

## Angela Carter's *Heroes and Villains*: A Dystopian Romance

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### ABSTRACT

*The present paper modestly attempts to study Angela Carter's Heroes and Villains (1969) as a dystopian romance in apocalyptic mode. It is an attempt to present how Angela Carter critically examines Rousseau's Utopia of Noble Savage in Heroes and Villains. Carter juxtaposed Rousseau's concept of 'Noble Savage' with the Barbarian Jewel, who does not represent natural 'goodness of man' and 'perfectibility' which are the merits attributed by Rousseau to his noble savage. Carter debunks the romantic idea of a 'Noble Savage' as well as an idyllic picture of the countryside, outside the walls of civilization. Carter scrutinizes Rousseau's utopian idea of Noble Savage and also shows how the western Enlightenment concept of Binarism to establish identity of the privileged group is misleading as well as responsible for mistrust and harmful conflict between communities. Angela Carter combines dystopia with subversion of the genre of romance in Heroes and Villains. It encodes 'female values' of love and relatedness as well as 'male aggressiveness' and competition. The paper concludes that Angela Carter examines Rousseau's utopian notion of Noble Savage as well as his notion of the ideal womanhood in Heroes and Villains. She has created a kind of laboratory world in which there are only three communities, the Professors, the Barbarians and the Savages. It is in this post-apocalyptic futurist world that she examines the utopian ideas of Rousseau. She subverts the romantic notion of love, courtship and manners that categorize popular romances.*

*Keywords: dystopia; Noble Savage; apocalyptic world; enlightenment; romance*

### INTRODUCTION

A dystopian society is supposed to be an imaginary oppressive society. Even a utopian society may turn out to be a dystopian one when the elites of such a society try to impose their authority over others. The utopian fiction presents a society without crime, poverty, ambition and such other elements. It is a static society in which there are no challenges and no conflicts. On the other hand, a dystopia presents an imaginary world in which there are fictional communities in conflict with each other and yet need each other for their own survival. The trope of dystopia, therefore, can be a very useful framework for an allegorical representation of such communities and their way of life or their ideology.

Angela Carter, in her science fiction, had 'feminist preoccupations' as a part of her social concern, 'her commitment to the world of reality..., her preoccupations with social justice, abortion law, access to further education' (Zirange 2002, p. 41), and others. She made use of the sub-genres like fairy tales, gothic novels, monster stories and romances, to react against Puritanism and Naturalism. She was concerned with examining Rousseau's social utopia of the primitive state of man before the fall from the Eden, and also the heterosexual utopia of patriarchal social contract. She was not just a science fiction writer. She was making use of science fiction mode for her own ideological purpose and also for the purpose of breaking the illusion of reality. This paper attempts to present how Angela Carter critically examines Rousseau's Utopia of Noble Savage in her dystopian romance, *Heroes and Villains*.

### HEROES AND VILLAINS: A DYSTOPIAN ROMANCE

*Heroes and Villains* is apparently a science fiction in the sense that it projects a futuristic world after the holocaust of the Third World War fought out with the nuclear weapons. It is a futuristic world, and it is neither a utopia nor an ideal world. It is a dystopia presenting a society divided into three groups at war with each other. There is a community of Professors, who claim to represent the civilization before the holocaust. Theirs is an ordered community or a group of communities living in the walled cities protected by heavily armed soldiers. The title 'Professors' suggests an elite society of the enlightened people, opposed to the community of the Barbarians, who live in the wilderness and often raid the fortified civilized society to loot food and clothing and even weapons. The Barbarians are the 'others' negatively characterized alterity by the 'Professors'. The third community is made up of the 'Out People', the mutants, who are the worst affected by nuclear radiation. They are deformed, grotesque and monstrous. The Professors and the Barbarians, both are threatened by the Out People who do not constitute a society as such and who are beyond socially established boundary between the humans and the animals. Marianne, the heroine, describes one such hairy mutant as a creature of 'indeterminate sex equipped with breasts and testicles', which inspires horror among the Professors as well as the Barbarians because these mutants pose a threat to the binary opposition on which the identity of their communities is based.

The protagonist of *Heroes and Villains*, Marianne, is the daughter of Professor living in the walled village of civilized community. As a child, she witnessed an attack on her village by the Barbarians. She also witnessed the killing of her brother by a young barbarian warrior. Marianne, even as a child was different from other girls. She resented very much the role of girls as Villains and boys as the Heroes in children's game 'Heroes and Villains'. At the age of sixteen, after the death of her father, she witnessed another attack by the Barbarians. She willingly helped a Barbarian youth who was hiding in a garage. This was followed by her running away with him. She was raped and then married by the young Barbarian, Jewel. Marianne is physically attracted to Jewel, but the uncleanness, filth and squalor in the Barbarian household repels her. Among the Barbarians, she meets Donally, originally a professor, but now a Shaman among them. He is also a tutor to Jewel. She helps Jewel to overthrow Donally. After the death of Jewel in the attack by the Mutants, she decides to become a Tiger Lady and rules the tribe. The world of *Heroes and Villains* is a futuristic world. It is a picture of devastation, a dystopia that subverts utopian ideas.

### SUBVERSION OF ROUSSEAUEAN UTOPIA: DISPELLING OF ROMANTIC ILLUSIONS

Angela Carter, in her interview with John Haffenden states that *Heroes and Villains* is 'a discussion of the theories of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and strangely enough it finds them wanting'. (Haffenden 1985, p. 79). Angela Carter juxtaposed Rousseau's concept of 'Noble Savage' with the Barbarian Jewel, who does not represent natural 'goodness of man' and 'perfectibility' which are the merits attributed by Rousseau to his noble savage. Marianne's father tells her '*Rousseau spoke of a noble savage but this is a time of ignoble Savages*' (Carter 1969, p.47) Rousseau, in his novel *Emile*, creates a patriarchal model of a woman, in the character of Sophie - who is an ideal woman for the hero, docile, obedient, accomplished in feminine chores and arts. Angela Carter presents ironic reversal of Rousseau's fantasy of femininity in her drawing of the character of Marianne. Unlike *Emile*, Marianne is a mentally tough character, who would like to dominate, rather than be dominated. Angela Carter

presents Marianne's temporary surrender to physical attraction but also shows her overcoming it quickly. Carter's protagonist has an independent 'thinking' mind, ambitions and also pragmatic view of life which leads to her gaining a possession of authority. Rousseau's man-woman relationship is a patriarchal, heterosexual utopia stated in his *The Social Contract*. He mentions passions as the driving force behind reasoning and attaining knowledge. There are our desires and fears behind the quest for knowledge and also fear is the first reaction in man's encounter with other men, according to him. However, Carter's protagonist is driven more by the desire to know the 'other', the Barbarians rather than by fear. The protagonist is bored by the strictly ordered society of the Professors, where women are suppressed and treated as objects.

Rousseau's utopia assigns natural subordination to women, and establishes patriarchal model of family. Angela Carter interrogates and satirizes this subordination. Though Professors and Barbarians are opposed to each other, they are essentially the same in terms of treatment of women, who are subjected to the male dominance in the family. Women's inferiority is shown to be a common principle of all utopian fantasies. Of course, it is quite discernible that this principle is not at all present in Carter's fiction.

In satirizing the utopian fantasy of the ideal society, Angela Carter brings out how the Professors and the Barbarians are ruled by their fear of each other. They do not only feel it, but cultivate it. The title of the novel *Heroes and Villains* underlines the social perception of how each society is difference from the other. Children in each society are conditioned to hate the other society. Marianne recalls how, as a child, her brother as well as other children, especially girls, were made to follow the patriarchal tradition of pinning down women to household work. Marianne questions everything. She is an independent person who questions this binary stereotyping of self and the others which brands Barbarians as bad and soldiers and Professors as good.

Jewel, in *Heroes and Villains*, is a parodic presentation of Rousseau's utopia. Jewel is obsessed by fear of being objectified by the community of Professors. Donally, his tutor wishes to turn Jewel into his own idea of a hero. In this respect, Donally, who gets Jewel's back tattooed with a picture of Eve tempting Adam under the tree of knowledge, is the satiric representation of Rousseau. Using such selective myth, Donally wants the Barbarian community to become another form of patriarchal society minus the eliticism of the Professors.

The two communities look at each other with suspicion and horror. When Marianne is taken to the Barbarian fold, the men and women are afraid to touch her. Even Jewel has a mortal fear of castration if he tried to have sexual intercourse with Marianne, because he, too, believes that the Professors' women have sharp device in their vaginas to castrate the Barbarian male.

### MIXING OF ROMANCE WITH DYSTOPIA

In *Heroes and Villains*, Angela Carter combines dystopia with subversion of the genre of romance. Conventional romance is based on the notion of patriarchy. It encodes 'female values' of love and relatedness as well as 'male aggressiveness' and competition. Romance implicitly represents female sexual desire. In romance, one finds elements such as 'courtship, manners, conflict and finally marriage', which are the elements of typical heterosexual romance. It is a gender specific form which is marked by 'adventure and quest', and which goes back to the narratives in the ancient times. This appears to be the influence of the Arthurian legend on the British literature. In *Heroes and Villains*, Carter uses and subverts

romance mixing it with Dystopia. In the writings of women, romance has been largely feminine-oriented, establishing the conservative values of love and marriage. We can even see this in the fiction of Jane Austen. Carter uses Dystopia to undermine these patriarchal values. In *Heroes and Villains*, the heroine, Marianne, is the one who is aggressive and takes initiative in the action. However, it is not love that prompts her but the boredom of the ordered and male-centric community of the Professors. Marianne and Jewel are suspicious of each other on account of ‘misrepresentation’ of their respective communities nurtured in them right from their childhood. This is evident when before raping Marianne, Jewel makes sure that she did not have sharp teeth in her private parts and it is also evident in Marianne’s disillusionment with the Barbarians:

... whatever romantic attraction the idea of the Barbarians might have held for her as she sat by herself in the white tower, when her father was alive, had entirely evaporated. (Carter 1969, p. 52)

In the Barbarian community what happens to Marianne is a bad dream for her. She perceives Jewel as a ‘Noble Savage’ in her first encounter with him. She goes with him to discover a New World like Donally, who too was bored with the dry intellectual and repetitive atmosphere of the community of the philosophers. And like Donally, she also was stranded in this world of the Barbarians. Angela Carter, thus, debunks the romantic idea of a ‘Noble Savage’ as well as an idyllic picture of the countryside outside the walls of civilization. However, in debunking the idyllic myth of the countryside and the people there, Carter goes to the length of giving repulsive details.

A woman came from the shadows at the back of the hall, raised her heavy skirts, squatted and urinated... The woman wobbled in the middle of the spreading puddle .... (Carter 1969, p. 47)

Children suffering from ringworm, skin diseases, weeping eye, and rickets are distasteful details for Marianne. Angela Carter purposefully does not spare a single detail to demystify and dispel the myth of romance.

### GOTHIC ELEMENTS IN *HEROES AND VILLAINS*

Angela Carter’s early fiction is mainly written with a realistic mode of presentation. And yet there are elements of gothic reflected in her handling of description of places and people, which led some critics to describe her as a writer of gothic fiction. ‘Gothic’ is normally associated with unearthly characters, damned heroes, eccentric passions, black cats and owls, stone castles and frightening antique structures and also variety of things. In her interview with Les Bedford Angela Carter asserts that her early fiction was not gothic because she knew very well what gothic novel was. However, in *Heroes and Villains*, she consciously chose a gothic mode. The two worlds of *Heroes and Villains* are apparently contrastive in the sense that the Professors’ community represents ordered, civilized and elite society, while the Barbarians represent chaos. The Barbarians live in the forest, in stone houses, ‘wholly abandoned to decay, baroque stonework of the late Jacobean period, gothic turrets murmurous with birds and pathetic elegance of Palladian pillared facades...’. (Carter 1969, p. 31). There is a chapel, a narrow vault of dark stone, its arched windows covered with animal hides. Donally, the renegade philosopher is also presented as a bizarre gothic figure:

‘donning purple and black blotches, dark red spots and scarlet streaks which covered all his face ... He was robed from head to foot in a garment woven from the plumage of birds ...’ (Carter 1969, p.71).

The Barbarian brothers who assembled in Donally’s hall themselves were grotesque figures with painted faces, and nightmarish looks. Other common people, dressed in rags and fur, wearing collars of glass, metal and bone certainly add to the gothic atmosphere of the chapel.

The ritual Donally performed for marrying Jewel and Marianne has also horrifying gothic touch since, Donally cuts their wrists and clasps their two wounds together. After this ritual, Donally’s act of leaping high into the air, screaming loudly once and flinging himself down among the rushes, frothing and babbling in a tremendous fit creates awe and fear in the minds of the assembled people. This ritual might have belonged to the tribal culture of the Red Indians.

### CAMP CULTURE AND THE BARBARIANS

It is quite noticeable that apart from the setting and the Barbarian attire, the gothic protagonist Jewel and his Guru, Donally speaks the language of elite community. They have the same social system of patriarchy that operates, perhaps more brutally than it operates in the community of the Professors. Angela Carter’s main intention behind this speculative fiction appears to be examining gender and sexuality which define the relationship of man and woman. Angela Carter parodies the element of romance in this presentation, by reducing romance to the desire of an adolescent girl for the life of the ‘other’ and her disillusionment. The Barbarian scene of life appears to Lorna Sage, a critic ‘not much different from the ‘camp’ life portrayed in *Shadow Dance*’. She opines:

‘the cataclysm suspended over the city streets has happened ... The student drop-outs, King’s road peacocks and junk-collectors of the earlier novels have inherited the earth’. (Sage 1977, p. 52).

Angela Carter presents a picture of the Barbarians like Honeybuzzard in *Shadow Dance* and Kay Kyte in *Love*, who live at the surface level of the ‘camp’ life and who play only roles, dressed spectacularly in stolen clothes and ornaments. Readers can easily recall flashy Honeybuzzard, who is the equal of Jewel in cruelty and Jewel is perhaps more condescending to Marianne, than Honeybuzzard was to Emily, his newfound love. Carter, thus brings out how looting, junk-collecting, casual attitude to sex, squalor and violence are the common elements which the Barbarian community shares with the Camp culture of the 1960s.

### BINARISM: THE NECESSITY OF THE OTHER

In this speculative fiction, Marianne is the protagonist because the story is told from her point of view. The two worlds, of the community of Professors and the Barbarians, are presented from her point of view. Angela Carter scrutinizes Rousseau’s utopian idea of Noble Savage and also shows how the western Enlightenment concept of Binarism to establish identity of the privileged group is misleading as well as responsible for mistrust and harmful conflict

between communities. Marianne confronts this Binarism when she comes face to face with the Barbarian community. As Lorna Sage observes, *Heroes and Villains* offers:

‘the exhilarating sensation of recognizing that the binary oppositions (inside/outside, culture/nature, masculine/ feminine) are themselves being called into question’. (Sage 1994, p. 18).

Angela Carter brings out how both the communities use certain myths and folk tales to maintain their identity and also their geographical, cultural and social boundaries. Marianne, as a child was told warning tales about the Barbarians. One such tale is about how the Barbarians slit the bellies of women after they rape them and sew cats up inside them. Another one is how the Barbarians wrap little girls, bake them and eat. In a similar manner, the Barbarians are made to believe that women in the community of Professors have sharp teeth in their vaginas in order to bite off the genitalia of the Barbarians.

As a result of these beliefs, the Barbarian women look at Marianne with fear and suspicion, thinking as if she was evil. The little child, Jen, considers Marianne to be a witch since she believes that the Professors have killed her father, baked him and eaten him with salt. Even, Jewel is convinced that the women in the Professors’ community do not bleed when one cuts them. It is quite evident that such myth-making is chronic and intentional in both the communities and it is responsible for breaking all communication between the two communities. This can be very well explained through Marianne’s father’s opinion about how Barbarians are uneducated savages. Nevertheless, Carter demystifies the Barbarians’ ways, as she makes Marianne, later in the novel, find that Jewel can speak the same sophisticated language like her, and he was also educated in his own way. Marianne’s finding out how the Barbarian community is also a cohesive society with a system of their own also serves Angela Carter’s purpose of demystifying the concerned myths about the Barbarians.

However, Carter, through the character of Marianne’s father brings out this binarism as a necessity. Marianne’s father explains:

... if they finally destroy us, they will destroy their own means of living, so I do not think they will destroy us. ...and if the Barbarians are destroyed, who will then we be able to blame for the bad things? (Carter 1969, p. 87)

Thus, the binarism seems to help in presenting ‘identity’ for the both the communities and it may be said that the Professors and the Barbarians seem to share the same identity as human beings.

The two communities of *Heroes and Villains* are apparently divided in terms of reason or rationality and unreason or irrationality. Marianne’s father describes Barbarians as a community that has reverted to beastlihood and is governed by irrationality, passion and desire. Marianne, who is bored with the extreme rationalism of the Professors’ community, is a rebel right from her childhood. She is not convinced by her father’s misconception of the Barbarians, nor is she balked by the superstitious fears of her nurse. She would not agree to be a Barbarian and be shot down by a soldier boy while playing games among the children. She would question girls always being Barbarians even in games. She unconsciously resents the masculine/feminine dichotomy, and its resultant inequality, right from her childhood. In the rationalistic society of the Professors, the women are assigned a secondary status and are treated as workers in the household. Women also are complicit in their subordination in this patriarchal, male-dominated society. Marianne’s mother values her son far more than she values her daughter. Such patriarchal totalitarian feudal order breeds fascistic policies supported by the army. The soldiers in this community have to enforce this fascistic policy.

The oppressiveness in this rationalistic community leads to frustration, and sensitive men and women either commit suicide or are driven to madness. One such example of this is how a Professor of psychology throws himself deliberately under the hooves of the horses of the Barbarian attackers and gets killed. And another is how the maid servant, Marianne's old nurse, kills Marianne's father and then kills herself. However, Marianne's uncle, the colonel in the army, dismisses such instances as just maladjustment. According to him the Professor's death served him (Professor) right and it was nothing but a result of maladjustment.

The world of Professors is a patriarchal world, where women have no role to play except cooking, rearing children, and taking part in social ceremonies. Only the male members of the community inherit property and enjoy the power that follows it. Women are no different from workers, who hardly have time to think about their life and react to this situation. Angela Carter is, in a way deconstructing the rational, so-called liberal democratic policies of the contemporary male-ordered British society. But, this could be the picture of any middle-class community during 1960s and 1970s. It was an essentially patriarchal community, based on the oppression of women and workers.

Marianne's attraction for the newness and strangeness of the Barbarians is a result of her boredom. It is among Barbarians that she identifies her own rebellious spirit and as a result of this she cannot think of marrying any young man from her own community. She justifies her stand in the following words:

I don't want to marry ... I don't see the point. I could marry someone from outside, but nobody here. Everybody here is so boring, father.  
(Carter 1969, pp.10-11)

Marianne is driven by her impulse to follow her desire, her passion. The extreme rationalism of the Professors' community does not interest her anymore and therefore, she finds a part of her Self in Jewel.

Though Marianne relates her desire to the Barbarian world and fulfils it by uniting with Jewel to her disgust, the Barbarian world arouses distaste in her after the actual contact. She is disillusioned to seeing that the world of the Barbarians is no less circumscribed by patriarchal conventions than the world of the Professors. Marianne's rape is nothing but Jewel's expression of his masculine superiority. Donally's tattoo implies the image of woman as a seductress. However, it is not at all surprising that the Professors and the Barbarians share the same myth of patriarchy represented by Adam and Eve. Marianne, the protagonist of the novel becomes a victim of the oppressive patriarchal society of the Barbarians though in the initial part of the novel she rejects the patriarchal discipline of her own community. Her experience leads her to her understanding of the 'otherness' and also the myths which maintain the 'categorization'. She also understands that patriarchy and its masculinity in both the societies are the common principles and their attitude to women is the same. Jewel wants Marianne to deliver a baby boy as he needs 'a son' because theirs is a 'patriarchal system'. He also needs a son to take revenge upon the Professors community by victimizing Marianne. Having a son will, according to him, certainly offer him a higher status in the society. However, Marianne's rebellious spirit resents his ideas:

By submitting me to the most irretrievable humiliation? By making me give birth to monsters? What, like the sleep of reason? (Carter 1969, p. 92)

Angela Carter has graphically and succinctly juxtaposed the two communities, showing oppositions and parallels between them and also shows how, in the last analysis; both

systems are equally oppressive for women. Carter has also exposed misconceptions of Rousseau's idealism.

During the 1950s, when the Cold War between two superpowers had created anxiety and uncertainty in the western world, the post-apocalyptic novel was popular. Angela Carter's *Heroes and Villains* belongs to this genre. The fear of another nuclear war suggested decline of civilization. The life of the Barbarian living in the ruins after the holocaust relates *Heroes and Villains* to the British and American science fiction, written specially by women writers in the 1970s. They showed in their fiction the destruction of cities, surviving population, their life in the ruins, squalor, and looking for left-over things, which is also the scene of the life of the Barbarians in *Heroes and Villains*. The day-to-day life of the Barbarians is a gothic fantasy.

In *Heroes and Villains*, Carter presents clear polarization between two patriarchal communities, which need each other for establishing their own identities. The 'otherness' is maintained by them creating myths about each other. Like European warning tales of the 17<sup>th</sup> century discussed in Jack Zipes' *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion*, they warn girls and boys against their own natural inclinations. In spite of Carter's use of science-fictional trope, the creation of the dystopian world, strongly thematizes feminist plight in any kind of society under patriarchy. *Heroes and Villains* are equally to blame for this. As discussed earlier, Carter examines in *Heroes and Villains* Rousseau's Utopia, which is directly or indirectly reflected in the novel.

Angela Carter questions Rousseau's social theory stated in his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality and the Social Contract* when Marianne looks at Precious, Jewel's brother, he appears to her:

'Just as if he had come from the hands of original nature, an animal weaker than some and less agile than others, but, taking him all round the most advantageously organized of any.' (Carter 1969, p. 65).

This is what Rousseau also says about man. But, for Marianne, this picture of innocence proves an illusion.

In *Heroes and Villains*, there is an echo of Heathcliff and Catherine from Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. Jewel, like Heathcliff is a demon hero. Moreover, there is the motif of incest in *Heroes and Villains* also as it is found in Bronte's fiction. Marianne, while watching her brother being killed by Jewel, feels her 'brother's face superimposed on Jewel'. There is a suggestion of interchangeability between her brother and Jewel.

When Marianne is taken to meet Donally, she feels at home because he speaks the language of people she is brought up with. She herself is like Donally. Donally's asking Marianne if she feels like Miranda reminds us of the imperialist Prospero in Shakespeare's *Tempest* and also to the fact that Donally has colonized Jewel and in a similar manner Marianne also may have a desire to do so.

Marianne's reply about how the Professors will treat Jewel if they caught him brings in the reference to another famous text i.e. Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. According to her: 'The Barbarians are Yahoos but the Professors are Laputans. And you haven't been educated according to their requirements'. In Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, Yahoos are the antithesis of Hoyhnhnysms, the rational beings. And Laputans are satirized as mad scientists. She describes what the Laputans or the Professors would do if they caught Jewel, in terms of their scientific methodology.

There is a reference to Mrs. Green, Jewel's foster mother, 'keeping a copy of Dickens' novel *Great Expectations*', in her personal belongings. Dickens is known for presenting ideal,

domestic motherhood, Victorian patriarchal values, and virtuous self-effacing women. Mrs. Green is an example of the destructive effect of patriarchy and the female bonding in it.

Another example of the intertextuality is the repetitive reference to the tattoo representing Adam and Eve who in turn, symbolize the Fall of Man and therefore the reference to the Bible and Christian ideology.

Marianne as a child 'broke things to see what they were like inside' (Carter 1969, p. 4) and thereby signifies a rebellious spirit and a deviant psyche. Women in the community of Professors, by and large, appear to have subjected themselves to the male-domination and the whole system of patriarchy. However, in the Barbarian community, this is more evident. Mrs. Green, a woman who has migrated from the Professors' community and is a foster mother of Jewel is an example of this subjugation. She is dependent on 'the goodwill of the Barbarian men'. Like Margaret in *Heroes and Villians*, she is the victim of oppression but, unlike Margaret, she takes a line of least resistance. She completely identifies herself with the men. Paulina Palmer, famous critic has noted that:

'in a patriarchal society, contact between women is frequently ambiguous. They help to arrange each other's hair and make each other beautiful not for their own pleasure and satisfaction, but in order to attract men.' (Carter 1969, p. 192)

Mrs. Green advises Marianne to submit to men as, 'young men will always take advantage ... and we all have to take what we can get.' (Carter: 1969, p. 59) She, thus, underlines the feminine fate and therefore, 'she would not and cannot help Marianne'. Carter shows that women in the Barbarian community are scared of men, and would not do anything or do anything unless 'they are directed' which is evident from the incident in which Marianne and Annie are ordered to kiss each other.

However, in the later part of the novel, Marianne gradually relinquishes the role of the female victim, and assumes the role of a hunter. She defies her humiliation, and in the end, is ready to replace Jewel and become 'a leader', a tiger lady controlling the Barbarian community. Marianne's triumph over Donally and then on Jewel points towards a new world, which may not be a perfect world, but which promises change for the better, because Marianne knows both the communities from inside and their strength and weaknesses.

Angela Carter's dystopia started with the idea of debunking Rousseau's utopian patriarchal world. Her portrayal of Barbarians, however, does not go beyond weak representation of the Camp culture of the Britain in 1960s. The Barbarians portrayed by her are the remnants of the urban communities before Third World War holocaust and not the uncorrupt Noble Savage that Rousseau had in mind. Yet Carter has made a point that how, in this dystopian world, communities have to exist with conflict, with war and strife.

## CONCLUSION

In her science-fictional romances, Angela Carter is either satirical of the contemporary society or she critically examines popular beliefs and notions. In *Heroes and Villains*, she examines Rousseau's utopian notion of Noble Savage as well as his notion of the ideal womanhood. Her protagonist, Marianne, is not Rousseau's Emile, a patriarchal model of a woman. She is a rebellious new woman bent upon exploring a new world. Similarly, the male protagonist in *Heroes and Villains* is far from being a Noble Savage. Marianne becomes disillusioned with her romantic notions of the life of the Barbarians, who are no less patriarchal.

In *Heroes and Villains*, Carter creates a futuristic fictional world after the holocaust of the Third World War. She has created a kind of laboratory world in which there are only three communities, the Professors, the Barbarians and the Savages. It is in this post-apocalyptic futurist world that she examines the utopian ideas of Rousseau. She subverts the romantic notion of love, courtship and manners that categorize popular romances. She makes use of gothic elements also in her presentation of the Barbarian community. However, this gothic presentation appears to be influenced by her in her earlier fiction. In presenting the two main communities in *Heroes and Villains*, Carter uses the concept of Binarism, the interdependence of these two communities for their own survival. Though opposed to each other, the two communities are presented as essentially patriarchal societies. By the end of the novel, Carter's protagonist, Marianne, is set to bring about a radical change becoming a tiger-lady, replacing male-dominance.

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