
HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR COLLECTIVE PROSPERITY: ANALYSIS OF THE PORTRAYAL OF MAN-EATERS IN JIM CORBETT'S WRITINGS

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Abstract:

The efforts taken by united nations and many nations worldwide improved the effectiveness of the implementation of human rights and dignity and gradually moved towards directing a sustainable development which encompasses not only humans but also the whole ecosystem. Literature can be used to promote the significance of animal existence and to create awareness among the young generation to preserve the standards of sustainable and environment-conscious rights directed by the united nations. Understanding of the interest in animal rights was created through various narrations of man-eater stories by jim corbett in an era when animals were considered inferior to human beings. We cannot deny the role played by his work in forming this concept of the animal world and its claim to survive on equal terms with the human world. Jim corbett attempts to intersect animal rights advocacy and is sometimes conflicting with human rights. He is a pioneer in preaching and presenting the case of tigers in the man's court with sound arguments. He was a visionary who understood the vitality and significance of the natural world and its inhabitants before the world realised its importance.

Keywords: *human rights, sustainable development, animal rights, co-existence*

Methodology:

This study is based on primary and secondary sources available on and related to the theory of human rights in literature in the english language. A review of literature is comprehended to present the journey and growth of the genre. The prominent traits and trends in the history of human and animal rights are studied. Jim corbett and his work is taken into consideration and analysed while studying the depiction of animal rights imbibed in his writing. His writing is studied on the parameters of a discussion of rights in the context of man-animal conflict. An analysis of his literary contribution is undertaken to conclude. Research papers in various journals, articles in newspapers, books and real-life observations from academics are used as secondary sources. A comprehensive analysis of the available literature was undertaken by using both printed and internet sources.



Introduction:

United nations define human rights as "...inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination." international human rights law lays down the commitments of governments to act in defined ways or to abstain from some particular acts, to endorse and defend human rights and essential individual freedom or groups. The united nations has demarcated a comprehensive series of globally acknowledged rights, like civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. United nations in the general assembly in 1945 and 1948 adopted the universal declaration of human rights. The efforts taken by united nations and many nations worldwide improved the effectiveness of the implementation of human rights and dignity. People around the globe are leading improved lives equated to just a decade ago with better access to health care, work, and education than ever before. However, with developing technology and modernisation environmental degradation threats are increasing day by day. Speculation in all-encompassing and sustainable development can release substantial prospects for collective prosperity. The need for sustainable development objectives has influenced human imagination and perspective creating a reflection in every sphere of human existence. The concept of sustainable development encompasses not only human existence but also the existence of non-human entities.

Observations :

The 17 sustainable development goals (sdgs) laid down by united nations cover the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. Goal 15 is about conserving life on land. It is to guard and reinstate global ecosystems, sustainably preserve forests, combat deforestation, halt and reverse land dilapidation and stop biodiversity loss. Strong ecosystems and biological diversity are a source of food, water, medicine, shelter and other material goods. They also provide ecosystem services – the cleaning of air and water – which endure life and increase resiliency in the face of mounting pressures created by increasing population and the pressure of technology. Human efforts to protect biodiversity are inadequate to accommodate the interest and rights of non-human entities. Human activities have intensely transformed most ecosystems: around 40,000 species are documented to be at risk of extinction over the coming decades, hectares of forest are being destroyed each year, and key biodiversity areas remain unprotected. Thus, the protection of animal interests and rights has become indispensable for the existence of human beings.

When we consider the term "animal rights" it "refers to the idea that many animals have fundamental rights to be treated with respect as individuals and liberty from the torture that may not be overridden by considerations of aggregate welfare."("animal rights") it preaches morality to provide fundamental protection for all animals. The term is frequently used as a



synonym for animal protection and liberation. The 42nd amendment to the Indian constitution in 1976 was a liberal step towards placing the base for animal protection in India. The constitutional provisions for animal protection commenced with the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1960. Moreover, over the years Indian courts have added animal law. However, there is still a need of developing a solid animal law in India.

This is the fiftieth year of Project Tiger since it was launched in the year 1973. India has come a long way from almost the stage of extinction of tigers to the successful implementation of one of the most successful environmental projects. Tiger is still an endangered species and there is a need for public support and efforts to preserve this majestic fauna of Indian jungles. Literature has the enormous power to initiate change and create awareness in all dimensions. Literature can cultivate a better understanding of the natural world through critical evaluation of characters, analysis of scenarios, and examination of diverse voices. Through literature, people identify their place in the world, their belongings and their responsibility. Naturally, literature can be used to promote the significance of animal rights and to create awareness among the young generation to preserve the standards of sustainable and environment-conscious rights directed by the United Nations which include not only human beings but also animals. Małecki, Pawłowski & Sorokowski points out that "literary fiction is a popular form of entertainment which can make almost any subject interesting to wide audiences." They further add that "the fictional narrative used in our experiment influenced the subjects' attitudes toward animal welfare in the sense of making their attitudes more pro-animal welfare." The understanding of the interest in animal rights was created through various narrations of man-eater stories by Jim Corbett in an era when basic human rights were denied, leaving apart the animal world and no one can deny the role played by his work in forming this concept of the animal world and its claim to survive on equal terms with the human world.

Corbett's work is a collection of wildlife stories, which convey an explicit message of conservation to the world. His work can be regarded as a non-fictional account of his adventures. Corbett through his writings presented the man-animal conflict, while stating strongly the importance of non-human existence. Jim Corbett presents both human and animal characters. The presentation of Indian characters is in the framework of humanity, while the depiction of the animal world instigates a sense of responsibility towards creating awareness about the importance of non-human existence and their right to life. He shows a great sense of responsibility towards the animal world and presents a case for their rights. All his life he strived hard to help the poor folk of Kumaon by hunting man-eaters but his argument always carries disapproval of eliminating the species.

His commitment towards the protection and well-being of the animal world is visible not only through his writing but through the delineation of nature and her inhabitants in all her shades and beauty in jungle lore. Jim Corbett's work depicts the hunting of twelve man-eaters. He is the hunter's protagonist. However, the protagonist is not a regular hunter in the common sense of the word. He observes ethics. He is the most humane hunter, perhaps the only one, who admits and reports an error of judgement. Corbett admits to shooting the Pital Pani tiger



under a misconceived notion. He develops a theory about the man-eating tendencies among carnivores. The protagonist shows an exclusive relationship with the man-eater. The relationship is of conflict, with the implication of life and death, but with an undertone of respect for the opponent. The protagonist's objective in hunting man-eaters is humanitarian because he loves and respects fellow human beings. He does not favour the indiscriminate slaughter of wildlife but hunts the notorious man-eaters. Sport has a different and wider connotation for him. He hunts for the adventure of sport but rejects indiscriminate slaughter. The bachelor of powalgarh was not a man-eater. The episode celebrates the supreme joy of adventure in its true sense but, also ends on a note of remorse at having lost the finest of fauna in the region.

All twelve episode of man-eater hunting follows a process of investigation to determine the cause of the conversion of a normal tiger into a man-eating tiger. One of the most striking features of jim corbett's narration is that like human characters he creates animal characters, they have a name which sets him apart from other nature writers. He accords the attribute of a personality to the tigers with its unique operating style, habits and even mental status. The description of tigers is unique and noteworthy. The eleven man-eaters present a fully sketched portrait of the wild cats. These man-eaters have unique characteristics. The circumstances and the reasons for their operation are different. Every man-eater has been forced to adapt to an alien diet due to the force of circumstances and in most cases caused by the ruthlessness of human beings; a carelessly fired shot of a gun or in some cases injury caused by some natural disaster. Every hunt is followed by an investigation process to determine the cause of the conversion of the carnivore into a man-eater. The champawat man-eater is hunted after strenuous stalking but, while skinning the tigress corbett found that "the upper and lower canine teeth on the right side of her mouth were broken, the upper one in half, and the lower one right down to the bone" (mk 38). This injury was caused by a gunshot and forced her to be a man-eater. The chowgarh tigress became a man-eater because as corbett writes, "the tigresses' claws were broken and brushed out, and one of her canine teeth was broken and her front teeth were worn down to the bone" (mk 108). An interesting and curious fact about the mohan man-eater was that it made a low moaning sound while walking. The sound was an indicator that the tiger was suffering from a wound. The reason for the low moans of the man-eater was revealed while skinning. Some twenty-five porcupine quills were found embedded in its left leg. The thak man-eater had lost all fear of man and carried people in broad daylight from the doorstep of houses, from the heart of a village, and in front of a group of people. The young tigress became a man-eater due to injuries to her shoulder caused by buckshot. The mukteshwar man-eater was shot dead, a frightened animal blind in one eye. Jim corbett's delineation arouses our sympathy for the man-eater. The tallades man-eater was a wounded tiger and was the most dreadful animal. The man-eater starved but fought out with the hunter till her last breath. Rudra prayag leopard is the only one of its types, to whom jim corbett has dedicated a complete book, a sort of novella. The man-eating leopard is introduced with a theory to support the reasons that turned leopards into man-eaters. During epidemics of diseases, disposing of a large number of bodies poses a big problem. The rudraprayag leopard emerged after the epidemic of influenza of 1918 and operated from 1918 to 1926, killing over one hundred and twenty-five people. The



pipal pani tiger is a complete character sketch of a tiger since its birth. It shows the growth of a tiger in its natural surroundings and instigates a view of the man-free natural world and a joyful life led by an animal in natural surroundings. The cub's growth and movement were detected from the marks he left on the sandy bed of a stream, pipal pani. Deprived of its mother's assistance, it learned to kill the smaller prey, graduating to the bigger ones. Details of his shikar, his home and his habits are discussed in detail. The cub leads a comfortably protected life in a giant of a felled forest. Jim corbett describes the peaceful life of the cub, "here he brought most of his kills, basking, when the days were cold, on the smooth bole of the tree, where many a leopard had basked before him" (mk 176). The cub grew to be a handsome tiger and his baby hair changed for a rich coat. As a grown-up male tiger, he set up his territory in a "thick belt of scrub skirting the foothills" (mk 179). In his growing years, he found a mate for him. Over the period, his nature changed. He started objecting to jim corbett's visits over his kills with angry growls. The cub had grown into a full-grown male tiger with all the majesty and strength. Sadly, he disregarded the lessons learned as a cub. He returned to a kill carelessly and was shot. The wound healed but left him with a permanent defect in his right leg. Disabled to hunt big game, he took a heavy toll on the cattle.

The author remarks, "in the succeeding year he gained as much in size as in reputation" (mk 182). He became a prized trophy and many sportsmen tried to bag him. A fatal wound by a gunshot forced him to shoot his long-year companion, the pipal pani tiger. Jim corbett feared that the tiger may turn to man-eating. However, this fear turned out to be wrong because the wound was completely healed. This story poignantly depicts the fatality of human intrusion on animal rights. Jim corbett provides details about animal characters, their physical features, behaviour, and expression, which help in building the characters on equal terms with human characters. These details make the animal character lively and real.

Conclusion :

Jim corbett's writing attempt to intersect animal rights advocacy and at times is in a conflicting position with human rights. Superficially his man-eater stories seem like jungle mystery fiction where the tiger is the villain and the hunter protagonist looks like the saviour hero. However, the quality that distinguishes these stories is that the advocacy of animals and their rights to survival in the natural surrounding is paramount. The animal operates in the setting of the story as equal to human characters and at times gets the benefit of the doubt twice before labelling them as a man-eater. The human rights propagated by united nations began with a man-centric approach but gradually evolved into an environment centered approach wherein animal stands on equal terms with human beings. This evolution leads towards a new future of coexistence and respect for every living entity. Jim corbett was a pioneer in preaching this approach while presenting the case of tigers in the manmade court with sound arguments. He was a visionary who understood the vitality and significance of the natural world and its inhabitants before the world realised its importance.



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