

The Depiction of Sufferings in Literature

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Abstract

Suffering is an inevitable facet of human life. All around the world countless people endure a lot of sufferings from violence, abuse, natural disasters and their own vindictive and self damaging nature. Human suffering occurs every day, everywhere, in many types, different forms and many ways all around us. We do not always observe it, but it does not mean that it does not exist. The definition of the verb 'suffer' is "to feel or undergo pain; sustain damage or loss," Different readings explain a different way of suffering. In their basics, some described mental suffering and others described physical suffering. But after the deep reading of various books, we find a certain kind of suffering in each.

Keywords: Suffering, damaging, human Suffering, mental Suffering, undergo

Suffering is a painful and unhappiness experience of an individual's life associated with the perception of harm or a threat of harm. Suffering is a fundamental element of human being that generates a lot of physiological and psychological violence. Suffering and pain both are used synonymously, but in many cases they are considered and used in different ways. Pain is used to express physical sorrow while the suffering for mental sorrow. Pain is inevitable but suffering is optional. Sometimes they both are used to define each other. For instance; pain is a physical sensation and this cause mental sensation. Thus, pain is physical suffering; or suffering is severe physical and mental pain. Physical pain is an unpleasant bodily experience including breathing, hunger, thirst, sleep, sex etc while the suffering have many unique qualities of painful sensation. Suffering includes distress, misery, unhappiness, discomfort, displeasure, disagreeableness etc.

This research paper aims to depict the true depth of human suffering and to connect it to day-to-day life. It will give a brief description of suffering, different types, forms and signs of suffering. Further it will describe the root causes and remedy of suffering and the truth behind suffering briefly. Our life is full of emotions positive and negative. Human life is a series of many events and emotions woven together by pain. Acceptance, affection, amusement, anger,

anguish, annoyance, anticipation etc are the various forms of suffering. It includes being insulted, mocked, despised, apposed, beatings, labor, loss of reputations, hatred, martyrdom, crucifixion etc.

According to the Ancient philosophy, suffering is alleviated by achieving mental clarity or lucidity which signified false belief, mindlessness, folly and conceit. In the Pyrrhonism, suffering comes from dogmas. It believes that certain things are good or bad by nature. Suffering can be removed by developing suspension of judgment which leads mental tranquility. For Stoicism, the greatest good lies in virtue but the soul reaches it through a kind of indifferent thing pleasure and pain. Modern philosophy says that suffering of life is productive, exalting the will to power, despising weak compassion or pity; and recommend us to embrace willfully the eternal return of the greatest suffering.

In religion too, suffering have many different meanings. Buddhism tells us about the four truths of suffering (Dukkha). They are the truth of suffering, the truth of the cause of suffering, the truth of the end of suffering, and the truth of the path that leads to the end of suffering. The basic doctrines of early Buddhism that remains common to all Buddhism, including these four noble truths. Existence is suffering 'Dukhka'; suffering has a cause, namely craving and attachment 'Trishna'; there is a cessation of suffering, which is 'Nirvana'; and there is a path to the cessation of suffering is the 'Moksha'. Buddhism gives The Eightfold Path consists of eight practices as right view, right resolve, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right meditative absorption Samadhi.

Hinduism says that the suffering follows naturally from personal negative behavior in an individual's current life or in a past life that is called Karma, the action. Karma is not fate, for we act with what can be described as a conditioned free will creating our own destinies. Karma is an active law of existence, one that describes the spiritual cosmos much as Newton's law describes the physical world. Basically, the Law of Karma states that every action you take will have an equal reaction. Just as

we put money in a temple collection plate and coming home to find some money we had forgotten we had. A coworker steals a cell phone and later on the cell phone is stolen from him. "As you sow, as you reap." We can create good Karma by telling the Truth in any situation.

The Bhagavadgita begins with the theme of sorrow and ends with a positive note on the possibility of ending suffering through self-realization. Arjuna like any other human being is prone to the emotion of sorrow in the face of difficulties when he was standing in the middle of Kurukshetra, the war field. He was overwhelmed with sorrow as he contemplated upon the prospect of slaying his own relations to achieve victory in the battle field, despite the fact that he was being assisted in his actions by God Himself in the incarnation of Lord Krishna. A warrior like Arjuna, with God Himself by his side as a charioteer, was unable to deal with his suffering and face his enemies. Imagine the plight of ordinary men and women when they have to take difficult decisions that may often conflict with their long held opinions, morals and values or involve a radical change in their very life styles.

When we tell a lie, even if it is a small one or even a single time, we set ourselves up for deceit and hidden agendas from other people. Live purposefully and help People. We should meditate and practice Compassion and Kindness. So we must accept suffering as a just consequence and as an opportunity for spiritual progress. Soul is free from any suffering. Abstinence from causing pain to other is called Ahimsa, is a central tenet of Hinduism and Jainism too. For Judaism, suffering is often seen as a punishment for sins and a test of person's faith.

For Christianity redemptive suffering is the belief about human suffering. The live example is the redemptive suffering of Lord Jesus. It was just the punishment for sin and allows him to grow in the love of god. According to the holy book The Bible, suffering is the work given by Satan. Sin brings people away from God. Sometimes people accept the sufferings accepting that it is given from God and it is beyond our power. According to Christianity suffering includes insult, mock, despise, opposes, beatings, stoning, fasting, labors, loss of reputation, renunciation of worldly pleasures, humiliation, hatred, martyrdom and crucifixion. Christianity teaches people to pray for those who are suffering in their life. They believe that evil and suffering give people a chance to become better and improve their souls. Instead of this, God rewards heaven to them as He is omnipotent and almighty.

The other belief of Islam, people accept suffering with the hope and faith as they think that suffering is Allah's will

and they accept it as it is the test of their faith. Suffering is God's blessing according to Islam. The sufferers remember the Allah and connect with Him through

sufferings. Suffering expunges the sin and cleanses their souls for the immense reward of the afterlife and the avoidance of the hell. Bahai believe that suffering is a temporary and brief manifestation of physical life. Bahai believe that only joy exists in the spiritual world.

In Arts and literature, suffering has a broad meaning. It is a theme that is communicated in various texts in the different forms of literature as prose, poetry, novel, drama etc. Literature depicting suffering also inspires hope and confidence in the resilience of the human spirit. In most stories, suffering is temporary and usually resolved by the end, even if the resolution is simply death or justice served for those who have suffered. Literature involving suffering, then, is often true to life, in that it portrays suffering as inevitable and sometimes inexplicable, but often endured and overcome. Suffering is categorized into two; physiological and psychological. Suffering turns a normal person from mild to intolerable. Physical suffering generates from a physical cause. An unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage is physical pain.

In law, suffering is a legal term that refers to the mental distress or physical pain endured by an accuser as a result of injury for which the accuser seeks redress. Assessments of suffering are required to be made for attributing legal awards. Suffering has been defined as the distress a person experiences when they perceive a threat to any aspect of their continued existence, whether physical, psychological, or social. Suffering results from an inability to control actions that usually define one's view of one's self and that the characteristics of suffering include the loss of autonomy, or the loss of valued relationships or sense of self. Suffering is therefore determined not by the threat itself but rather by its meaning to the individual and the threat to their personhood.

In nutshell, we can say that suffering and the pleasure are respectively has the negative and positive effects of human life. The evolutionary role of physical and mental suffering, through natural selection, is fundamental. Despite its initial disrupting nature, suffering contributes to the organization of meaning in an individual's world and psyche. People make use of suffering for specific social or personal purposes in many areas of human life. In arts, literature, or entertainment, people may use suffering for creation, for performance, or for enjoyment. In the depiction of suffering, a great amount of suffering is involved in the body art. The most common forms of body

English, Jon Mee, analyzing the post-Salman Rushdie/ Midnight's Children writers, calls Seth's novel "classic realism," but says despite that it is difficult not to see it "as an allegory of nationhood..., subscribing to an idea of Indian history as a progress towards the goal of a secular, commercial society in the image of conventional Western models of national development." Although Lata shows signs of independence, "the novel is ultimately one of conformity and what it represents as the inevitability of bourgeois life," argues Mee.

A Suitable Boy is set in Brahmampur, a fictionalized Northern Indian city on the banks of the Ganges River. The action takes place sometime around in 1950 to 1952, four to five years after India gained Independence from Great Britain in 1947. The novel is the best example of continuation of the tradition of arranged marriage as true to the times of 1950s. In India, marriage is a well-established institution which presupposes certain customs and rites, various values, issues and obstacles. Marriage in India does not merely mean the meeting of two individuals, but it signifies mixing and mingling of two families and involves respecting and understanding the customs and tradition as well as the members of each other's families. This makes the parents especially the mother, more responsible to install in her daughter the good values that she is able to maintain balance the human relationships and values. The stories of these families bring in other issues of the value of work, the process of change, the injustice of poverty, and the direction taken by the newly independent and democratic India. The novel is not only a love story but also a depiction of India. The theme of *The Suitable Boy* stands as a hallmark of traditional Indian customs and culture.

The plots of *A Suitable Boy* are structured around pursuit or search and this gives force and coherence to the novel. Mrs. Mehra is in search of *A Suitable Boy* for Lata; Dipankar is in search for a spiritual base; Mr. Mahesh Kapoor is in search of a political base and the Nawab is in search of his feudal stability. All these searches are centered in the period of 1951-52, the period of newly free country, embarking on the path of finding a permanent footing internally and externally. *A Suitable Boy* shows up in the verifiable family with ordered occasions which adjusts the anecdotal characters, who goes at the same time following one another. The novelist appears to be rising up out of the content as storyteller of the story and furthermore a character inside the novel. In *A Suitable Boy* Seth achieves this by the faithful representation of a vibrant society with all its intricacies and potentials.

According to Malcolm Bradbury, *A Suitable Boy* "is a vast chronicle novel of post-Independence Indian life, and

one of the more startling works of the early Nineties."

A writer's social consciousness in society while observing its various formations. It can also be defined as social awareness; to be aware of the problems that different societies communities he shares within a and face on a day-to-day basis; to be conscious of the different cultural, political and civic aspects. The factors that form various strata of society interact with the cognitive and biological processes of the writer, while he lives in the society. This interaction slowly shapes the reaction of the writer to his society and his inner and outer experiences add to this process. he society. *A Suitable Boy*, the central motif of the novel is the search for a companion in life. A vast, panoramic tale charting the fortunes of four large families and exploring India and its rich and varied culture at a crucial point in its history. Seth's social consciousness enables him to make an almost photographic representation of many of India's cultural and religious festivities in *A Suitable Boy* and in addition to this; he makes a thorough analysis of the formative years of post-independent India by exploring the history of the period by concretizing certain historical figures in his fictional world. Thus, he has made a two pronged strategy-one cultural and the other; political-armed with the essential assimilatory social consciousness a creative writer should possess to complete his unbiased and faithful representation of the Indian society. A kaleidoscopic presentation of India's varied religious and cultural festivities are strewn in the length and breadth of *A Suitable Boy*. Thus, Seth has succeeded to achieve a panoramic view of the Indian society that can easily be assimilated by any reader from an alien culture. *A Suitable Boy* presents the mosaic of the common and multicultural, multi-lingual and multi-ethnic India. He acknowledges the demand of reproducing microcosm India with different dialects, cultures, social and customary issues. In the words of Ruth Morse, "*A Suitable Boy* is social satire and social history, from the politics of the great man to the maneuverings of a mother." *A Suitable Boy*, the novel of the record was not a small achievement in 1993, impressed critics and reviewers all over the world, "More than 8 lakhs words, kneaded in 478 sections of 19 parts in its 1347 pages, weighting about fifteen hundred grams." One of the major characteristics of the realist novel is its preponderance of middle-class life Indian society of the 50s is witnessing the gradual growing up of this particular segment. British Raj left in India a class of anglophiles who became executives in the earlier positions occupied by the British master. They are a class apart, engaged themselves in consumerism and pomposity. The snobbishness of this particular class forms a major chunk of *A Suitable Boy*. They share the cultural

lineages of the whites and are whites in their souls albeit Indians in physic. Arun and Meenakshi are the typical representatives of this class. There's something about long-drawn, multi-threaded family sagas. A fascination that becomes habit in watching lives unfold with all their strange complexity, the simple yet irresolvable tensions between members and the oftentimes quirky motivations that guide them. All of which present necessary insights and grant us an easy omniscience as well. Seth's novel, however, presented difficulties in adaptation. With one central storyline - finding A Suitable Boy for Lata Mehra - there were myriad other stories branching out in small and big ways. Some assumed critical importance, others meandered away into too easy resolute ions.

Regarding politics, M.K. Bhatnagar says: "In a society characterized by widespread ignorance and illiteracy with fatalistic and other worldly attitudes, religion becomes a tool of exploitation."

Seth's novel is a quintessential Indian story, or as has been said, it's the one big Indian novel telling the big story of newly independent India. There is the suspense-filled courtroom trial in the very last episode, echoing similar scenes in countless films over the decades. On the other hand, Seth's description of what will transpire at Maan's trial is elegant in its simplicity, especially when he writes of a crucial exchange between the Nawab of Baitar and his son.

James Beatlie Expresses his views which is quite similar with Vikram Seth: "A great part of our fashionable music seems intended rather to tickle and astonish the hearers, than to inspire them with any permanent emotions . . . Simplicity makes music, as well as language intelligible and expressive . . . In music it is indispensable, for we are never pleased with that music which we cannot understand and which seems to have no meaning, who is good enough, but not someone she's in love with: Haresh. As the saga concludes, Lata Mehra finally makes her decision: she will not marry Kabir. Instead, she marries another 'suitable boy.' Thus, Indian English fiction may be regarded as "a systematic study of cultural contact and cultural change, with Indian world view at the focus" and "knowledge of acculturation process."

With his representation of India in the 1950s, Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy (1993) has appropriated the nineteenth-century realist tradition in novel writing to his own ends. The Nehruvian idea of India as a 'unity within diversity' and a secular approach to religion features prominently in this novel. The ordinary human experiences are subjected to observation and logical analysis. Realism recognizes the fact that, as the naturalist

supposes, it cannot rest either on a lifeless average or on an individual principle which dissolves its own self into nothingness. True realists are always striving for truthfulness. They have an intense desire for probity and are sincere and honest in describing the situations and characters. A well-defined form coupled with characterization made his work something other than a mere photographical representation of reality, social concern also helped them to model their types according to their ideological stands. Seth's effort is to tame the receding reality in the works of art. This striving of man to know truth and its representation is the manifesto of realism.

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