



Volume 11, Issue 12, December 2024  
**SK International Journal of  
Multidisciplinary Research Hub**

Journal for all Subjects

**Research Article / Survey Paper / Case Study**

**Published By: SK Publisher**  
([www.skpublisher.com](http://www.skpublisher.com))



**A Monthly Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access Multidisciplinary & Multilingual International Journal**

**Special Issue: Two Day National Interdisciplinary Conference on "Script Writing"**

**Organised by: Department of Languages, Shankarlal Khandelwal Arts, Science & Commerce College, Akola, Maharashtra 444002.**

**(Sponsored by Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan Grants to Strengthen Colleges)**

## ***Anton Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard": Reflection of Some Modern Patterns of Writing Drama***

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.61165/sk.publisher.script.writing.2024.31>

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Modern pattern of writing drama has brought about the conceptual and structural changes in the genre. It has become more realistic and naturalistic. A far more impartial and scientific approach to studying the human condition had replaced the Romantic focus on emotion over reason and the senses over intellect by the middle of the nineteenth century. This was caused by some significant factors: The so-called Springtime of the Peoples in 1848, which saw revolutions in France, Germany, Poland, Italy, and the Austrian Empire, demonstrated the broad desire for political, social, and economic reform; technological advancements in trade and industry increased the belief that science could solve human problems; The working classes were adamant about defending their rights, and their main tools of choice were strikes and unionization. Pragmatism was preferred above romantic idealism.

Naturalism in literature refers to a style of writing that depicts people, things, and events as they truly are; it is a type of realism that focusses especially on the ways in which society and the sciences impact society overall, as well as how society and genetics impact individuals. The foundation of naturalism is the conviction that nature is both the creator and the influencing force. It does not include religion or belief in God. Thus, it presents a skewed and subjective picture of the world and life, whereas realism refers to any drama that shows regular people in normal circumstances and does not impose any specific philosophy or belief. *The Cherry Orchard* is frequently classified as a realistic and naturalistic drama.

The conduct of characters is foreseeable as they are consistent, have a history of genuine situations, and are products of their surroundings. They seem authentic to the audience. This type of drama portrays events that might actually occur in real life, possibly even for audience members. The play is presented in a very realistic way, and an attempt is made to give the audience the impression that they are watching a meaningful performance rather than a play. It lays focus on people and families in normal circumstances. It seems as though the actions taking place on stage are a part of the larger actual world. Everything in the drama itself is set up and covered to give the impression that it is real. Typically, the drama takes place in a home setting.

The history of Russian society throughout the early 1900s is one of social structural change and transition. Russian society had a difficult struggle in the last half of the 1800s to escape from the shackles of the age-old belief of the declining feudal class. This struggle coincided with progressive transformation, which accelerated the emergence of a commercial middle class. Throughout social history, there has been no instance where a single social class has been able to maintain its position of privilege and dominance. The current social order must eventually give way to the established one of the past, in order to provide space for its successor. No civilization remains constant over time. Every culture has to alter in some way. Every culture will unavoidably undergo some kind of change over time. Change cannot be avoided because it is woven into the very structure of society. It is possible to apply the law of social transformation anywhere in the world.

The drama, *The Cherry Orchard*, is set in the then Russia and emphasises the significance of socialism and change. The work was written during Russia's aristocracy's decline and the middle class's growth. The noble elite did nothing except relishing life's privileges, including refraining from paying taxes. They had serfs working for them. Although the communist revolution came to an end in 1917, its inception was crucial. Russia underwent socioeconomic and political transformation. Since many nobilities were unable to protect their lands, the middle class began to feel proud of their status. Serfs and aristocrats made up the first and second major classes of Russia, respectively.

Leo Tolstoy aptly describes the contribution of Anton Chekhov when he remarks,

"Chekhov is an incomparable artist [. . .] an artist of life...Chekhov has created new forms of writing, completely new, in my opinion, to the whole world [. . .] Chekhov has his own special form, like the impressionists." ("Criticisms and Awards")

When the play begins, Lopakhin has developed into a successful businessman. To her debts, there is no other way left before Ranevsky than to set out for the sale of the property through auction. The political and social climate of Russia at the time is, in fact, the subject of this drama. The middle class was miserable as a result of their worst behaviour, and the feudal system was at its height. So, something has to change. The middle class successfully overthrew the arrogance of the noble class by speaking out against it. The drama has brought out this aspect in a very forceful manner. This is a reference to Lopakhin's character. His forebears were his forefathers. Despite enduring a difficult life, they put in a lot of labour for the Ranevsky family. With Russia's social and political transformation, there is also seen the transformation of Lopakhin's social and economic state. He has fresh concepts. He is free to think. He now leads a better lifestyle. Instead of distributing the results of his effort to members of the aristocracy, he is receiving them himself.

At the outset of the drama, Madame Ranevsky, who owns a grand estate with a vast cherry orchard, is awaited by Lopakhin. Ranevsky is eager to return to her former life after spending all of her money while living abroad for five years, but things have changed. She is heavily indebted, and Lopakhin tells her that the only way she can probably save her estate before it is put up for auction in August, is to divide it up into separate plots and rent it out to the growing number of "villa residents" - a glorification of the expanding middle class - in the countryside. Ranevsky maintains that there must be an alternative; her hesitation to clear her cherry orchard represents her fears of the swift social change occurring around her and her need to maintain her place in the world, which will soon be unattainable.

Ranevsky consistently disregards Lopakhin's insistence that she divides the property and lease it. Chekhov's depiction of how social innovation impacts the servant class complements her denial of her circumstances, which is the play's primary analysis of the bewildering impact of social upheaval on the wealthy. Yasha, Madame Ranevsky's detached and inhumane male servant, behaves as if he is too nice to others of his social strata, treating visits from his mother, a peasant, as arduous irritations and treating Dunyasha, Anya's governess Charlotte, and Ephikhodof poorly. Dunyasha, a young maid working at the estate, tries to act and dress more like a refined lady despite everyone around her criticizing her for trying to go above and beyond her

station. First, the family's oldest servant, bemoans the day serfs were freed from the land they were enslaved to and appears to be dwelling at a time when slaves were completely loyal to their owners. Throughout the drama, Chekhov, with the effective use of Firs' psychological barrier, is able to depict how deep is the antagonism of people of all socioeconomic classes are, at the prospect of upheaval going to take place in the society, and, the concept that the traditions they have adhered to for ages are about to become out of date when it comes to embracing the shift in society.

In an apparent attempt to rescue the estate, Ranevsky gives a sumptuous party to divert her attention from the reality that her brother Gayev and Lopakhin are gone at the major auction. As a member of the nobility, Ranevsky and others like her have always had it easy, thus the party is her desire to remain in denial a little while longer, even at the final hour. She is anxious about the possibility that she might really lose her property, but it still seems unlikely—until Lopakhin returns from the bidding and announces that he has bought the orchard. Lopakhin, the son of impoverished, lowly farmer, is egotistical as he explains how he is successful in surpassing all the others in the auction. He is ecstatic because he has just outbid and usurped the same family whose generosity his own family once depended on to survive. Aristocracy and Feudalism come to an end and the new era of common people is commenced. Anton Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard" paints a vivid picture of Russian society. He has depicted Russia's social and political transformation in this drama.

There is conflict among the Ranevsky family, however. It requires money in order to pay high taxes. The estate of Ranevsky will be put up for auction if it fails. Boris Simeonov Pishchik is also dealing with the same issue, but with Mrs. Ranevsky's assistance, he is able to salvage his land. Anton Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard" paints a vivid picture of Russian society. He has depicted Russia's social and political transformation in this drama. In the play, each character's tale is tied to nature. For instance, Lopakhin views nature as a business and wishes to buy a cherry orchard for his real estate development project.

Lopakhin stands for the middle class that has triumphantly emerged. A guy with vision, he is considerably busier in his strategy to ascend beyond the less fortunate class through practical and financial achievement. He feels that urgent action is necessary. He used to be a member of the working class. When he was younger, he worked as a servant at Lyubov's home. He was able to make money by working hard and adopting a pragmatic mindset. He was able to go from the labour class to the middle class because of the enormous sum of money he made. He got so powerful economically that he paid the highest price at auction for the Cherry Orchard of Lyubov.

"The motif of change, especially the change in social and economical circumstances, is the plot's driving force. As the aristocratic owners of the estate get older and poorer, the merchant Lopakhin becomes wealthier and buys the estate. Even the orchard, we are told, has changed from a profitable enterprise to a useless object of beauty." (Lyudmila, 111)

The nobility was impressed with his work and performance as well. Lopakhin hesitated when Lyubov gave him her daughter Varya's hand. Trofimov stands for the intellectual and imaginative goals that the class is devoted to embracing, while Lopakhin represents the pragmatic middle class.

"As the ideological climate changes, Trofimov and Ania are hailed in turn as future revolutionaries or impotent chatterers, and Lopakhin as a sensitive man or a ruthless predator, but the cherry orchard has always represented ethical and aesthetic values." (Lyudmila, 112)

In his drama, Anton Chekhov depicts what occurs when a class that prioritizes its own interests over those of the poor and privileged is able to grow to prominence. Instead, Chekhov adopts a more nuanced perspective and includes the very real way that even positive social transformation gives particular modes of living meaningless and leaves even advantaged class and people out in the fogged, ill-prepared for the new vistas opening out before them. The dramatist might have simply

reflected *The Cherry Orchard* about the pathetic, outdated worries and fears of the prosperous, landowning class in the wake of the victory of ordinary individuals.

“Although the social and economic factors are central to the plot, Chekhov does not present them as tragic forces; neither does he join his characters in singing praises to the past. His interest is in the human reaction to change.” (Lyudmila, 112)

Thus, Anton Chekhov have presented the drama with entirely new technique and pattern.

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... Cite this article ...

Bhatti, Dr. L. G. (2024). Anton Chekhov's "The Cherry Orchard": Reflection of Some Modern Patterns of Writing Drama. Two Day National Interdisciplinary Conference on Script Writing, 146–149. <https://doi.org/10.61165/sk.publisher.script.writing.2024.31>