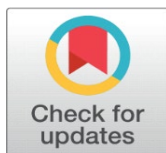
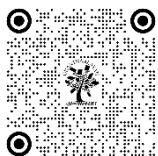


POST-IMPRESSIONISM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF FRAGMENTED IDENTITY AND SUBJECTIVE RESISTANCE IN VERONICA ROTH'S DIVERGENT

Dr. G. Iswarya Gopan ¹✉

¹ Assistant Professor in English, Muslim Arts College, Thiruvithancode, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Abishekapatti, Thirunelveli- 627012, Tamilnadu, India



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Corresponding Author
Dr. G. Iswarya Gopan,
Iswarya.Gopan@outlook.com

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the inner conflicts and psychological struggles of the central character in Veronica Roth's dystopian series *Divergent*. The debut novel, *Divergent* gained global recognition. Tris is a brave, selfless, strong willed sixteen year old protagonist. *Divergent* is becoming a massive young adult dystopian hit. Most of Roth's works focus on dystopian, science fiction and young adult themes. Contemporary writers share similar themes of dystopian culture and science fiction fantasy elements. Science fiction writers often attempt to expand the new scientific and technical development in order to prognosticate the changes that happened in the technical world, which shock the readers' sense of cultural propriety and expand their consciousness. The author elaborates the identity fragmentation of the character through the faction system followed by the people of Chicago, post-apocalyptic walled city. The narrative mainly focuses on the identity exploration and the attempt to escape from the wrath of powerful authority. It highlights the apocalyptic society and the inner suffering of people living in a desperate and voiceless situation under an authoritative government.

Keywords: *Divergent*, Young Adult Dystopian, Prognosticate, Apocalyptic

1. INTRODUCTION

Veronica Roth is an American writer who has played a key role in shaping the young adult dystopian genre. It is a genre that mainly emphasizes the readers aged twelve to eighteen years, focusing on adolescence, their age, identity and their experiences. These types of novels often portray teenage protagonists who navigate and fight against the corrupt systems of society. Most popularly this YA (Young Adult) genres focus on themes of fantasy, romance and also explore the societal issues.

So many contemporaries utilize these YA (Young Adult) fiction theme. The very common theme is shared by Suzanne Collins in her novel *The Hunger Games*. It also deals with a teenage protagonist who fights against the Capitol, for the

sake of saving her own district. We find a similar type of protagonist can be found here. Young adult fiction explores the identity, self-discovery, romance, family dynamics and the transition to adulthood. It is known for its fast - paced narratives and it is engaging with the storytelling while also explores important social and political concerns such as class disparity, racial identity and queer rights.

These themes often resonate strongly with the young readers because they reflect issues that shape their social world. The genre captures the emotional intensity, confusion and growth that are central to the teenage experience. The American novelist and short story writer Veronica Roth wrote *Divergent* as her debut novel, followed by the sequels *Insurgent* and *Allegiant*. *Divergent* is set in post-apocalyptic Chicago, where society is divided into five factions, each dedicated to particular virtue: Candor (the honest), Abnegation (the selfless) Dauntless (the brave), Amity (the peaceful), and Erudite (the Intelligent).

Post Impressionism in literature, emerging in the late nineteenth century, reflects the artistic principles of Post - Impressionist painting by emphasizing subjective perception, symbolic expression and innovative narrative structures rather than strict realism. Writers associated with this approach often experimented with the fragmented storytelling and techniques such as 'stream of consciousness' to portray the complexity of human thoughts and emotions. This literary tendency later contributed significantly to the development of modernist writing and influenced authors connected with the Bloomsbury Group. Much like Post-Impressionist painters such as Vincent Van Gogh and Paul Gauguin, who favored expression over realistic representation, literary Post - Impressionism prioritizes the depiction of inner psychological experience over external reality.

Post Impressionism focuses on the subjective perception, inner emotions and psychological experiences. It exposes the fragmented or symbolic representation of reality. The study explores the individual perspective, the protagonist of the novel *Divergent* is Beatrice Prior (Tris) the heroine, is Abnegation born but later discovers that she is a Divergent. In the dystopian Chicago was ruled by the Erudite, headed by Jeanine Matthews. All the faction members of the post-apocalyptic society are forced to be very similar and conform to the rules and expectations that the government set forth. The aptitude test, only decide a person's faction. They have not arisen questions against them. "Today is the day of the aptitude test that will show me which of the five factions I belong in"(Roth 2).

Before injected the serum, the volunteer presses an electrode to her forehead, then let her allow to drink the serum. After consuming the serum, she drifted into a half sleeping state, acting only through her sub-conscious mind. It is purely subjective and her inner emotions were calculated through the help of electrode which pressed on her forehead. In her subconscious dream she saw long tables, glass walls, chunk of cheese, and a knife, etc. Once she hears a door squeak and turns to see who locked it. Instead of seeing a person, she saw a dog. The animal, with a sharp nose, stands several yards away. It lowers its body and slowly moves toward her, its lips pulling back to reveal sharp white teeth. A deep growl from its throat. At that moment she realizes why the cheese and knife would have been useful in such a situation.

It is a kind of psychological perspective of the individual. From the result basis a person is able to choose her faction. In Post Impressionism, most of the writings were based on the painting, but here we use the inner emotions and psychological experience instead of painting. Post Impressionism usually deals with the tradition of portraying the use of subjects from real life. Vincent Van Gogh often used vivid colours and vivid brushstrokes to convey the feelings of his state of mind. Like the usage of vivid colours and vivid brushstrokes, the protagonist identity is complex, fragmented and internally driven which aligns with the Post-Impressionism. It focuses on personal perception rather than fixed reality.

For example Virginia Woolf is known for her remarkable writings especially in the genre of 'stream of consciousness'. In her novel *The Waves* she sketches her characters with their real mind hidden behind their bodies and appearances is expressed with the flow of consciousness. It's not a matter to depict the character only through the form of painting, it also demonstrates through the form of writing, it manifests human beings inner consciousness. It is considered to be the main purpose of art. In *Divergent* also the story is narrated by the protagonist Tris. Because the narration is closely connected to her inner flow of thoughts, through that the readers will be able to understand the psychological stand of the character. It's more over a kind of partial stream of consciousness, it leads to mental conflict within her. So this technique closely intertwined with Post-Impressionism.

Post-Impressionism often exemplify fragmentation and complexity of human identity. In *Divergent* Tris embodies a multi-layered identity, she cannot restricted herself to a single identity. During the simulations she shows various emotional shifts. In Post-Impressionism emphasizes an emotional expression and personal interpretation instead of focusing on realistic representation. At first as an Abnegation girl, she is so kind and very affectionate to her family, she

is taught to think about the needy and the pathetic condition of the poor. On the other side she also has the Erudite qualities.

Even in her aptitude test, she is able to think and take decision like the Erudites. In crucial situations, she controls her fear, analyze the situation tactfully and find a solution critically. At the same time, she has the qualities of the Dauntless too. For example in the final Erudite serum test all the people are affected by the test, but as a Divergent she think independently and overcome the situation individually. But at that place all other Dauntless soldiers mind controlled by the serum. "The Dauntless soldiers carry out unspoken orders without hesitation and without question" (Roth 423).

They just revive the comments from the computers through the transmitters they injected on them. But as a Divergent, Tris easily overcame the situation, no serum would be control her mind. Post Impressionism often employed as small, carefully arranged dots of colour to create a balancing and organizing paintings, this produce "art of mind concerned with the emotional appreciation of form qualities" (Denvir 25). The whole novel is constructed by the interior monologue of the protagonist Tris. At the end of the novel, Veronica Roth gives emphasis to the fear landscape test. In this test widely elaborate the characters psychological and inner fear rather than physical reality.

This simulation generates images like darkness, restraint and being attack by a group of ravens, all occur in her subconscious mind. This merely shows the psychological inner conflict of the character.

I am in darkness. The last thing I remember is the metal chair and the needle in my arm. This time there is no field, there is no crows. My heart pounds in anticipation. What monsters will creep from the darkness and steal my rationality? How long will I have to wait for them? (Roth 251-252)

Tattoos play a vital role in express the inner identity of the characters in the Divergent. Tris paints three birds as her tattoo, which represent her family members, which shows her inner affection and emotional connection towards her family. Mainly Post -Impressionism focuses on the in-depth feeling rather than the outside reality. Mostly, it represents the feeling through the images, here tattoos convey the deeper meaning. Like Tobias Eton also bear multiple tattoos which depict his inner struggle and emotional suffering about his family history.

Post Impressionism is presents the characters inner struggle and emotional pain through the novel Divergent. Instead of focusing the external reality or the outside events in a dystopian setting this narrative highlights the mental struggle and the inner conflict through the tests like simulation, fear landscape, and the continuous thirst towards finding her identity and so on. As an Abnegation born, she always raises a question in her mind about her decision to choose Dauntless as her faction. The novel explores the importance of subjective identity, symbolic representation, and emotional stability. It explores the fragmented identity of the protagonist Tris.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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