knew fame,

before reaching his mid-twenties, by writing short stories. However, his

name was mainly associated with British imperialism and his short story, "A

Sahib's War" is a case in point.

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The events of the story take place in South Africa and the word "War" in the title refers to the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). In the 17th century, the Boers (means farmers in Dutch) were the early settlers of Cape Town, before leaving it to go north, after the British settlers (Uitlanders) started to move in. The Boers finally settled in the Transvaal region of South Africa. The majority of the Boers were Dutch, however, there were many of them who came from Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Poland, and even from England itself; The common denominator between them was that they were all white Protestants and, at the same time, very racist. (*wisegeek.com*, Who Are the Boers?)



The discovery of gold in the Transvaal region made it a magnet for all of those who wanted to go from rags to riches fast. Moreover, it made the Uitlanders very envious of the Boers, who were determined to keep all the wealth for themselves. Britain, who always wanted to annex South Africa to its empire, was also at its heights in trade and industry, backed the Uitlanders, because the international monetary system was based on gold and Britain needed a steady supply of it in order to remain on top.

(*sahistory.org*, 2nd Anglo-Boer War)



This information could have been summed up in one paragraph

At that time, the Transvaal region was ruled by President Paul Kruger and the Cape colony by Premier Cecil Rhodes. Kruger started to buy arms and even approached Germany for protection. Rhodes, on the other hand, formed a small private army and even launched a failed raid against the Transvaal region. A cable of congratulation sent by the Kaiser of Germany to Kruger, on his defeat of the Uitlanders, enraged Britain. Moreover, Kipling wrote a poem called 'Hymn before Action', which further inflamed the situation. However, the straw that broke the camel's back came when a Uitlander was shot to death by a Boer policeman, who claimed it was in self defense, and later was found innocent by a jury of his peers. (*Literature and Ideology*, p. 24, 25)

↳ you need a transition, best.

Eagleton once remarked that "works of literature are just expressions of the ideologies of their time" (Reader, p. 189). In going back to the title, the word 'Sahibs' is plural for 'sahib', which means 'friend' in Arabic; it was used by Indians to refer to their white occupiers! Therefore, "A Sahibs' War" literally means "War between the white people". According to D. Reitz, there was "an unwritten law that this was a white man's quarrel, and that the native tribes were to be left alone" (*Literature and Ideology*, p.25).

However, the protagonist in this short story is not even a white character;

good ✓

instead it's an Indian Sikh, Umr Singh, who also functions as Kipling's omniscient voice. Singh has accompanied Captain Corbyn, a British officer stationed in India, who has volunteered to fight the Boers in South Africa.

✓ Corbyn ended up being killed by a Boer sniper's bullet, and Umr Singh lived to tell the story.

Excellent quote

Alexis de Tocqueville once remarked that "the English wish to have inferiors... The Englishman lowers his [eyes] beneath him with satisfaction (Reader, p. 237). Englishness is prevalent in this short story, for although it takes place in Africa, which is called the Dark Continent, however, the only mention of Africans is as 'black Kaffirs', "Do not herd me with these black Kaffirs. I am a Sikh" (*The Prose Anthology*, p. 1). Other places they are referred to as 'Hubshis (niggers)', "whose touch and shadow are pollution. They were enormous eaters; sleeping on their bellies; laughing without cause, wholly like animals" (*The Prose Anthology*, p. 3, 5). This fact, that black Africans take no active role in "A Sahibs' War", is precisely what Pierre Macherey meant by "What is important in the work is what it does not say" (Reader, p. 194), i.e. what is missing tells a great deal about the author, his generation and Englishness for that matter. The English novelist E.M. Forster once wrote "the Englishman... must bottle up his emotions, or let

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them out only on a very special occasion" (Reader, p. 222), perhaps Kipling felt that writing this short novel was such an occasion; he is hiding behind Umr Singh to tell us that the English people are godsend to us, because as Carrington puts it, "Civilizing the world was a worthwhile task" (*Literature and Ideology*, p.27). Kipling gives us the impression that they were born in heaven and the rest of us on Earth, "Yes, I will sit in by the truck till Heaven-born has explained the matter"! (*The Prose Anthology*, p. 1). That probably what George Orwell meant by "the English people [']s...graded snobberies" (Reader, p. 227). Good ✓

✓ Kipling's ideology is stated in a hidden way, and he makes it look like the only racist people in this world are those of color, not the white people, which are a cut above the rest, "Be quiet. Keep pace! For his place was behind me, and I rode behind Kurban Sahib" (*The Prose Anthology*, p. 9). He also abhors non-Whites' violent temperament, "Wounded men lie there. We shall yet get vengeance", "his whole head fell beside the door, and none followed him. It was a very pretty stroke - for a Pathan" (*The Prose Anthology*, p. 10, 11); while the English are the ones who started cycles and cycles of violence around the world by going and colonizing other people's ?

countries! This is what George Orwell referred to as "their world-famed hypocrisy" (Reader, p.225).

✓ Good reference here. But Orwell was being constructive when he said that.

Kipling has used his short stories in order to join the circle of politics,

therefore, his works can be termed as 'committed' or 'engaged';

nonetheless, "A Sahibs' War" can also be classified as Modernist due to its

distinctive techniques (*Literature and Ideology*, p.28).

Examples of these techniques? ✓

The Second of the two texts that need to be discussed in this essay is a poem

that was written by W. H. Auden in 1933 and called "The Malverns". The

name 'Malvern' is derived from the Celtic term for 'bare hill'

(visitworcestershire.org, The Malverns). ✓

Auden starts the first stanza by delineating the natural surroundings of the

Malverns and, in the process, endorsing Englishness, through expressing his

deep attachment to the English countryside:

Here on the cropped grass of the narrow ridge I stand,

A fathom of earth, alive in air,

Aloof as an admiral on the old rocks

England below me (The Poetry and Drama Anthology, p. 69)

In the second stanza, however, he experiences a flash-back (analepse) of a happier time when he was, at the same place, accompanied by a lover

When last I stood here I was not alone; happy ... (The Poetry and Drama Anthology, p. 69). From there, Auden goes into self-examination, with the industrial depression as its backdrop, reflecting on England's condition

These years has seen a boom in sorrow (The Poetry and Drama Anthology, p. 70), *Of empires stiff in their brocaded glory,*

The luscious lateral blossoming of woe

Scented profuse;

And of intercalary ages of disorder (The Poetry and Drama Anthology, p.

71) and debating his responsibilities toward it. In doing so, he criticized S

Modernism and satirized Englishness

'Know then, cousin, the major cause of our collapse

Was a distortion in the human plastic by luxury produced,

Never higher than in our time were the vital advantages;

To matter entire, to the unbounded vigours of the instrument,

To all logical precision we were the rejoicing heirs.

But pompous, we assumed their power to be our own,

Believed machines to be our heart's spontaneous fruit

(The Poetry and Drama Anthology, p. 72)

That is a bit awkward to split the sentence this way.

Need to explain further

Finally, the 'love' that Auden has experienced in his other poems, of the collection 'Look, Stranger!' takes a preaching tone

"These moods give no permission to be idle,

For men are changed by what they do;

And through loss and anger of the unlucky

Love one another (The poetry and Drama Anthology, p. 73)

This last stanza gives "The Malverns", as a poem, a non-modernist appearance, due to its political dimension and its committed tone (as opposed to the style of Sartre or Adorno), however, upon closer examination of the techniques used, in the poem as a whole, it will definitely be granted a membership card to the Modernist club!

good
point

In conclusion, Kipling endorsed Englishness, but with some reservations. Auden, on the other hand, satirized it; however, Auden's attachment to the country side is what prevents him from being totally anti-Englishness. Auden is a more complex character than Kipling, because he joins too many contradictions in his poems; Modernism and anti-modernism, Englishness and anti-Englishness! Probably that explains how a pro-Marxist turned religious in his later years!

✓
good

References

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