[Name of the Writer]

[Name of Instructor]

[Subject]

[Date]

Literature Analysis

Introduction

When one talks about the literature, it is important to understand that there are different writers who tend to bring their own style to the narrative to the way things are supposed to be progressed and they put their own spin to the any story that is happening around them. Despite this fact, at times when one goes through two pieces of literature, when these pieces are dealing with the same form of the narrative, it is the basic human tendency to compare and contrast between both of them. Not only that, one gets to see what are some of the shortcomings of one story and how the other piece of literature that is pretty similar in the style and the narrative comes across as a good piece of literature. Now, it has to be noted that both these things are quite subjective in nature, it is important to keep in mind that at times, the differences are so sweeping and obvious that it becomes quite hard to ignore them in the long run. During the course of this paper, there are two stories that are going to be compared, the first one the Chrysanthemums and the House on Mango Street, Both these stories are dealing with the coming of age narrative, but the style, the maturity with the different thematic aspects are being dealt with as well as some of the other major issues going to be an important determinant as far as the way decision making is supposed to be done. One comes across as a very mature piece of the literature, where the other shows to be quite an immature literature, in this paper, both these stories are going to be discussed and it would be seen how they compare and contrast to each other.

Synopsis and Theme of the Stories

Looking at the narrative of both the stories, one of the things that stands out is that how both of the stories are dealing with the coming of age narrative. The racial differences and the problems that are faced by the people of the color are some of the themes that are discussed during the course of the story. There is strong symbolism in both the stories and one of the major themes that is discussed in both the stories that how the narrative and the thought process of the person changes with the passage of time as how the decision making is being done at the given point of time and what are some of the changes in the thought process of the people as they come off age. Now, one of the reasons that “The House on the Mango Street” stands out as compared to the Chrysanthemums is that while it discusses the racial and ethnic themes in a much more risqué manner, the Chrysanthemums is not able to go beyond its limitations in terms of how it plays safe as it does not discusses the problems and the issues of the people of the color and instead there is cursory glance at some of the problems that are faced by the people. The other reasons that the ‘The House on the Mango Street” tends to work out well is that how it deals with the story of the human optimism and the struggle that is made by people at the given point of time. It does not shy away from discussing these issues and it is one of the prime reasons that it is being talked about as a major landmark in terms of the literature and the representation of the people of color. The same thing cannot be said about The Chrysanthemums. So the risqué theme is one of the many things that is going on for the “The House on Mango Street”. The House on Mango Street is a deceptive work. It is a book of short stories—and sometimes not even full stories, but character sketches and vignettes—that add up, as Sandra Cisneros has written, “to tell one big story, each story contributing to the whole—like beads in a necklace.” That story is told in language that seems simple but that possesses the associative richness of poetry, and whose slang and breaks from grammatical correctness contribute to its immediacy. It is narrated in the voice of a young girl—a girl too young to know that no one may ever hear her—but whose voice is completely convincing, because it is the creation of a mature and sophisticated writer. Filled with metaphors and symbolism, "The Chrysanthemums" is an overwhelmingly realistic portrayal of a woman's struggles in a patriarchal world where intelligent women are sadly overlooked. With simple, narrative language, Steinbeck brings Elisa to life - a middle-age woman married to a man who has absolutely no understanding of what she needs.  Throughout the text, it is apparent to readers that Elisa seems to be at conflict with herself. During the first scene when she is first introduced.

Treatment of the theme of the Sexual Abuse

Both the stories are discussing about the plight of the sexual abuse victims, but the major difference that one gets to see in the treatment is that how the context is provided to the story. The Chrysanthemums discusses the theme of the sexual exploitation but the major problem with this story is that it does not go beyond the discussion other than the cursory glance and the casual observer might feel that the theme of the sexual abuse should have been discussed in more detail. The other major problem and one of the prime example of the bad writing is that The Chrysanthemums does not address how the issue of the sexual abuse is supposed to be resolved and how it is something that should not be normalized. The horror of the sexual abuse is something that should have been tackled and it was important that some sort of closure was being provided during the story. Comparing that to the narrative that is being presented in the “The House on Mango Street” there is great deal of maturity with regards to the way the whole issue has been discussed at the first place. The reader is able to feel the fact that despite the sexual abuse being carried out, people who are the victim are not taking the abuse in silence and they have the emotional capacity to make sure that they are retaliating to the incident of the abuse in an appropriate manner. Both the stories discuss with the plight that how the domination of the man over women is being showed but the sexual abuse, the way it has been tackled and discussed is much more vivid in the “The House on Mango Street”.

Definition of the Gender Roles

One of the worst thing that the writer can do is that they can normalize gender stereotypes. Both these stories are quite small in their overall narrative and one of the most important thing that is needed to be discussed during the course of the story is that how the theme of the feminism is being talked about during the course of the story. One thing that stands out the most is that the idea of the feminism is discussed and its implication are applied in much more detail in The Chrysanthemums. As a matter of fact, the argument can be made that the women in The Chrysanthemums are much more dominant in nature and they know what are the societal stereotypes and there is a genuine attempt on their part to make sure that they fight back all the stereotypes. On the other hand, if one looks at how the narrative of the feminism is being treated in the “The House on Mango Street” the much more realistic depiction of the issues that are faced by women are discussed. Now, this is something that is quite subjective in nature but the argument can be made that the feminism is something that is not about accepting the fantastical elements, but making sure that the people who are involved in the broader story making are able to take the right decision making aspects in terms how all these things are supposed to be looked at the given point of time. Despite the fact that “The House on Mango Street” does not sell and talk about the feminist narrative in the great detail, the argument can be made that this story was able to discuss about these things in a much more realistic manner. Feminism was not discussed and put out there for the sake of the convenience of the plot like The Chrysanthemums but the reader has to face the harsh realities during the study regarding the major issues that are faced by women at that point of time.

Development of the Adolescence

Now, comparing both these stories, one thing that stands out the most is that how the development of the adolescence as an attitude is being carried out during the premises of the story. The idea that both these stories tend to incorporate is that how the people who tend to face difficult situations at the given point of time tend to retaliate, what are some of the broader changes that are happening in their lifestyle and how their decision making evolves with the passage of time. Keeping that aspect in mind, the argument can be made that both the stories deal with the coming of age stories in quite an appropriate manner. There is a wonderful sensibility when one talks about the way portrayal of the trials and tribulations that one geos through when they are experiencing different things during the course of their life and how they are supposed to work out in an appropriate manner to say the least. The other aspect that is quite important in terms of the broader interpretation of both the pieces of literature is that how they tend to look at the holistic view in terms of the character development. The major difference though is that while The Chrysanthemums comes across as bit more cliched in terms of the story treatment. There are not many risks that are taken by the writer during the course of the development of the story. Also, at times, one gets a feeling that the dealing with the emotional trauma is something that should have been depicted in a better manner during the course of the Chrysanthemums whereas the risqué technique that is being taken in “ The House on Mango Street” is something that makes it go beyond the conventional story and lifts its narrative to the greater level. So this is another difference in terms of how the character treatment that is witnessed during the course of how both the stories proceed. The disadvantage for The Chrysanthemums is that it a much shorter story and at times, due to the length constraints, it becomes difficult to give ending to all the character arcs during the course of the story.

Conclusion

In the hindsight, it can be said that both the stories are quite original and intensive in terms of the character development and the way they deal with the character arcs. There is a fine line though when it comes to how story telling and narrative is going to lift one aspect to the story as compared to the one where it is being seen where not much risks are being taken care in terms of how major arcs are needed to be developed at the given point of time. The argument can be made that the Chrysanthemums was handicapped by the much shorter length in terms of the story and how its subsequent treatment at the given point of time. The other major problem with the story was that it did not take into account the fact that how major aspects of the story are being developed at the given point of time. Thus “ The House on the Mango Street” feels more developed in terms of the development and is much riskier in its approach as compared to The Chrysanthemums.

# Works Cited

Bloom, H. (Ed.). (2010). *Sandra Cisneros's The House on Mango Street*. Infobase Publishing.

Olivares, J. (1987). Sandra Cisneros' The House on Mango Street and the Poetics of Space. *The Americas Review*, *15*(3-4), 160-70.

Steinbeck, J. (2014). *The chrysanthemums*. Penguin UK.