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The Portrayal of Cross- Disciplinary Synthesis between Naval Fiction and Naval history in C. S. Forester's novel *Commodore*

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Abstract

Cross-disciplinary is an approach developed to extend the scope of studies in two or more facets of knowledge. The writers have combined to develop the interest among the readers of multidiscipline. Among this periphery Nautical Historical Fiction has written by the C.S. Forester inclined the synthesis of naval fiction and naval history through the representation of the character Commodore Hornblower in the classical age of the navy i.e the Napoleon age.

Keywords: Cross-discipline, naval fiction, naval history

Introduction

Generally, the term Cross disciplinary refers to any activity that consists of two more academic disciplines. It includes much social inclusive approach. It extends the scope of knowledge by developing learning through other branches. Cross- disciplinary synthesis is useful for knowledge generation. Hence, it has become a prime source for the writers in the periphery of work of art. Therefore, we as reader experience this crucial mingling through several work of arts written in different genre. For example, Science fiction, Historical Fiction etc. C.S. Forester, who is known for writing naval warfare, depicts and refers a Royal Navy during the Napoleonic Wars through his twelve books novel series Horatio Hornblower. The present select novel for the study is one of the significant novels in the series that has cherished the cross disciplinary synthesis between fiction and history.

Historical necessity seems to be appeared in naval fiction to produce the culture or to see the relations between individual and world. It is helpful for counting the psychology of the characters and useful for faithful representation of concealed past actuality. It promotes the approach like Neo Historicism, where equal weighting of text and context is pivotal for the interpretation of work of art. It is boosting the combine interest in textuality of history and historicity of text. Hence, literary text is mere foregrounding the history by representation of fictional character. Thus, C.S. Forester's *Commodore (1945)* is a fictional representation of history and a source of developing combine interest for naval fiction and naval history. *Commodore's* principle setting is the high seas and coastal areas of the Baltic during a time of general war. It was the time when Napoleon Bonaparte's military adventures threaten the British Empire and only a strong naval response keeps the French aggression at bay and ensures the survival of the empire. As a commodore of the Royal Navy, Hornblower's sworn and obvious duty is to foil the interests of the French and promote the security of England. He carries out his duty by utilizing his flotilla of English ships in a variety of standard and atypical methods. The novel relates a sea voyage in the year 1812; although the voyage is fictional, it contains many historical elements and the various conflicts and combat described are derived from several historical accounts. The ships mentioned represent fictionalized ships of historically appropriate type, though the crews are entirely fictional. Many of the Russian, French, Polish, and Prussian individuals introduced in the novel are fictionalized versions of historical people. All aspects of the novel are related to sea or coastal adventure; most of the action takes place at sea or at least within cannon-shot of the sea, and even the

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action takes place at sea or at least within cannon-shot of the sea, and even the action which takes place on land generally relates to the sea.

The strength and popular appeal of the novel is undoubtedly due to the nature of nautical adventure and the conversational way in which it is presented. Although full of accurate descriptions of lengthy nautical and amphibious maneuvers and frequent technical descriptions of nautical equipment and tactics, the text is presented in an accessible and friendly manner, which allows the reader to descend to deck-level, as it were, and enjoy the excitement of days long gone.

Captain Sir Horatio Hornblower has retired to his country estate where he is the local squire, welcomed by his tenants and beloved by his wife and son. He is called back into service as a commodore to lead a fleet of English ships to the Baltic Sea, where he is instructed to damage French interests and, if possible, draw both Sweden and Russia into the greater Napoleonic wars on the side of England. Hornblower prosecutes his duty with zeal and, against all odds, accomplishes his orders with aplomb. The novel frequently refers to these events as having happened during a prior time; thus, even for new readers, Hornblower is established as a capable and resourceful officer. He is often plagued by self-doubt and almost always tortures himself with deep introspection and second-guessing his own decisions. Yet in action, he flawlessly makes the right choices at the right time and takes decisive action when such is warranted.

Hornblower is called up from the life of a country gentleman of means and given the office of commodore, leading a flotilla of English warships to the Baltic Sea. The Napoleonic wars have engulfed Europe and only England stands against the French tyrant. Sweden and Russia maintain a delicate neutrality in the face of increasing French aggression, and Hornblower is ordered to bring them into the war on the side of England. He proceeds to the Baltic with dispatch and encounters a French privateer, which shelters near a Swedish fortress. When Hornblower determines the Swedes will not eject the ship, in conformance with international law but over Napoleon's interests, he contrives to destroy it from a great distance. An outraged Napoleon orders an army into Swedish Pomerania as a reprisal; thereafter, Sweden enters the war against Napoleon.

Hornblower then proceeds to Russia, where he meets the Czar and engages him in political discussion. The Czar is convinced of England's naval power after touring Hornblower's flotilla, and sends an insulting response to Napoleon's incessant demands for concessions. Within days, Russia and France are also at war. Hornblower is then instructed to support Russia in any way possible. He takes his ships to Riga, where the Russians prepare a major defensive position. A huge French force closes on the city and a prolonged siege occurs where it seems that, eventually, the French must emerge victoriously. Hornblower consults with the local military leaders, including the Prussian defector Clausewitz, and together they lead a successful defense of Riga. Hornblower aids materially by several audacious plans that are executed with perfection. After months of siege, the French fail to take the city. Defections from the French occur constantly, and then plague and typhus sweep through the malnourished French army. The Russians counterattack and

drive the French into full retreat. Hornblower meets with the rear-guard, composed of Prussian troops, and convinces them that their best interest lies with defecting from the French cause and taking up Prussian independence. Shortly after this series of resounding successes, Hornblower becomes ill with typhus and collapses into fever. After weeks of illness, he regains himself and recuperates enough to travel home to England. There, he makes his report to the Admiralty and then quickly travels home where he meets his wife and child in a joyful reunion.

Thus at the conclusion I would say that the synthesis between naval fiction and naval history is useful to develop the knowledge of history and naval culture. *Commodore* a fictional story of Commodore Hornblower presents the fictional account in naval history Royal Navy during the time -the world was threatened by Napoleon. Equality between text and context is useful for the interpretation of work of art. The historical realism by recording of the minutiae of the world characters have created the sense of authenticity.

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