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Violation Of Human Rights In Amitav Ghosh's The Circle Of Reason

K. Kugan^a, Dr. S. Akash^b

^aResearch Scholar in English, M. R. Government College (Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Trichirapalli) Mannargudi. E-Mail: k.kugan85@gmail.com

^bResearch Supervisor & Assistant Professor of English, M.R Government Arts College, Mannargudi. (Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli), Tamilnadu, India. E-Mail: akashdoss1@gmail.com

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Abstract

Amitav Ghosh is not only the writer of historiographic meta-fictions, but also the writer of human rights. He is imposed through his immense vision on society that all men should never loss their identity in the name of violation of human rights. It is the commonest act which persists everywhere in this globe. Ghosh widely is looking after the problems of human rights and pastes on the pages of his novels. The current aim to excavate the problem from the minds of people that no one shall be the victim by the act of violating human rights. To take out that problem and adopt humanism in this society, Ghosh comes up with his ideas along with his imaginative character in the novel *The Circle of Reason*. The novel vividly deals with this theme of violation of human rights on the lives of both men and women. Indeed, many characters in this novel undergo with the sufferings and turn out as victims.

Keywords: Humanism, Human Rights, Mutilation of Humanity, Identity.

1. Introduction

Amitav Ghosh is a dissevered writer to receive noble prize for literature for widely speaking against the violation of human rights. The writers from the nook and corner of the world have created their works on the sort of human resource, human rights and humanism. Many writers have given their voice against the violation of human rights, because it is the basic doctrine of everyone should follow in everyday life. A common man should have owned two major things in the life, first of all the humanity, secondary is helping tendency. If both qualities generally vanish from a man it is meant that he never shall be a man. All the human beings have all kinds of rights to live in this world. Amitav Ghosh is very much influenced by the political and social milieu of the country. His works are largely dealing with the themes of human rights.

2. Humanism

Man is the only intelligent animal born on this earth, hence, he is considered as a social animal. As being an intelligent, man has incarnated differently from other animals because he has become civilized by thinking with his mind.

E-Mail: k.kugan85@gmail.com

To a human, it must include humanity, so humanity is also a unit of life. Violation of human rights is an inhumane act that has been going on in this earth for a long time. Humanity is one of the basic features for all human beings. On the other hand, mutilation of humanity is a shameful act of human beings. Many writers have been creating their works which claim human rights, against violations and raising awareness among the people over the time. The abuses of humanity and inhumanity continue to mutilate the world. In that sense, Amitav Ghosh, a contemporary writer and humane activist is very clear about the mutilation on humane in his works. Hence, Satendra Kumar points out as:

Though the characters in the novel are not subtle and complex, they are an epitome of human suffering and pain. In the novel everyone has a story to tell, the story of their untold sufferings. The characters in the novel do not fall into the conventional categories of round and flat characters or types and individuals either. (Kumar 15)

The mutilation of humanity is the central theme focuses of his novel that leads his characters to search their centre. *The Circle of Reason* is the most significant debut novel by Amitav Ghosh which portrays about the complexities of estrangement in contemporary people, transmigration and the struggles of life. Especially, the novel deals with the violence on humans and expresses the mutilation of humanity chiefly. The post colonial situation and modern man's search for centre, problems of alienation, migration and existential crisis of ordinary unprivileged class of the society is explored through the novel. The rootlessness, migration and feelings of displaced are extensively narrated in deep sense and corner of human heart. While exploring the migration of small group, the problem of individual is exposed rather than the problems of group as a whole. Ghosh as a literary personality exemplifies the fact that the novel should be aimed at finding out solution for the common routine problems of people which includes middle class men and women in the society of different culture and faith thus, he projects the historical events in comparing with post colonial situation and put forth the life of men and women struggling for existence, work, wages, money, home, ultimately a better life.

3. Violation of Human Rights

The novel begins with a description of Alu, who is present in all the three sections of *The Circle of Reason*: "The boy had no sooner arrived, people said afterwards, than Balaram had run into the house to look for the Claws." (TCR 1) Alu, whose real name is Nachiketha Bose, loses his mother and father in a car accident. He comes to stay with Balaram, his uncle and Toru-debi, his aunt, they live in Lalpukur. He does not know them at all and he looks somewhat odd. It is a kind of unusual event in that village, for only rarely new people come to Lalpukur. He does not know them at all, with an extraordinary head is criticized by the people of the village by mutilate their humanity, the young boy badly treated thus:

Someone said: It's like a rock covered with fungus. But Bolai-da, who had left his cycle-repair shop and chased the rickshaw which was bringing Toru-debi and the boy home from the station, all the way to the house on his bamboo-thin bandy legs, wouldn't that. He said at once: No, it's not like rock at all. It's an Alu, a potato, a huge, freshly dug, lumpy potato. So Alu he was named and Alu he was to remain, even though he had another name, finely scriptural-Nachiketa. Nachiketa Bose. But Alu was all that he was ever known as, and nobody deny its appropriateness. (TCR 3-4)

From that day, he is named Alu throughout the life though he had another fine name Nachiketa Bose. Instead of giving him a formal school education, Balaram decided to teach him the art of weaving, thus the act of Balaram clearly views the mutilation on humane not offering fundamental education to a boy. Balaram, became a phrenologist offers us insight into his quirky personality. He had discovered a book in practical phrenology, then, he joins with Bhudeb Roy, a political bully in the remote village hiring thugs to enforce his policies at the school and elsewhere. The two men become

enemies competing for the minds and hearts of the villagers. Sixteen years on, in 1967, Balram's mind is beginning to show some strain of living under Roy's thumb. During an extravagant Puja to Maa Saraswati planned by Bhudeb Roy to garner favour with the inspector of schools, Balram jumped up onto the statue's platform and ripped off its head, declaring it to be excessive pride than cognition. To react, Bhudeb Roy clandestinely bleeds the toxicant into the fish pond owned by Balram. Five of Roy's sons attack Balram's eleven-year-old servant, Maya.

In this incident Alu, who was only eleven at the time, had run and fetched Maya's sixteen-year old brother, who defended her from possible rape. Balram's globalizing vision disputable on Western sciences, in which he without interest discloses its racialist subtexts. The process of purification by using carbolic acid, Balram disrupts Bhudeb Roy's latest political gathering. As a revenge, Roy burns several of Balram's possessions to the ground which depicts the mutilation on humane vividly. Further, Bhudeb Roy incites Jyoti Das and the police to attack Balram's compound and they inadvertently set fire. In the result of conflagration, Balram, Toru- debi, Maya and Rakhal are all killed. Partobobi-debi being wife to Bhudeb Roy, becomes the reason for the pregnancy of her daughter by Shombhu Debnath on the same night as like plane crash and they leave with their child and go to Calcutta. The neighbourly feud, in turn, is mistaken by the state authorities as potentially political in nature and by the time Alu escapes as the sole survivor of the disastrous denouement to Balram's conflict with Bhudeb Roy, he is a wanted fugitive having been absurdly identified as a political extremist and threat to the state.

Alu, clearly the protagonist of the novel began to run towards the light but Bolai-da saved him. He dragged Alu into the forest and said: "They'll be around it now, looking for you. But they are not going to get you. I named you and I'll see you safe somewhere." (TCR 160) Bhudeb Roy finds Alu as an easy scapegoat and declares Alu a dreaded terrorist hence, the dangerous life of Alu begins. Poor Alu becomes the victim of circumstance. He is grinded into pieces in the mechanism of law who seeks refuge from place to place. He begins to live on the edge, on the brink of normality. Jyothi Das, an Assistant Superintendent of Police is told about Alu and his alleged terrorist activities. Alu rushes to Calcutta, from there to Kerala and finally on a boat to al- Ghazira. All the while he is chased by the police. He even had to give up travelling by buses and trains; he moves through Nilgiri forest. Alu's life is away from the normal. The threat of police constantly enhances the thrill of his adventure. Alu's life revolves around adventure, threat, danger. Further, Kumar Satendra points out as:

The novel derives home the point that reason will remain incomplete without the touch of human emotion. On the larger scale, the author/text seems to be saying that crux of the socio-political imbroglio of the country is precisely due to gap between passionate commitment and human touch. (Kumar 22)

The Circle of Reason vividly portrays the violation of human rights when Alu at Bengal village after a false accusation that he is a member of a terrorist group subsequently flees westwards. Alu's search for centre across the Indian Ocean on a mechanized boat called Mariamma which depicts the risks endured by thousands of Indians who leave their native land in search of a prosperous future. Alu's particular boat also bears witness to the wide range of social types who makes the dangerous crossing in pursuit of economic security. Among the passengers are a professor, a travelling salesman and a madam and her girls, one of them is pregnant.

Gopal, the friend of Balram who assists Alu to sway to Calcutta and encounters Rajan being one of the persons in a caste of weavers interlinked with other members all over the nation, India. The weavers assisted Alu to sway to the state Kerala and the former French Colony of Mahe. Everyone leads their life prosperously for a while, then Balram was murdered by the fire five months later, so, Jyothi Das pursues Alu to this out of the way spot. Even so, along with other illegal Indian migrants, just two days after, Alu finds himself smuggled into the Gulf emirate of al-Ghazira where he lives in a boarding house run by an ageing former courtesan, Zindi-al-Tiffaha, along with a multi-ethnic, multilingual, diasporic community of illegal immigrants from India, East Africa, the other Arab states

and Bangladesh. There Alu resumes his craft of weaving but is accidentally buried alive when a new concrete building collapses in which he is working as a labour. The readers cognize that Alu is passed away and Ghosh shows the character Alu, many days later seems again as a new man, like a re-birth of Gandhi, at least of Balram: "He was sitting behind the loom on the platform, weaving very fast, but without so much as looking at the loom, and talking all the while. For Alu was a very silent man." (TCR 299) He also speaks about the necessity of a war against money. He succeeds over to his reason which brings to the readers that Balram's initial educational study of his school with common scheme and its income are shared, unless a profit for any one since their enterprise apart from their present need. Alu could not make enough profit since the enterprises which drags Zindi into the gloomy state then she has earned plenty of money. At present, she has earned much, so the people to whom she once helped them many years start to threaten her, hence, Zindi looks for some other form of security. She proceeds to attain the shop owned by Jeevanbhai Patel, in order to wed Forid Mian, before attaining her aim, Jeevanbai passed away by suicide attempt. Jeevanbai worked as spy to the local magistrate, Alu is betrayed by Jeevanbai to Jyothi Das through the magistrate. Echoing the conflagration in which he had destroyed Balram's world, the local magistrate and Jyothi Das enforce the power of law on group of people who support the communist principles of Alu. In the fire most of people killed including Karuthamma, Haji Fahmy and Rakesh. Hence, people were forced to indulge in migration once again, Abu Fahl Zaghoul, Kulfi, the baby Bose and Alu are let by Zindi's native land. Zindi's family never bring a shelve there, instead of doing it, the family rejects refugees even though it had been her money over the years that had build homes for her brothers and their wives. Now Zindi and friends head further west to Algeria. All along their trip, though, they are dogged by Jyothi Das still in pursuit. Zindi makes Kulfi and Alu profess as couples and both name themselves as Mr. Bose and Mrs. Bose in Algeria. In this context, the novelist presents Indian small migrant people Dr. and Mrs. Mishra, Mrs. Kanda Swami, a nurse and Mr. and Mrs. Verma. It turns out that as a house guest to Mishra's family, Jyothi Das unavoidably encounters Alu and his friends. As a virgin, the mutilation on humane implies when he implores Kulfi to indulge in sex in one night and at the suggestion Kulfi passes away in cardiac arrest. Varma and Mishra argue each other to conduct Hindu funeral ceremony for her demise. Alu cognizes the incident of Zindi and him manipulated to run away from bushwhack of the protesters at the star in the conversation with Jyothi Das. Rakesh, Professor Samuel, Haji Fahmy and Chunni of the others had not died but had been exiled to India or Egypt. But it is known that on the same day of the protest Haji Fahmy expired of daze. Meanwhile, the Professor still held out hope for the future. Alu, Zindi and baby Bose continue their migration towards west, at least as far as Tangier, there they depart Jyothi Das who guides to a new life in Europe: "Hope is the beginning" (TCR 457) then they turned happily to al-Ghazira. On an allegorical plane, Alu is someone rooted in identity. But one can see by his torturous wandering, Alu seems only to satirize his name. Ghosh divides man as mechanical man and other type of man can be easily assumed, thinking man. In this thinking, Ghosh is talking about the man on the loom or ever further the idea behind on loom and not just the instrument. Through depicting the issues and struggles of the characters, Ghosh clearly projects how far people lost their humanity by mutilating itself.

Further, Ghosh brings many historical events take place in the novel as the Indian nationalist struggle of the 1930s, the Bangladesh war of 1971 and the international tide of migration to the Middle East of 1970s onwards, thus the violation of human rights is vividly expressed by the novelist. Further, the novel is concerned with the period of British colonization of India and foregrounds the community of illegal migrants, refugees who are a victim of economic and ecological inequity and also are at the margin of an exclusive culture practiced by the co-operate elites.

The displaced after the partition were originally refugees in the second sense. They then settle in Lalpukur but keep on commemorating their native village as sacred and beautiful. The Bangladesh war victims, however, are to return home on the restoration of peace. When Bangladesh actually materializes, some of them return; others stay back in the host country and disperse all over it. This results in a composite of indigenes and immigrants, undermining the myth of a homogeneous nation. While political compulsion is the cause of demographic dislocation, the lure of economic opportunities in the new world of al-Ghazira in the Middle East compels the working class South Asians to become desperate immigrants.

The novel's second section *Rajas*: Passion shatters the dreams of third world immigrants about the utopian possibilities in the Gulf and delineates the dehumanizing labour conditions in the region. In this context, Karthamma's painful pregnancy while traveling in the boat named Mariamma raises many questions. Her labour has started but she tries to kill the baby in the womb. Karthamma believes that her child would not have any material possessions if she doesn't sign the proper forms. Seeing the matters worse, her child might even be sent back to India. For Karthamma, the forms are a source of legitimacy for her illegitimate child. A migrant that she is, al-Ghazira holds for her the possibilities of a bright future and material prosperity. She has been convinced that by going to al-Ghazira she and her unborn child will possess "houses and cars and multistoried buildings." (TCR 177) To return to India and so to her past, would be a regression. By all indications, Karthamma has been sexually exploited. She has also experienced the utter destitution typical of a citizen of a third-world postcolonial nation by doing "eight-anna jobs in rice fields and things like that..." (TCR 177) No wonder she would prefer killing her child to returning to India. The gullible Karthamma rests her dreams of modern material comforts on a piece of deception.

A victim of patriarchy, Zindi establishes a matriarchal community. Her house is for its inmates both the home and the world. The novel exposes the meaning of unhappy events in the society faced by the middle class families thriving to progress by economic uplift or even by migration. Ghosh writes through the character of Zindi: "But let something happen outside, and that is the end, there is nothing I can do? Why because I can give them food, I can give them roof, but I can't give them work...the house is almost empty now and work is gone. ...Where can I go?" (TCR 3) Zindi is worried about the migrant. Ghosh has presented a powerful character like Zindi, who plans a shop for the migrant, but does not succeed. The cause and problems of migrated people mostly middle class families for the work, for the bright future and existence are portrayed in the novel.

4. Conclusion

Thus, the novel highlights the violation of human rights and mutilation of humanity with capturing how the protagonist and other characters are affected by violation on human rights and inhumane acts. Everyone should realize that if a man does not show humanity to his fellow man, his birth as a human being will be a meaningless. The author explains that the sixth sense and knowledge acquired by man is for the purpose of saving life and not for destroying it otherwise. Hence, Ghosh constantly preaches the world to look after the necessity of basic humanism among people.

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