



A STUDY ON MEANINGLESS EXISTENCE AND HUNGER IN SO MANY HUNGERS BY BHABANI BHATTACHARYA

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ABSTRACT

Bhattacharya's first novel "So Many Hungers !" manages the themes of hunger and meaningless existence. The socio-political events of the nation immediately before independence for example Bengal Famine of 1943 and the Quit India Movement of 1942 motivated Bhattacharya to compose this novel. Therefore it manages the theme of hunger or neediness caused by Bengal famine.

Of the two interweaved themes of freedom and hunger, the theme of hunger figures all the more unmistakably and it offsets the other in content. Hence, Bhattacharya portrays the stripped frightfulness of the famine stricken workers behind the scenes of Gandhian Satyagraha struggle. The current paper highlights the meaningless existence and hunger in So Many Hungers by Bhabani Bhattacharya.

KEYWORDS:

Freedom, Hunger, Famine

INTRODUCTION

Bhabani Bhattacharya is a famous writer of Indian writing in English, known for his stamped authenticity. His novels depict the Indian society with haughty treatment of the themes relating to the blemishes and qualms in the construction of that society. However the subtleties introduced in the novel, are as it were, hard for assimilation, they should be gotten with no negative insight. He accepts that craftsmanship isn't required workmanship's purpose and demands its social reason, willingly.

Like other great Indian novelists, his works present him as a progressive social writer. As a sociologist, Bhabani Bhattacharya distinguishes and investigates the issues of the society. As a



serious craftsman, he distinguishes himself with the society and has an inward desire to communicate the contemporary issues to create mindfulness in individuals. As a therapist, he manages an assortment of social and moral issues, breaking them down through his characters in everyday situation. He peeps into the personalities of character and depicts them in a sensible way.

The fictional universe of Bhabani Bhattacharya portrays a meaningless existence of the human being conflicted between two universes - the self and the society. The shackled self battling for emancipation from the extremely tight grip of a tumultuous society gives off an impression of being a predominant quality in Bhabani Bhattacharya's novels.

The singular struggles for self-liberation yet are hushed by the smorgasbords of societal values, vacillates and afterward sets up a faltering battle yet never yields. Never surrenders to the powers of insidiousness. The struggle of the self for liberation culminates in a trade off, in an affirmation and an attestation of the option to live.

This note of confidence in societal values, and in man's potential for endurance in spite of all the clubbing of fate, loans loftiness and charitableness to the Bhattacharya hero. The honorability of the person despite all sufferings bestows an epic aspect to the self, be Rahoul or Kajoli. Enduring and hunger recognizes and strengthens it. Rahoul says: "In the desolations of war the soul would be purified" (9).

The Bhattacharya hero lives and flourishes enduringly and morally. Torment and hunger can't mistreat him. Nor would it be able to corrupt and spoil him: "Live. We don't dread to live- - perilously" (40). In this way, the singular self doesn't escape from life, yet escapes into it. It grapples with the exhausted societal values and tries to rise above its unremarkable limitations through self-penance.

The novel is loaded with horrendous scenes of hunger and exploitation. It is of the workers, and of moral degradation of the rich property managers and the industrialists, and of impassion of the Public authorities. Bhattacharya shows that hunger and exploitation can't decrease the genuine human soul through the conduct of Devesh Basu. Sufferings can remove them from the virtues yet just briefly.

Kajoli is the laborer young lady from Baruni. She lives with her brother, Onu and her mother. Her father and brother are captured during the Quit movement. These individuals think that it is very hard to confront the hunger and stroll towards Calcutta, the city of dreams.



Kajoli leaves her feeble mother. She goes looking for food. Hunger not just drives Kajoli and her family out of their town looking for food yet in addition attempts to constrain her to sell herself. She would go out with her mother to chase after roots. These are bubbled, salted and hard to process.

Kajoli underscores the coldblooded fate of the country population of Bengal at the time India confronted the Japanese danger in the East. When Kajoli gets slice of bread from a soldier she fails to remember her mother and brother:

...Right away she delved her teeth into the irregularity, gulping quickly, not chewing, not waiting for the vibe of bread on her tongue, gulping hard. What's more the soldier clicked his tongue with feel sorry for, for his hearth was worm. He watched her... In a moment the bread was completely gone, and afterward the realization burst upon her that she had eaten all; nothing was left for her brother or mother. (144)

Bhattacharya bargains about the hunger which was the result of the famine caused significant damage of multiple million individuals; the desperate battle of man against hunger delivered both the kinds of pictures man at his noblest and at his most noticeably awful also. Accordingly, this novel depicts the two merciless powers of war and famine which sucked the blood of poor people.

His nerve racking record of famine in Bengal and the delight of the opportunists and dark advertisers are mindfully and wonderfully anticipated. Here the existence of Rahaoul represents the struggle for freedom and the pathetic story of Kajoli addresses the sufferings of the large numbers of people who lost their lives by virtue of the man-made famine and the unfeeling apathy of the outsider Government.

Here the characters are quiet and uninvolved onlookers of the impacts of famine. They respect the situation with no revolt or dissent. The imaginative accomplishment of the novel lies similarly in the order of the repulsions of hunger and famine, and the novelist's sharp attention to the existence of the provincial, working people of Bengal and rich wonder of life concealed in it.

MEANINGLESS EXISTENCE AND HUNGER IN SO MANY HUNGERS BY BHABANI BHATTACHARYA

Bhabhani Bhattacharya's first novel, *So Many Hungers!* (1947), is probably the best piece of creative working born out of the struggled torture of body and soul suffered by the holy soil of



Bengal during the ugly famine years and the beginning phases of the Subsequent Universal Conflict.

The novelist shows the unfortunate problem of Bengal by depicting the high points and low points in the existence of two families—one of Samarendra Bose, a well-off lawyer and finance manager of Calcutta and the other of a worker of Baruni, whose soul is given to song and meandering.

The two families are connected by their contact with the virtuous figure of a matured nationalist pioneer, Devesh Bose (father of Samarendra Bose), who is venerated by the residents of Baruni as God in light of the fact that "the heavenly happiness makes him exuberantly pleased with riches." He is a genuine Gandhian and has been somewhere down in Common Disobedience Movement and has pursued imprisonment a few times. He adores townspeople and is glad for them. When many other characters in the novel represent a bad-to-the-bone reality of the cynical side of country's sociopolitical scene, Devesh represents the hopeful side of something similar.

Devesh Bose's son Samarendra Bose, is quite inverse in nature and lifestyles to his righteous father. His main point in life is to satisfy his English rulers, procure fabulous titles from them and accumulate more cash. To him the conflict is authentic bonus. He treats it as the shot at life-time.

As war advances, he gathers rice and stores it and later on sells it at exceptionally exorbitant cost. He has his arrangements for his oldest son, Rahoul as well. He is glad for son's D.Sc. degree in Astronomy from Cambridge College and needs him to be on the highest post of specialized Counselor in New Delhi so that he might utilize logical information to develop a profoundly damaging weapon. This was the haziest side of a person who plotted against his kindred human creatures and his mother land.

The insensitivity of this person truly baffles the readers. However, a reasonable beam of trust found in his son's person soothes us. Rahoul's heart is, be that as it may, set elsewhere. Having gone under the impact of his granddad prior, he is drawn towards Gandhiji's Non-Cooperation Movement. While claiming to research on the Death Beam, he works furtively for the Quit India Movement.

The main thing that hangs out in Bhattacharya's novels is the charitableness of the self in setting up a heroic battle against an antagonistic milieu. The 'self in the novel, is a cognizant reasonableness battling for socio-clairvoyant emancipation from a physic-moral world. It is a



"mathematical image, bumped into a declaration of the plight of humanity in Calcutta, in Bengal, in India" (Iyengar 412).

The distinctive thematic patterns of the novel are held together neither by the sociopolitical powers at battle with each other nor the extreme idyllic allure of Rahoul or Kajoli however by the singular dilemma of the hungry self from one viewpoint and the socio-recorded powers on the other.

The two fundamental strands of the Indian society - the materialistic and the Westernized present day culture of the metropolitan people and the conventional and unsophisticated society of the country people are at struggle inside the self of the individual generating the issue of existence.

Whether to adhere to this or to that, to do either, is the issue. Be that as it may, the characters are not bothered and clouded despite such social chances. Rather they arise out of such a problem victoriously. Regardless of every one of her sufferings and self-mortifications, Kajoli doesn't evade customary values. She sells her body out of critical need yet not her soul, not her socio-authentic self sustained in the customary social values of confidence and trust. As has been called attention to before, she has "a tradition of habits as old as India" (28).

So Many Hungers is a masterpiece of self-realization and self-declaration. The characters like Rahoul and Kajoli justify the latent possibility of their soul by self-amazing quality. "There was a dash of light" in Rahoul's "internal agony" (183). It was not all dim with him. He had a courageous confidence throughout everyday life, its strength and eternity.

The image that Bhattacharya presents in the novel is of meaningless existence. Its heart-severing sights of human hopelessness and enduring move us to tears and yet it passes on to us the affirmation of life in the midst of hunger, the glimmering of light in the ashes.

Check out the dreadful plight of the fishermen at the huge hands of the boat-wreckers who are deputed by "the Gorement" (55) which takes their boats and gives them cash. The hesitant fisher-society continues to cry "My boat! My boat!" however the boat wreckers pay no heed and snatch away their boats to make a fine bonfire. Yet, everything isn't lost.

The damned self in Bhattacharya displays colossal patience and apathetic avoidance. The self goes through all mortifications and dishonor to help the famished and the penniless. The body is forfeited for standards however the soul isn't tarnished. The dejected young lady is a valid example. She uncovers her body for cash which she disperses among the affliction and the destitute ones.



However she goes through self-dishonor, she never darkens her soul. Her soul is unadulterated and pure: "That was the dash of light to illuminate the misery of his heart" (19), is what Rahoul thinks about her. A matured penniless resident holds out his card of free food to Rahoul. His ration card gives food to the destitute ones.

Bhattacharya draws the desperate state of individuals through the story of Kajoli and her family. As indicated by him, the selfish finance managers like Samarendra Basu and the unconcerned attitude of the public authority are liable for the present situation. Hunger makes the human set to the side their warmth at seeing food. The contention of self all through the novel has not been with the materialistic powers of evil yet the social powers of insidious and the social powers of exploitation and degradation.

When a soldier gives a large portion of a rupee to Onu, he is invigorated and considers purchasing cheap suppers. In any case, later he adjusts his perspective and purchases blossoms for the Goddess. Rahoul is a survivor of So Many Hungers. He shows his hunger for research and freedom, Kunal has hunger for adventures; Samarendra has hunger for cash. Manju is hungry for cash. Devesh Basu, and Kajoli's father and brother have shown hunger for freedom. Rahoul has sympathy and empathy for the destitute individuals. He chooses to work for the casualties of hunger. Bhattacharya charges the poor for their situation however he accepts that their confidence in God gives them boldness to battle against hunger.

That the father and son are total opposites is seen when, during draft, Rahoul runs a free kitchen for the needy individuals. Furthermore on the other side, his father intends to sell rice. He goes into underground market for that reason. Rahoul communicates his desolation :

. . . The unfilled stomach was because of no blight of nature, no disappointment of harvests Rahoul knew. It was man-made shortage, for the gather had been reasonable, and regardless of whether the Army purchased up large stocks, with rationing at the right level there could be nourishment for all. Yet, there was no rationing (105).

Their confidence makes them exemplification of strong life ready to go and valor. They are strengthened and not softened by the exploitation. The novel effectively reports the hunger and exploitation through the personal conduct standards of different characters.



DISCUSSION

So Many Hungers also represents the novelist's hunger for human values. The characters have shown full confidence in the values of life. Rahoul is the focal person of the novel. He accepts that sufferings can cleanse human creatures. The point of Devata's life is the government assistance of individuals. Indeed, he genuinely shows the standards of honorable life, its pride and strength. The battle of man against hunger creates two kinds of pictures. Man is at his noblest or at his most noticeably terrible. The tough spot of hungry, needy individuals communicated by Rahoul addresses the hardships of the multitude of transients:

Abnormal how much a human body could carry on with before life left at last. The initial not many days the man experienced most. He was distraught with hunger. Then he became languid. He laid himself down. His mouth was excessively worn out for food and he simply needed to be left alone. His eyes kicked the bucket. He squandered to a skeleton, spending whatever smidgens of tissue he had anywhere on his body. (153,154)

Indeed, Bhattacharya prevailed with regards to fabricating theme of troublesome kinds of hunger into a texture. It has displayed to reaffirm a confidence in the decency of human values. The book uncovers the two troublesome powers war and famine. The novel presents a frightening image of famine in Bengal and the delight of the opportunists and dark advertisers, who stored rice wrongfully, are sympathetically anticipated, however somewhat exaggerated and nostalgic.

Bhattacharya has a through handle of his fundamental theme of hunger. He has managed a large portion of its critical perspectives. In this novel, Kajoli and her family are the images of neediness and hunger. Bhattacharya has contemplated rebels against the social shades of malice in the society. Kajoli challenges enticement and Rahoul fights the exploiters. Bhabani Bhattacharya gives a clear image of hunger both in towns and in the great urban areas of Bengal. Kunal is Rahoul's more youthful brother. He is energetic youngster. He doesn't stress over optimism. He is a pragmatist. He also accepts life as it comes his direction. However unperturbed by optimism, Kunal also has confidence in specific virtues. He helps a poor young fellow in solving his food issue. The families those live in towns bear a ton because of the hunger. They have no work to do and no food to eat.

Food turns out to be the essential imperative of human nobility. Amusingly, the seriousness of hunger debases and mistreats human creatures. Bhattacharya has managed the theme of neediness and hunger and the associated theme of human degradation in his absolute first novel.



All through the novel we run over occasions of wretchedness, destitution, starvation deaths yet these negative components are curbed away from plain sight when we think about the flashing of trust and statement of the self. Does Kajoli's selling away of her body adds up to self-humbling and self-degradation? No. She does it to keep alive her mother and her more youthful brother. She is an incarnation of self-penance.

Her self-destruction prompts self-ennoblement. In the self-immolation of the famished individuals, we allure the actual affirmation of life and the negation of an animal and close canine existence. They lean toward biting the dust to being humiliated and degraded by an insouciant social inner voice. They are men still undefeated, "contenders all...undefeated all. No prison house might at any point break their soul" (196).

CONCLUSION

Unswayed by the sufferings of life, the singular self keeps on living serenely and firmly and it looks past these unpleasant privations to a universe of otherworldly consolation and happiness. Bhattacharya closes the novel with a positive note.

The smothered interests of the lacerated self victories over the sufferings of humanity: "There was no defeat in the voices, yet confidential, energized triumphs...freedom couldn't drop from the skies, nor be asked from lands past the oceans; yet there, in the immense marsh of misery and struggle, would it sprout, outgrowing the seeds of the soul" (205).

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