



Research Article

Bhabani Bhattacharya's writings with Women Sufferings and Empowerment

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Abstract

Bhabani Bhattacharya is an excellent Indo- Anglo-Saxon novelist of this time. He has earned world-wide honor and his books have appeared in twenty six languages sixteen of that are European. He has won the in demand Sahitya Akademy award for 1967 for his novel 'Shadow from Ladakh' that may be a worth and due honour done to the genius of Dr. Bhattacharya.

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Speaking of the award, it's smart to be glorious abroad. All the novels of Bhattacharya gift a real image of Bharat and its that means millions billowing with life and substance. He doesn't believe the dictum of art for art's sake. All writing for him contains a social propose. His outlook is extremely constructive and purposeful. Smt. Leela Ray writes," As we have a tendency to scan his writing, we have a tendency to hear the dialogue between man and his scenario, between man and man and between man and therefore the concepts he lives by.

His five novels which describe contemporary issue are as follow: "So many Hungers" (1947), "Music for Mohini" (1952),"He Who Rides a Tiger" (1954), A Goddess named Gold"(1960) and "Shadow from Ladakh" (1967) not a prolific writer with abundant humanism and leftist meaning like Mulk Raj Anand, nor a comic genius with

artistic detachment and commitment to human values like R.K Narayan, nor a creative artist with astonishing philosophy wale defect like Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya- one of the major novelist of the older generation of living Indo English fictionists- is endowed with a transparently positive vision of life explored and expressed artistically in all the five novels so far.

Bhattacharya dealt with the issue of caste in his novels in context with man-woman relationship and Indian evils of the existing society. He upholds dual status of caste. The people of another generation stick to the caste system and racism event today and those of the new generation considered it altogether irrelevant. This dual status of caste and race is well represented in Bhattacharya Novels. He does not however champion the cause of the untouchable in his novels like Mulk Raj Anand. He is an observer of life.He

tells us what he has actually seen or to be more precise, what is actually going on in the society today.

The protagonists life shows three phases. The first phase describes the background of the conflict. The hero leaves the small town to escape from poverty and hunger and goes to the big city where he is from believe in law, justice and social ethics get shattered. In the second phase the actual conflict occurs. In order to take revenge on the society he writes on the tigers of lie. He himself becomes a part of the class of the exploiters. The final phase indicates self realization. The protagonist realizes that the tigers is no more under his control. He decides to dismount it. In the climax of the story, he not only dismounts but also kills the tiger, and conquers his self.

Kalo, the blacksmith lives happily with his only daughter, Chandralekha, in a small town Jharana. He falls victim to the have wrought by the man made famine in Bengal. Leaving his daughter at Jharana in charge of her aunt he leaves for Calcutta. While travelling in the train he is caught by the police for stealing bananas and is sentenced for three months rigorous imprisonment. Biten, another prisoners advises him to retaliate against the society.

No sooner is he released than he rushes to Calcutta. He is forced to become a pimp in a brothel to earn his living. He decides to call his daughter only after establishing his own smithy. At this juncture there comes of turning point in his life. He finds his daughter in the harlot-house protecting herself from a sexual assault of one of the customers. He saves the honour of her daughter.

The miseries of his own life and sexual exploitation of his daughter make him hostile

towards the society. He decides to follow the way suggested by Biten.”.... a way note simply to make a living but a way to settle accounts with them.” He makes Lord Shiva emerge from the earth with the technique taught by Biten. He builds a temple with the financial aid by a number of devotees.

Kalo starts to perform a number of rituals in the temple to attract the devotees. He receives tremendous response to the rituals of Shiva’s milk-bath. Offers the milk of Shiva’s bath to the destitute babies dying of hunger. Lekha convinces Kalo that an act of feeding hungry babies is far more pious than throwing it into the river.

Biten is realised released. He realises that Kalo has forgotten the pledge of the revenge and become a part of the social system. The friendship of Biten and Lekha turns into love. Kalo decides to offer him his daughter and the temple business on condition of wearing the sacred thread. Biten who is by caste a Brahmin has already discarded the cast to avenge the society. He refuses to wear the thread again.

The brothel experience does not allow Lekha accept Biten as her husband. She involves herself in the rituals of the temple. The devotees find in her ‘mother of sevenfold bliss’. But Lekha is fed up with the hypocritical role she has been playing with her father. She decides to marry seth Motichand a middle aged rich person in order to punish herself. She thinks “Motichand was a good rope to hang oneself with.”

Kalo who rides the tiger turns an exploiter to seek revenge against the exploiters. Kalo’s turning a exploiter is a symbol of his attempt to protest against the exploitation. An industrious, skilled blacksmith of a small town is compelled to

leave his town is by the man-made famine and the plague of hunger. The man who is respected not only in his community but also in other communities, to whom the people go to settle their quarrels, get arrested for the petty theft of bananas. His good nature and past record do not help him to be rescued. Three months rigorous imprisonment for such an ordinary crime breaks him. "Something was gone Kalo, the blacksmith Jharana town could never be whole again." The judge's question - why did you have to live? upsets his faith in the value system. The oppressive awareness of low birth, poverty and hunger and three months rigorous imprisonment for an ordinary offence turn the humble Kamar into a rebel. The development of Kalo as a rebel is an outcome of a pernicious system which has to be challenged.

He puts on the sacred thread of the Brahmin a small talk Smith toiling from dawn to midnight for a fistful of rice rode a lie as if it were a tiger." That was the way of take revenge against the society. A Smith is reincarnated as a Brahmin. A convict and harlot-house procurer becomes the master of the temple, placing the hand benediction on the heads of pious folks. "So had the wheel of karma turned!"

When the magistrate comes of touch his feet he feels that he has taken the revenge. He is at the top. But when he finds feelings of sadness on his daughter's face he feels defeated. Sometimes the sad face of his daughter makes him think about dismounting the tiger but suddenly he remembers the miseries of his poverty and is proud to take revenge on all the exploiters. When he realizes that his daughter is with him only physically and far away from him mentally and spiritually, he starts feeling uneasy on the back of the tiger. The disguise of a Brahmin begins

to suffocate him. He realizes that material success is futile if it does not lead to true happiness. In revenge, he does not find self-fulfilment.

When Lekha expresses to marry Motichand to follow him in his battle, he understands that she is preparing him for his services to her. He understands the reason of Lekha's emotional detachment from him. He decides to dismount the tiger and kill it. He realizes that he can cheat the world but not himself. At this very moment of realization as the fear of his future disappears. He takes off the mask in order to be simply his true self. He wins his daughter back.

Chandralekha, who unwillingly rides the tiger with her father, does not allow herself to be carried away like her father. Whenever she finds that her father is forgetting his true self, she acts as his navigator or the mentor of his conscience. A Kamar girl retains his original simplicity and contentment while playing a role of a high caste Brahmin girl. Though she accepts the role of the exploiter, she remains passive. She cannot exploit anyone. Lekha is thus a silent protester. She protests against caste and evil social system on one hand and her father's deceit and fraud on the other hand.

As a woman she gets exploited by the men and women in the brothel. The picture of a woman accepting prostitution due to the poverty and hunger may be very common but Lekha is forced to enter the harlot-house not out of poverty and hunger but out of her love for her father. An experience at the brothel turns her life upside down. She is shattered. "The taste for life died in her." She is rescued unscathed by her father but she feels contaminated with the air of the brothel. It creates hatred in her against opposite sex.

In the` Shiva rising miracle she stays with her father but her inner voice forbids her father from cheating the devotees. She gets angry with her father for his hypocrisy. She utters sarcastic remarks on his Brahminic acts. She feels that her father's act of revenge is downfall, as while avenging, he himself becomes an exploiter. She gets fed up with this dual role. She decides to become the fourth wife of Seth Motichand. Her decision opens her father's eyes. The moment Kalo reveals the truth, she feels that a hundred temples are less in value to her than her father's victory.

If Kalo, who belongs to the class of the exploited turns himself an exploiter to take revenge upon the exploiter; Bitten, who is by caste Brahmin allows himself to be exploited by others as punishment.

Though by caste he is a Brahmin named Bikas Mukherjee, he personates himself as a man of `a convict class'. He repudiates his caste and suffers like a low cast person. He does not reveal his name and caste to anyone. When his sister commits suicide, Bikas flings his sacred thread away and renounces his caste. He feels guilty for the exploitation of his sister by his caste follows. Bitten advises Kalo to retaliate by becoming a Brahmin as he knows this is the caste which exploits other castes. Through Kalo, he takes revenge on the society for the sins committed by his own caste members. In Kalo's revelation of truth in the end given satisfaction of his on victory to him All the three themes of poverty, and hunger and exploitation cannot be separated in his novels as they constitute of vicious cycle. The three types of hungers; hunger for food, for money and for sex are shown as a result of political, economic and social exploitation.

Kalo, the protagonist leaves the town like other artisans so that his daughter they `never have to fear hunger'. He leaves the town to escape from the fear of hunger but it follows him like a shadow. The novelist mirrors the horrors of the hunger. Kalo finds a large number of destitutes lying dead near the railway line. When Kalo's rice scatters on the ground `Ravenous men and women with hoofs of Joy fell on his food and in a minute not a grain was left. On such a background Kalo's act of stealing bananas looks very ordinary. When he feels unbearably, hungry he cannot prevent himself from stealing the fruit."His eyes were trapped by the fruit. It gave him unbearable ache. His hunger seemed to grow a hundredfold he kept his eyes on bananas, torturing himself.

The magistrate who knows nothing about the hunger, sentences him for three months imprisonment. When Kalo tries to convince the judge that the act was with an urge to live, the judge ask him, "Why did you have to live?" .He repeats the question for each of Kalo's statement. The question suggest that the life of the poor is not worthy of living. The question upset Kalo's faith in the value system. It turns his life upside down. But he passively surrenders to the exploitation and accepts the punishment.

Kalo reaches Calcutta to earn his living but cannot get a job of honest means. He finds poverty and hunger everywhere. On the one hand the poor suffer from hunger and poverty and on the other hand the rich accumulated wealth by hook or crook. The poor are hungry for food and; the rich are hungry for money and sex.

Two great hungers had struck the land of Bengal in the wake of war: The hungers of the masses of people uprooted from the old

earth and turned into beggars and the hunger of the all-owning for and more pleasure raging fever of the times. Uprooted women with their own kind of hunger had to cool the ragging pleasure-favour with their bodies.

When the poor suffer from the fever of illness, the rich suffer from fever of sex, money and other pleasure. Dr. R.S Singh in Indian novel in English: A critical study, says, Bhattacharya not only records the misery of the poor but of the rich also. The irony of the situation very ably present the ghastly contrast between affluence and poverty, power and helplessness, goodness and hypocrisy.

Conclusion:-

Thus, we can see from above mentioned topics and explanation that Bhattacharya shows that poverty and hunger adversely affect not only the body but also the mind. He also attacks the political exploitation of the poor by the rules in the name of administration. Instead of helping them to settle in the city, they try to send them away. He also attacks the exciting law system. The black marketers who corner the food and turn the common man's savings to one fifth are no better than common thieves but they walk freely. Imprisonment is one of the reasons of Kalo's rebirth as Mangal Adhikari.

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