ABSTRACT

Power of horror: Occult and Rational in Select Novels of Bram Stoker and Indira Soundarrajan

“The heart of man is the place the Devil dwells in; I feel sometime a hell within myself”

Sir Thomas Brown.

From time immemorial the conflict between the occult and rational has attracted a number of writers to explore it. Rationalism, is the philosophical view that regards reason as the chief source and the test of knowledge whereas occult refers to the Knowledge of the hidden. The present research juxtaposes the two concepts to justify which is the most dominant one in the works of two notable writers who have touched upon these aspects in their novels.

CHAPTER -I INTRODUCTION

Chapter one introduces ‘horror’ and traces the development in English and Tamil literature. It also introduces the life and literary achievements of both the chosen authors, Bram Stoker and Indira Soundararajan. Besides providing a brief summary of the chosen works and a brief survey of literature, it tries to justify the title and adds a short synopsis of the forthcoming chapter.

CHAPTER - II OCCULT

Chapter two examines how occult is used by various writers from distant past to the present day. It also focuses upon how the theory of occult developed by Bram Stoker and Indira Soundararajan which includes superstitious, belief in the supernatural power, ghost, demigods and demigoddesses.
CHAPTER - III RATIONAL

Though both writers have dealt with the occult it does not mean they are irrational and unaware of science and its development. Time and again there are frequent references to rational ideas and principles through various characters in the chosen novels.

CHAPTER - IV OCCULT Vs RATIONAL

It is interesting to note that in the conflict between occult and rational, it is the occult that governs supreme. Some of the rational characters towards the end become defeatists and advocate occult as the only remedy.

CHAPTER - V SUMMING UP

Sums up the argument in the previous chapters, it also offers the scope for further research in the same area.