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Humanism in the stories of Ruskin Bond

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Abstract

An Englishman by birth, Bond is an Indian by choice. Ruskin Bond's perception of Indian reality is the most omnipresent note of every one of his compositions. Despite the fact that he is British by parentage, he is distinctly mindful of the nation that he has made his home. Most parts of Bond's fiction stamp him as an Indian author. He looks to depict the Indian reality which he himself has encountered and watched and which has turned into a part of his mind. His stories are effortlessly unmistakable as Indian because of their setting and focus. He looks

at India as an insider and a participant, not as an observer or as an outsider. Bond enthusiastically embraces the cause of the persecuted, abused and the oppressed in a humanistic point of view. This paper attempts to portray his humanism as reflected in his stories.

Keywords: humanism, empathy, sensitivity

Ruskin Bond delves deep into the intensely human social and psychological issues. His works mirror his profound and standing pledge to uphold human qualities. Notwithstanding his ardent love for nature, he is no hermit nor does he meander about in a fictional universe. He is intensely mindful of the wretchedness and sufferings of his kindred brethren. He is exceptionally alive to all types of abuse, misuse and foul play. Like Dickens, his virtuosity lies in his kindred sentiments with his race; it empowers him to rise above the tight, narrow-minded interests and recognize himself with the toiling humankind. Poets like Wilfred Owen and Sassoon took to verse to voice their disappointment with war and exhibit the repulsions of war with its melancholy, thwarted expectation and dread. Bond utilizes his verse, short stories and books to proclaim his sensitivity and sympathy for the underdogs of society. He takes the route of workmanship to portray their destitution, wretchedness and anguish and to achieve a consciousness of their appalling predicament. His principal endeavour is the acknowledgement of a belief system by which man will obtain a genuine comprehension of himself and subsequently establish the framework of moral conduct that will bring about the introduction of an equitable social order.

Bond enthusiastically embraces the cause of the persecuted, abused and the oppressed in a humanistic point of view. The expression "humanism" was first utilized by the nineteenth-century German scholars to assign the Renaissance accentuation on established investigations. So

humanism was the European Renaissance, a restoration of enthusiasm for western traditional writing. It was inescapably mainstream and arranged to human instead of religious concerns dissimilar to the Bible, the other awesome wellspring of Western philosophy.

A declared humanist, Bond makes in his perusers a familiarity with the dehumanizing disasters devastating our general public. He endeavours to mix the springs of delicacy in them and enact them for the expulsion of these shades of malice so that an equitable and empathetic order can appear.

His humanistic sensitivities, populist feelings and his unselfishness force him to talk like Gorky, of man's condition "to indicate how terrible it is" as well as to propose what man could be. Horrified by the neediness and hardship of the innocent slope people in his local Garhwal, his heart connects in sensitivity for them. There is expanding association in his works between his characters and the cultural and social milieu. Society frequently accepts the part of a corporate reprobate and individual malefactions end up symptomatic of predominant misuse.

The disheartened and bullied rustics are his recurring themes. Bond depicts the social shades of malice that spoil the lives of his characters. Deprived of cash, the most fundamental wherewithal for essential human existence, these hapless villagers accidentally fall prey to all types of misuse and social manhandling. Constrained by conditions, they acknowledge their enslavement with quiet stoicism. They are frequently denied of key human rights and denied fundamental human nobility. However, they endure their life of subjugation and its mortifications and treacheries with latent acquiescence.

In the story "Dead Man's Gift", the devastated villagers of Ahirpur are tricked into the alluring financial trap of Lala Ram Das, the town's cash loan specialist. Like Shylock in

Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice", Lala isn't content until the point that he has extricated his "pound of substance" from these pitiable people. Feeble to remove themselves from his horrible obligation trap, they enable themselves to be abused and transformed into veritable slaves to pacify him.

Bond demonstrates the pitifully caught state of these villagers paying off debtors. His fundamental humanism is revolted by this horrendous arrangement of usury that is rife in Indian culture. He dispatches a frontal assault on Lala Ram Das and other human bloodsuckers like him who empty the life-blood from our general public. His repugnance comes from his loathing to all types of misuse and is traceable in his profound empathy for individual men.

Bond makes Dilawar Singh, the thanedar of Ahirpur his mouthpiece as he dispatches into a destructive assault on Lala Ram Das. This records for Dilwar Singh's guided inquiry toward the bania:

" Hello, what's this? Is this one of your shocking indebted individuals?

Have you ended his life and in addition his garments?

The astute thanedar, who under the guise of murkiness, had propped up the exposed carcass against Lala's primary entryway, now pretends surprise as he watches the unnerved Bania endeavouring to dispose of the dead body. Bond nearly brags over the situation of this false exploiter, as looking for leniency, he goes down on his knees previously the head constable. The cornered usurer presently endeavours to purchase his freedom by gifting Dilwar Singh the cash he had before refused even as a credit.

Bond's graceful equity winds up obvious as Ram Das is gotten in a more complex than the ones he had carefully woven for his hapless customer. As the adversary overwhelms Lala, Bond's

essential humanism goes to the fore. Unfit to smother a twinge of pity at his hopeless situation, Bond comments :

"The appalling Ram Das understood that he was in an abhorrent dilemma. True, he was not guilty, yet before he could demonstrate this, he would be captured by the police whom he had disdained and mocked. Legal advisors would eat up his reserve funds. He would be torn from his family and denied of his solaces"

Be that as it may, such justice as is allotted to Lala Ram Das is conceivable just in the arranged universe of craftsmanship. It's anything but a reality of nature. Throughout everyday life, goodness isn't generally rewarded, as the underhanded frequently flourish and go unpunished. While a couple of Dilawar Singhs do exist, most of the law-implementers in our nation regularly scheme with the prosperous and great to torment poor people. For these pitiable creatures, death regularly turns into the main other option to their destined existence.

Whole families are destroyed as the tormented men fall back on suicide to escape from their permanent debt trap.

Demise surely discharges them from their wretchedness, yet their obligations are handed down to their beneficiaries. Like their dads before them, the kids are constrained to hold up under this cross for the duration of their lives and are frequently pulverized underneath its weight. Here, Bond considers how man's battle to leave his hopelessness just exacerbates it.

While usurers like Ram Das sap the villagers of their mental quality, infections and diseases deplete them of their physical vitality. The despicable absence of medicinal offices in rustic India constrains the old man in "Dust In The Mountains" to move from his remote town to far off Mussoorie for the treatment of a simple affliction. He turns into Bond's representative as he voices

the appalling dilemma of the villagers who frequently bite the dust because of absence of opportune medicinal treatment. Doctors don't like going to villages as there is no money in the villages. So, the hapless villagers must go to the doctors in towns to get treated.

In *A Wayside Inn*, Megchand exemplifies the stoic enduring of the provincial people. A café proprietor in the wild of Garhwal, intense stomach aches drives him to leave his local town to look for treatment in Mussoorie.

Bond regrets the absence of fundamental therapeutic luxuries in the Indian towns. Served for the most part by the essential wellbeing focuses, without specialists and pharmaceutical, the villagers are denied the basic treatment required for a healthful existence.

Medical professionals decline to go to the towns as no cash can be earned in these destitution stricken territories. Through characters like Megchand and the old man, Bond communicates his own particular disillusionment at the morals of the modern doctors. Accordingly, Megchand turns out to be exceedingly suspicious when coordinated to go to Delhi for cutting edge therapeutic treatment.

"At whatever point if somebody is sick, they say "Go to Delhi!" Does the entire world go to Delhi to get treated?" he asks

Past experience has made Megchand agonizingly mindful that the medical occupation is plagued with human sharks, who on the guise of therapeutic treatment deplete their patients of their assets. Regularly compelled to dispose of their valuable property to meet the exorbitant cost of therapeutic treatment, numerous villagers are demolished by the city specialists instead of by their sicknesses.

Megchand, similar to others of his group, is hesitant to go to the huge city for treatment since he understands the express worthlessness of such a treatment. He knows how poor and immaterial individuals like him are dismissed or ignored by the doctors of the urban areas. He expresses an agonizing truth when he unfortunately comments, "My uncle was advised to go to Delhi for a task. He moved between various hospitals until the point that his cash was done and afterwards he returned to the town and passed away inside a week."

Like the old man in "Dust in the Mountains" Megchand is happy to live with his affliction as opposed to "dying in a strange land" in a major city. Bond blasts this wretched disintegration of human qualities and feels for the deplorable rustics, who persist torment with tolerance and guts regularly looking towards heaven for the lightening of their torment and wretchedness.

In this way, he understands the significance of education in a nation like India where destitution, untouchability, casteism and so on keep on holding influence. Education not just aides in the embellishment of human identity yet it encourages the activity of judgment and duty essential for annihilation of these social wrongs.

Despite the fact that he is English by birth, Bond "grew up as an Indian with no division of loyalties. His heart beats for the little offspring of our nation who are prevented the open door from securing taking in the three Rs. While without a doubt our Constitution ensures free education to all youngsters up to the age of 14, not all kids benefit from this opportunity. A substantial number of Indian towns do not have the framework of even a grade school.

In "The Panther's Moon", the offspring of Manjari don't go to class as this remote mountain town has no focal point of instruction. Like other youngsters brought up in penury, these kids too are occupied with difficult work to increase the family's small wage.

Bisnu in "The Panther's Moon" and Mohan in "The Visitor" are outstanding special cases. Having awesome coarseness and assurance, these youthful chaps are prepared to overcome all chances with a specific end goal to secure educational instruction. Through them, Bond mirrors the mystery longings and desires of the devastated kids who "wanted to read and write as well as anyone in the world".

A down and out, Mohan is selling curios at road corners amid the day and spends his nights underneath the asphalt light, lost in his universe of books. Bisnu walks five miles tough through a thick backwoods to the closest school at Kemptee, their town's the main connection with the socialized world. His concern is exacerbated when Sheroo, his loyal canine is murdered by a lurking predator while returning home from school. With his yearly examinations fourteen days away, Bisnu needs to incidentally suspend going to class as "there was nobody to go with him and it was excessively hazardous, making it impossible to go alone"

His battle for training gains a lamentable extent when he is himself assaulted by the man-eater while on his way again from school. Debilitated and icy with fear he takes asylum in the branches of a Himalayan spruce, intensely trusting it would spare him from the jaguar. Staying unmoving in the tree, he sends up "a petition to every one of the divine beings he could consider". The town search party figures out how to find the missing kid just late during the evening when they hear his berserk cries ringing through the dim, devastated backwoods.

Bisnu and Mohan encapsulate the anguished offspring of our nation. Through them, Bond centres consideration around the predicament of thousands of Indian young people, who experience colossal battle to secure the base fundamental training. It often disrupts their spirit and many kids abandon their pursuit in dejection.

Bond is disheartened by the situation of these grievous youngsters, whose fantasies of enhancing their part through a respectable education is halted from developing in any way. Overloaded by destitution and absence of education, they are vanquished even before they begin their voyage through life.

Bond's enthusiastic embrace of the reason for the denied and the discouraged stems from his inborn want for a social order in which each man is treated with a feeling of a dignity independent of his rank, statement of faith, status or position throughout everyday life. He is agonizingly mindful of the impact of cash and power in deciding a person's situation in the advanced world. He has likewise perceived how society disposes of, without shame, the individuals who have outlasted their utility. Bond is profoundly tormented by the mercilessness of present-day society which while venerating the achievers, it heartlessly distances itself from the disappointments and fallen legends

In "The Garlands on His Brow" and "The Kitemaker", he displays an investigation of the injury and enduring of Hasan and Mehmood, the two awesome champions of yesteryears. Tragically, they are currently dismissed and overlooked by the general population who had once showered honours on them. They both have a place with the advanced age where "life has turned out to be quick, unreflective and the general population are excessively bustling tallying their increases, making it impossible to worry about the symbols of their childhood". What's more, therein lies their disaster.

When Hasan in "The Garlands on His Brow" surrenders a promising vocation in wrestling to wind up the indiscriminate Rani's lover and protector, he barely understands the substantial value he would need to pay for this decision. His fortunes dive and his life gets ugly when the Rani all of a sudden dies. Without the Rani's liberal help, he all of a sudden winds up without cash or

business. He returns by and by to the expert wrestling field. Be that as it may, age and great living having officially incurred significant injury on his body, Hasan gets himself miserably deficient to address the difficulties of the new youthful experts and he is crushed over and over. His spirits break, Hurt and mortified, he, at last, pulls back from the ring. Badly prepared for different callings, it isn't a little while later, this rejected wrestler ends up in the city. Intense destitution drives him to beg in the city of Dehra-the place that had once given him so much riches and notoriety. Its kin who had once rushed to him with profound respect and amazement, now desert him.

Hasan's awful predicament takes Bond's psyche back to the past and forces an examination between the constraints of our unthinking age and the brilliant age of the past "when a man was lauded for his past accomplishments and his disappointments were endured and their excesses excused".

A comparative correlation is found in "The Kitemaker", to feature the lack of care of the advanced age. Like Hasan, Mehmood, the popular kite creator falls on detestable days when the quickly extending city gobbles up the fields, leaving next to no space for kite-flying. Kite-flying soon turns into an outdated game. With the evolving condition, there is a lot of change in individuals' mentality towards this game, as, "grown-ups abhorred them and kids liked to spend their cash at the Cinema".

In this way alongside kite-flying, Mehmood, its most acclaimed skilled worker slips out of people's memory. Bond imbues disastrous sentiment in the old kite-creators nostalgic memories of the past incredible fights were battled, the kites swerving and swooping in the sky, going head to head with each other until the point when the string of one of them was severed... Kite-flying at that point was the game of the Kings. There was time, then, to spend an idle hour with a gay, dancing strip of paper".

Through people like Hasan and Mehmood, Bond communicates his embitterment with the cutting edge age where everybody rushed, in the warmth of expectation and fragile things like kites and daydreamers were stomped all over. His inborn goodness shouts out in challenge the unconcerned state of mind of present-day society that causes untold human suffering. He is profoundly bothered, similar to Wordsworth when he sees "what man has made of man"

He is persuaded that the main driver of all human woes is man's lack of care and aloofness towards his kindred brethren. His kite maker's disaster lies in the way that in the advanced world he has turned into an irregularity like the old banyan tree under which he sits wandering off in fantasy land. Both are underestimated—perpetual installations that were of no worry to the boisterous, perspiring mass of humankind

Bond is similarly annoyed by man's aggregate dismissal for all other living things on earth. He is astonished by man's obtuseness and covetousness that have driven him to loot and scour the earth for his own egotistical pursuits. All the while, man has vexed the sensitive poise and balance in the delicate eco-system.

However notwithstanding this grim situation, Bond does not lose confidence in the inborn decency of man. His positive thinking originates from his confidence in the duality and decent variety of human instinct. Like John Stuart Mill, he is persuaded that human instinct isn't propelled exclusively independent from anyone else intrigues or by the thought of joy and torment, but it is equipped for generosity.

Consequently, while from one viewpoint his reality is regularly plagued with mavericks, cheats and miscreants, one next to the other there exists characters who embody goodness and empathy, liberality and altruism.

He displays swindles like Mr Khushal, the teacher in *Masterji* who has no contrition in profiting by offering counterfeit certificates to his young, susceptible understudies. Along with such villainy there exists together his optimal characters like Wang Chei's better half in "The Most Potent Medicine Of All and Aunt Mariam in 'The Guardian Angel. They improve and recognize the lives of those they interact with and make the world a substantially more wonderful place to stay in.

Bond makes an image of magnanimous commitment and boundless love in Wang Chei's wife. She forfeits her life to change her better half's physical enduring and cure his straightforward illness. She disfigures her own body for she has read in the book of Lui Fei that only her own flesh and blood would cure her husband and these she had unflinchingly taken from her soft, generous bosom.

This straightforward Chinese housewife gives another significance to presence through her unparalleled forfeiture. It is her totally unselfish nature combined with her marvellous love for her spouse that leads her to a definitive generosity. This demonstration recognizes her character and raises her to a relatively gallant extent. While we are shocked by her activity, Bond looks for and discovers defence for her generous motion:

"You were correct, old sage Lui Fei. What more intense fixing is there than affection and compassion"

Here, Bond familiarizes his perusers with that profound, tolerating and treasuring the love that maintains human connections, an affection that has progressively turned into an irregularity in the contemporary world. The affection Wang Chefs spouse had for her better half of twenty years, an adoration that Bond still treasures for his dad. It is an affection that is past Death—and adoration that makes life alive and significant. Subsequently, in Bond's real love is the main power that is sufficiently solid to break all bonds and discharge the limit with respect to truly unselfish activity.

Bond is additionally interested by the decent variety, dynamic quality and energy of life. He acknowledges the superb and the corrupt, the joys and agonies, the delights and distresses that makeup life. His catholicity of viewpoint influences him to embrace the reason for the frail and the abused underdogs of our general public.

In *Most Beautiful*, he reaffirms his certifiable human reaction to love and empathy through his very touchy depiction of the character of Suresh, the youthful retard. His fundamental humanism empowers him to enter the facade of a physical oddity to the honourable heart caught inside a pitifully disfigured body.

Suresh's physical deformation separates him from other youngsters as well as makes him a protest of their criticism. In the wake of protecting him from a bundle of stone-pelting kids, when the storyteller takes the bleeding youngster home, he is stunned by his dad's savagery. Unfit to acknowledge his single son's disfigurement, the dad's disappointment shows itself in his aggregate lack of concern towards his child. Suresh is dealt with as an irregularity of nature and excluded by other kids as well as by his own particular dad.

Overwhelmed by a sentiment of pity for this tormented and forlorn child, the storyteller gives him camaraderie and even figures out how to train him to swim. This new aptitude gave him a specific certainty, made his life something in excess of a one-dimensional presence".

The storyteller regards the youthful retard as an ordinary person. He is, in this way, horrendously frustrated when Suresh gets the news of his inevitable take off for Delhi with absolute detachment: "I felt somewhat hurt by his evident lack of interest. Did our long stretches of fraternity make no difference to him?"

The storyteller here neglects to value the way that the rationally disabled Suresh can't respond to a circumstance like an ordinary youngster. Be that as it may, when the acknowledgement occurs to him that his companion is abandoning him everlastingly, the youthful retard responds in a way that leaves the storyteller confused with wonder and awe.

Overcoming the insults and scoffs of the night swarm, Suresh stumbles through the swarmed market to the railroad station. As his train hauls out of the station, the storyteller all of a sudden sees the young man frantically limping after the speeding train, attempting to stop its flight. Hence, in his own ungainly way, Suresh shows his affection and appreciation to his companion. Right then and there, regardless of his physical peculiarity, Suresh moves toward becoming for the overpowered storyteller the 'most wonderful kid in the entire world'.

Through Suresh. Bond confirms his conviction that physical distortion frequently covers an honourable heart. In this way, one ought not to pass judgment on an individual absolutely by his physical appearance, nor enable himself to be biased by physical offensiveness or distortion. For underneath it might sneak a brilliant heart, and an unadulterated heart is unquestionably more wonderful than an immaculate body.

Bond's short stories are a lucid explanation of humanistic qualities and a mighty statement of human rights. In them, he imagines a general public liberated from class, doctrine, segregation, partiality and tyranny. Thus, he contends the need for shielding esteems like equity balance, resistance, balance and truth. Like a saviour, he lectures the ideology of love, adoration, empathy, kind-heartedness and magnanimity among fellowmen.

Bond believes that we must construct a new life here on this earth and not in heaven ... and at the back of all wretchedness, there is the soul of man. The soul remains even when wretchedness has passed. In this lies the real humanistic attitude of Ruskin Bond.

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