Chapter V

Struggle of Race for Power

This chapter analyses the plays *Wacousta!* and its sequel *The Canadian Brothers* in terms struggle of race for power. These two plays are set in historical background. The story of *Wacousta!* is set on Fort Detroit in 1773. The play presents the historical happenings in the colonial atmosphere in Canada. The power-struggle between America and England becomes the historical source for the play. There is clash between America and England regarding occupation in Canada.

The American government wants to occupy Upper Canada which is under the rule of England. In order to drive away the American soldiers from Upper Canada, the British captains Reginald Morton and Charles de Haldimer are deputed on duty in Canada. After some time Morton is promoted into chief army general on acknowledgement of his military performance. Haldimer becomes jealous of Morton's promotion, and he wants to spoil his honour and depower his designation.

Through cunning plots Haldimer becomes successful in his attempt by producing false accusation and false evidence. Hence Morton is dismissed from his designation and sought on the charge of treachery. Before the dismissal of his designation, Morton goes to Scotland on duty. Making use of the situation, Haldimer changes the mind of Clara Beverley, the fiancée of Morton and marries her. Thus Morton is brought to disgrace in his professional line and cheated in his personal life.

In order to escape from the false punishment, Morton goes to the Canadian wilderness, joins the Indians and changes himself into Indian Wacousta. He marries Ellen Halloway, the widow of Frank Halloway. Frank Halloway, the nephew of
Wacousta is executed by Haldimer on false charge. Haldimer has cheated Morton by marrying Clara Beverley. He has become the cause for Morton's dismissal and has killed his nephew Frank Halloway. For these three reasons, Morton in the name of Wacousta comes to Canada from the wilderness to take revenge on Haldimer and joined force of Pontiac, the leader of the Indians.

Haldimer comes to power through oppression and false betrayal. Three types of protests could be studied in Wacousta! The protest of the natives under their leader Pontiac against the colonial power: protest against science and technology and Wacousta protest against Haldimer's power. The natives protest against the British imperialism. They oppose the introduction of science and technology in order to safeguard culture and nature from pollution and damage.

Morton leaves for Detroit after two decades. His fabricated identity as an Indian confuses Haldimer who has doubt about Wacousta's identity. So he raises a question whether the mysterious stranger is an Indian. Wacousta, now becomes the combined forces of white's intelligence and natives physical power. The natives experience the hardships of the colonial slavery through Haldimer. Hence they join Wacousta and attempt to take revenge on Haldimer. The Indians suffer out of racial oppression in the hands of Haldimer. Haldimer hates and ill-treats the Indians on the ground of race, Haldimer and Morton; the white protagonists become enemies to each other and have vital battle between themselves because of Haldimer's craze for power and Morton's revenge motive.

Wacousta! depicts two kinds of clashes, the clash between the whites and the Indians and the clash between the two whites, Morton and Haldimer. The colonial power structures have ruined the old world and polluted nature. Hence, the natives want to restore the pleasant and powerful world of nature. A fierce battle
wages between the colonial power and the natives who does not want to be
oppressed and subdued. Wacousta fights with the support of Pontiac against
Haldimer. After identifying the real identify of Wacousta, Haldimer calls him a
white traitor and passes order to Pontiac to hand over Wacousta to him.

Both Wacousta and Haldimer kill each other. Wacousta’s long term scheme
of revenge ends with his suicide after he has killed Haldimer and his daughters Clara
and Charlette. Wacousta, in the first phase of protest, escapes from false punishment
and goes to the Canadian wilderness. In the second phase, he comes to Detroit and
joins Pontiac to attack Haldimer. In the third phase, he fulfils his desire of taking
vengeance by killing Haldimer and his two daughters. Reaney responds to the
historical and political happenings in the eighteenth and nineteenth century Canada.
He analyses the social milieu of the native Indians and the white settlers in Canada.

The literary realism of Wacousta! displays the contradiction between the
Indians and the whites on the one hand and between two whites on the other. The
first contradiction is based on colonial power and the second contradiction is based
on professional jealousy. Wacousta! deals with the issues of cultural differences
between the Indians and the whites and the raises discrimination shown by Haldimer
towards the Indians. There is antagonistic ambivalence between the whites and the
Indians and between Haldimer and Wacousta.

Haldimer is the representative of the British government. He remains the
power holder for the Indians in general and for Wacousta in particular. Haldimer
severs as the centre of colonial power structure which cannot be easily decentered.
He becomes villainous and produces false evidence against Morton because of his
craze for power. In The Canadian Brothers the enmity between the two families of
Morton and Haldimer is traced back to the youth. The son Desborough and the grand
son Phil of Wacousta become villainous Desboroughs. Desborough and phil join the enemies in the war of 1812 between America and Canada. Henry and Gerald, the Canadian brothers’ grandsons of Haldimer fight for Canada against the Americans.

When the play begins Brocks, the Canadian general leads the Canadian army. The American soldiers are firing from height down at British Canadian troops changing up the escarpment against them. Brocks encourage the Canadian soldiers to attack the Americans. He shouts at the Canadian Soldiers, "To a soldier nothing is impossible" (WC 667). Hiding himself behind a tree, Desborough shoots Brocks. Henry Grantham and other Canadian soldiers run to Brock's aid. The American troops are led by the general Mac Donnel. After hearing that Desborough has attacked Gerald Brocks, the older one of the Canadian brothers hurry to Queenston Heights from Kentucky.

The Canadian brothers protest against the villainy of the Desboroughs and the imperialistic attitude of America. A serious battle takes place at Queenston Heights. Gerald comes to help his brother at the battle of Queenston Heights near Niagara Falls. Phil and Desborough become treacheries and support the Americans to invade Canada. Phil says, "It is the Kentucky volunteer rifles and we are going to invade Canada" (WC 667). Henry hopes that by going like a backwoods Kentuckian without uniform he can make the Canadian army win the battle. He assures, “I can control it (war) by going like this” (WC 667).

America wants to invade Canada without genuine reason. After realizing the unjust, imperialistic desire of America, Tecumseh joins hand with the Canadians and tells Brock: “I have taken sides with your king and I will suffer my bones to bleed upon this shore” (TCBS 685). The unjust oppression of America on Canada is echoed by the chorus to Brock, “never shall be slaves” (TCBS 685). Canada,
heroically protests against the oppression of American and fights hard to safeguard its freedom. The statement of the chorus proves the fact that the Canadians will withstand oppression and defeat the enemies even by losing their lives.

Phil wants to oppress the Canadian brothers. He tells Desborough, “let’s ride the Grantham house for I am hungry” (TCBS 673). The role of Pontiac in Wacousta! is replaced by Tecumseh, The Canadian Brothers, the Indian leader. In the beginning, Tecumseh supports the Americans. But after some time he decides to support the Canadians. When Tecumseh comes to Brock along with his troops with the intension of helping the Canadians, Brock asks Tecumseh, “Have you come with your people to help us? Our struggle against unjust invasion” (TCBS 685).

The above statement of Brock indicates that Tecumseh supports the Americans and now he has changed his support to the Canadians. In the last phase of the war, Americans retreat. Henry shoots Gerald instead of shooting the enemy, and after some time he falls down from the precipice and dies. Before the Canadian brothers die, they hear the voices of Ellen and Wacousta saying “your ancestors still in your blood started this” (WC 635). Like the Donnellys, the Canadian brothers have no control over their fate. Ellen’s prophesy, ‘none of the De Haldimer line will survive’ is fulfilled. The Donnellys become victims to fire and the Canadian brothers become victims to war.

In The Canadian Brothers Reaney becomes an articulate part of the nineteenth century Canada and depicts the picture of the war of 1812 between America and Canada. He builds a bridge between the social milieu of the nineteenth century Canada and the twentieth century social milieu of the independence. The Canadian's consciousness to protest for freedom is emphasized through Reaney’s dramatic performance. Reaney’s documentary theatre depicts the contraction
between Canadians freedom consciousness and Americans imperialistic attitude on
the one hand and the internal politics between the Canadian brothers and their
enemies, villainous Desboroughs on the other.

Canada fights against America for its security of freedom and culture. It
reveals the antagonism between America and Canada and the antagonism of the
family feud between the Canadian brothers and the Desboroughs. Reaney condemns
the political discrimination shown by America towards Canada. The staging of war
of 1812 in Canada reflects Canadian's rational thinking and rebellious attitudes.
Americans remain the centre of power and they attempt to invade Canada and
depower Canadians.

In *Wacousta!* there is competition for power between the two family lines;
the Wacousta line and Haldimer line. In *The Canadian Brothers* there is power
struggle between America and Canada. America's attempt to exercise power over
Canada becomes a failure at the end of the war. Canada retains its political power
and independence by defeating the American army. In the play *Wacousta!* in the
first phase of protest Morton becomes aware of Haldimers treachery and decides to
take revenge.

In the second phase, the protest force is enlarged and he grows like
Wacousta. The ordinary soldier Morton becomes bold, vigorous and courageous like
Wacousta because of the strengthened protest force. In the third phase of protest,
Morton kills Haldimer. In *The Canadian Brothers*, in the first phase of protest,
Canada decides to resist colonization. In the second phase the strength of the protest
force makes the Canadian soldiers fight against the enemies American Soldiers
vigorously. In the third phase of the protest, the Canadian soldiers became
revengeful and defeat America. The resistance power and the strength of the protest
force of the Canadian soldiers bring out victory to the Canadians and put an end to
the imperialistic attitude of America. America’s aspiration to colonize Upper Canada
becomes a failure because of the vehement protest of Canadian colonization.

The play *Wacousta!* is a melodrama with its colourful and violent actions, its
lurid plot and characters seemingly divided between good and evil.

The Wacousta line regenerates into Desborough and his rough son Phil, as
revengeful as Wacousta more villainous, distinctly unsympathetic character.

*Wacousta!*, Morton is oppressed by Charles de Haldimer. But in *The Canadian
Brothers*, the sons of Haldimer are oppressed by the son and grandson of Wacousta
Desborough and Phil. The common factor of family feud brings unity between *The
Donnelly’s Trilogy, Wacousta!* and its sequel *The Canadian Brothers* like Wacousta
withstands the enmity of Charles de Haldimer and defeat his enemy by taking
revenge on him.

The Donnellys withstand the enmity of their enemies and take revenge on
them. Wacousta takes revenge on Haldimer by killing him. Mr. Donnelly takes
revenge on his enemies by killing Farl. There is family feud between the Donnelly
family and Marssey family. In *Wacousta!* and *The Canadian Brothers*, there is
family feud between Wacousta family and Haldimer family. Professional jealousy
becomes the major cause for the tragedy in *Three Desks* and *Wacousta!* Out of
professional jealousy, Professor Niles violates the seniority of Dr. Jacob Waterman
and employs cunning methods and occupies the place of Waterman.

In *Wacousta!*, Haldimer’s jealousy and cunningness cause the dismissal of
Morton. Because of Niles, Waterman loses his academic designation as the Head of
the department. But in *Wacousta!* Morton loses his job and the loss of livelihood
makes him become like Wacousta. In *The Donnelly Trilogy, Wacousta!* and *The
Canadian Brothers the enmity between the adults is traced back to the youth. Vengeance serves as the dominant theme in both The Donnellys Trilogy, and Wacousta! since Haldimer becomes a victim to 'Power' he depowers Morton.

In The Donnellys Trilogy, the communal mob in Biddulph, the religious authorities and the political authorities attempt to depower and subdue the Donnellys. But in Wacousta!, Morton is depowered by Haldimer but he cannot subdue him. The protest force of Wacousta and the Donnellys grows into a full swing and causes disastrous results. Power supremacy and craze for power play the vital roles in Three Desks and Wacousta! Power domination and suppression provide sadistic pleasure to the negative characters: the enemies of the Donnellys in The Donnelly Trilogy, Madam Fay in The Killdeer, Bethal in The Easter Egg, Professor Niles in Three Desks and Haldimer in Wacousta!.

The above mentioned negative characters of the evil forces in the select plays, live on earth physically and live in hell mentally. Their minds are dominated by the Satanic forces and they totally became an embodiment of vice, protest, force, resistance, power, regeneration of souls, regeneration of selves, and revenge put an end to the vice and establish the eternal greatness of virtue which is the embodiment of God. There is revenge and regeneration of souls in The Donnelly Trilogy. There is revenge in Wacousta!. There is revenge in The Canadian Brothers. There is regeneration of selves in The Easter Egg and The Killdeer and there is revenge in Three Desks.