Evil Satire and Enlightenment in Voltaire's Candide

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Introduction

Nature's characteristics have been highlighted by the question above. Literature supports claims about nature, either good or evil. There are many papers highlighting the evilness of nature towards humans. Human misfortune is one of the other philosophical views discussed in the literature.

This research work explains Nature's duplicity. Quoting Burton Raffel's translated work of Voltaire's *Candide*, the researcher Dr. Johnson Wright proves that the world of Nature is surprisingly dual-faced. It shows that there are two sides to the phenomenon of nature; it can affect a man's life positively as well as negatively.

Source 2: Cameron, Janet. Proofs of the Existence of God." SpringerReference (2015). Accessed: https://decodedpast.com/gottfried-leibnizs-proofs-gods-existence/15574>

This journal article elaborates on the cosmological impact of 'nature' upon Candide's life, particularly during his sea voyage. It explains how he and his companions had to face nature's wrath and chaos during their journey and how they barely survived and eventually reached the continent of Africa.

The two articles quoted above present somewhat differing views on the 'Role of Nature' in Voltaire's fictional work, *Candide*. The first research article depicts a mixed impression of the forces of nature faced by human beings. On the one hand, the researcher elaborates that the lead character of the novel, Candide, finds himself struggling against his pitiable condition and the unfortunate circumstances in which he is brought up. However, the writer believes that the fate of women is far more wretched than the fate of men. In this context, he quotes the misfortune of the character called Miss Conegonde. On one hand, he appreciates women as a 'gem' who can beautify and enliven the world of man. In other words, a woman is nature's gift in the life of a man.

Historical Background

On the other hand, the researcher criticizes the ruthless role that nature played in the tragic life of Miss Conegonde. Therefore, the first article is an amalgam of nature's 'good side' and 'evil side.' *Candide* is arguably Voltaire's finest work, highlighting a struggle between the

Good and Evil sides of nature. The second article, however, portrays Nature as a completely vile entity bent on making human life as miserable as possible. In this article, the researcher uses highly derogatory words for Nature (including human nature). Nature, here, is seen as a thoroughly destructive force that destroys the lives of passengers who are voyaging via a ship. Not only that, *Candide* exposes the flawed concept of Nature prevalent in the world. Some see Nature as a benefactor, while most people see its foul face.

Question 2 Voltaire is a keen observer of human experience, with a sharp eye for the "follies of human history." Which aspects of European history and institutions does he find particularly good targets for his weapons of irony, satire, and indignation? What is it about his critique that qualifies it as "enlightened"?

Discussion of Key Issues

Quinones, Ricardo J. "The Survivors: Praise of Folly and Candide." Erasmus and Voltaire: Why They Still Matter, University of Toronto Press, (2010), pp. 123–142. Accessed: <Www.jstor.org/stable/10.3138/9781442685758.10.>

The aforementioned research-journal article is about the use of irony, sarcasm and satire by Voltaire in his fictional novel *Candide*. It shows that the writer has utilized these literary devices in order to criticize mankind's selfishness and lust for wealth and luxury. The writer of this research paper, Mr. Quinones, intends to make his readers ponder over the hypocrisy of the protagonist of the novel.

This paper further intensifies Voltaire's use of sheer satire with the purpose of criticizing human behavior and how it changes from humility to a sense of superiority with the passage of time, as proven by Candide's shallowness.

As explained in the two research papers mentioned above, Voltaire also uses an extremely satirical tone in *Candide. The writer does so with the purpose of expressing his contempt towards the hypocrisy of people, not only the upper class but also the church.* He shows that the clergy frightens the poor and the working class with the purpose of compelling them to serve the church with their religious offerings. He also sheds light on the threat of sectarianism revolving around him, which could prove devastating.

He also explains that most of the priests of his time merely pretended to be listening to the pleas and confessions of the general public without having any real affiliation with them. One Franciscan friar is such a clever exploiter that he takes advantage of Miss Conegonde's naivety and robs her of her valuables. Since the clergy is the main target of Voltaire's satire, invariably every single churchman he has characterized in the work is corrupt in some way or another. The same is the case with the behavior of Friar Gillyflower. However, he is ridiculed to an even greater extent by the novelist. Gillyflower is initially depicted by Voltaire as a man of highly noble stature. But soon, we discover that this man turns out to be arguably the biggest hypocrite of them all. Gillyflower claims to be sick to his stomach because of his church life. He hopes that all the citizens of his town, Theatines, sink into the sea.

There are also some accounts of slavery related to racism in Candide. Voltaire exclaims that the teachings of Christianity include a strong emphasis on equality among men of all kinds. However, there is a visible differentiation in the general public's attitude towards the Negroes of society. Most of the Black people depicted in the novella are slaves serving white people. They are maltreated and guiltlessly humiliated by their masters.

Works Cited

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LastName, First, Middle. "Article Title." *Journal Title* (Year): Pages From – To. Print.