

REFLECTION OF HUMAN VALUES IN RUSKIN BOND'S SELECTED SHORT STORIES

Dr Nilesh Bhatেশwar Malichakar

Asst. Professor (Dept. of English) TSS' Smt. Vimalbai Patil Arts & Late Dr. B. S. Desale Science
College, Sakri, Dist Dhule.

Abstract:

Ruskin Bond's short stories present human values. He gives importance to love all kind of creatures. Humanism is the only source of solving all the problems in society. He tries to portray the bond of relationship between man and society. He appeals the people to have deep attachment and love for all the creatures.

Keywords: human values, love, compassion, abnormal, humanism.

Introduction:

The present research paper is an attempt to highlight the reflection of human values in Ruskin Bond's short stories. The Researcher has selected three short stories like Untouchable, The Kitemaker and When Darkness Fall for the present research paper. Though Ruskin Bond's main focus is preservation and conservation of natural elements yet he has handled human and social elements skillfully in his short stories. He Feels sympathy for animals, birds, tribal, rustic, handicapped, mentally abnormal and socially outcasted people.

Ruskin Bond is admired for his short-story. His characters and themes present a humanistic approach to the surrounding conditions. His characters believe in peaceful co-existence, human values, love for freedom, Positive attitude towards nature, continuity of life, and social issues rose during the period of partition between India and Pakistan. He conveys the message of conservation of the environment through his literature. Ruskin Bond is an ambassador of jungle life. His ideas are completely associated with animals, birds, tribal people, mountain, hills, valleys, wild animals. Ruskin Bond can be called the true environmentalist because, through his short stories, novellas and poetry appeals to the readers to develop a humanistic approach towards nature around us. The humanism of Ruskin Bond is simple. It is not political, Marxists or mystic. Human values are always important in life. Amita Aggarwal says, "His humanism is not political or social like that of Marxists, nor mystical like that of saints; it is completely humane and simple to follow." (Aggarwal, The fictional World of Ruskin Bond 19)

Analysis:

The short story Untouchable deals with the social problem of untouchability. Even today untouchability is observed in some parts of India. Ruskin Bond has emphasized on the eradication of untouchability. According to Ruskin Bond, we should believe in humanism. Untouchables are also human like us and their assistance needed too much in society. We can't imagine the world without their existence in society. Sweepers, cooks, water carriers, ayahs and gardeners are the part and parcel of the society. They help society by providing various useful services. Ruskin Bond is against this harmful convention as the convention of untouchability is a dark blot on the Indian society. He says,

"It was supposed to be below my station to bathe at the tank, where the gardener, water carrier, cooks, ayahs, sweeper and their children collected. I was the son of sahib and convention ruled that I did not play with servant children. But I was just as determined not to play with the other sahib's children, for I did not like them and they did not like me." (Bond, Dust on the Mountain 01)

The humanistic approach is very important in everyone's life. When you treats equally and respectfully to the fellow people then you will understand the value of such people. Ruskin Bond has presented the characters of sweeper boy who is very helpful to the narrator. He guards the narrator when he was alone. When the narrator needed



PRINCIPAL
T.S.S.'s Smt. V. U. Patil Arts &
Late Dr. B. S. Desale Science College
Sakri, Dist Dhule

operated him broad-mindedly. Through the character of sweeper boy Ruskin Bond has thrown the light of the positive side of untouchable people in society. The narrator says, "At night the sweeper boy would keep guard, sleeping in the kitchen. Apart from him, I had no company; only the neighbour's children, and I did not like them and they did not like me." (Bond, Dust on the Mountain 01)

It shows Ruskin Bond has revealed the human nature of untouchable and through the narrator he has glorified the character of sweeper boy. He is not interested in other neighbouring children but in sweeper boy. It presents a humanistic view of Ruskin Bond for untouchable. Children are innocent and they don't believe in the upper class and lower class, and touchable and untouchable. They have plain views about all the people. They treat everybody like a human being. Therefore, the boy in the story prefers the company of untouchable sweeper boy.

The short story The Kitemaker is about art. Art is an important element in life. The character of Mehmood Ali is portrayed by Ruskin Bond. Ruskin Bond feels sympathy for Ali because in old age sometimes relatives leave them in wretched condition. In the modern days, art has lost its real value and people have made it professional. Artists are neglected by society when they become old and weak. The short story presents the loss of real pleasure of art, sport like making a kite, playing kite and human values. It is our moral responsibility to take care of artists in their predicaments. If we want to preserve art forever then the artist must be respected and protected. Sometimes people in that society behave selfishly. They ignore artists. Such a critical situation is faced by Mehmood Ali. Once Mehmood Ali was a popular Kitemaker and everybody praised and respected him including, Nawab. At present people ignores him and do not value him due to his old age. Ruskin Bonds depicts him as, "Kitemakers, like poets, once had their patrons; but knew Mehmood, simply because there were too many people in the Gali and they could not be bothered with their neighbours." (Bond, Dust on the Mountain 211). Ruskin Bond holds the attention of the readers towards the inhuman treatment of people to the artists. The feelings of humanity are more crucial in this practical world.

The short story When Darkness Falls presents the inhuman aspects of war. War is responsible to destroy human values in society. It separates the people and develops hatred among the people. War makes direct or indirect long-lasting adverse effects on the life of human being. Markham, the protagonist of the story is the victim of war. He has lost his face due to war. War has made his life lonely and unbearable. The appearance of Markham is ghostly and horrible. Whoever sees him is frightened in the hotel, therefore; he lives in a small lonely room of the hotel. It has a strong wish to come out of the hotel and enjoy the company of people but his appearance comes in it. The horrible face makes him avoid looking himself in the mirror and he hides from the visitors in the Empire Hotel. Even in adverse condition of Markham, he is helped by Negi. Negi, the manager of the hotel takes care of Markham and offers him food. Negi is an ideal example of humanity who maintains contact with Markham when Markham himself and other people in the hotel hate him. If any function is there in the hotel then Negi sends him food, "If there was a wedding banquet in the hotel, Negi would remember to send Markham some roast chicken or pilaf." (Bond, Dust on the Mountain 552). It is essential to love such people whose faces are cruel or they are abnormal. This is true humanity.

Ruskin Bond has presented in the short story that Markham is a kind and gentleman. Though his appearance is ghostly still his nature is kind towards animals. Many people who visit the Empire Hotel think him ghost or rakshas. But the small creature shrews often visit the room of Markham. Markham and shrews both don't have any problem for each other. He loves shrews and offers them food. Ruskin Bond presents, "Markham was grateful for a little company, fed his shrews biscuits and dry bread. It moved about his room quite freely and slept in the bottom drawer of his dressing table. Unlike the cat, it had no objection to Markham's face or lack of it." (Bond, Dust on the Mountain 554). Innocence is a real sense of humanism. Both Markham and shrews are innocent. Markham has a humanistic approach for shrews. The story ends in a tragic mood. Both Markham and Mrs Khanna die at the end of the story. Mrs Khanna is the victim of insomnia and Markham is the victim of war. Ruskin Bond appeals to all of us that love and understanding are needed to look at such people. The



PRINCIPAL
T.S.S.'s. Smriti V.U. Patil Arts &
Late Dr. B. S. Desate Science College
Sakri, Tal Sakri, Dist. Dhule

humanistic approach will help such people to live a peaceful and meaningful life. It gives energy to such people enjoy life most fully.

Conclusion:

Human values are very important for the healthy survival of the society. Love, kindness, compassion, freedom, friendship, understanding, and generosity are important aspects of humanism. The characters of Sweeper boy, Markham and Mehmood Ali are those who need love and care of the society. People like these expect love and compassion from the people in the society. The short stories of Ruskin Bond uphold the importance of human values. He appeals the people to have equal love and compassion for abnormal, handicapped, untouchables, tribal, rustic people, animals, birds and other creatures.

Works Cited:

Aggarwal, Amita. The Fictional World of Ruskin Bond. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2005
Bond, Ruskin. Dust on the Mountain. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1996




PRINCIPAL
T.S.'s Smt. V.U. Patil Arts &
Late Dr. B.S. Desate Science College
Sakri, Tal. Sakri, Dist. Dhule