

# Exploration Into Eco-Consciousness Prevailing Through Characters Of The Almond Tree

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## Abstract

This paper tends to explore degradation of human beings and nature that is the main concern now days. The researchers are not paying more attention to the issues related to environment and pollution that causes harmful factors to human beings. Corasanti's *The Almond Tree* (2012) reveals how nature and environment are being destroyed in wars, and the effects of this destruction on human beings. The present study presents all the traumas of the people living in the areas where the war never ends. It deals with the harms and aftermaths of the attacks on human beings and nature. Eco criticism tries to find out the relationship of human beings with their physical world, that how both nature and human being reacts to each other. This interaction leads to harmful effects. The present scrutiny unravels that humanity and nature share close relations, as they are interdependent. Any attack on humanity or natural world causes harmful results for both.

**Keywords:** Eco-consciousness in Characters, *The Almond Tree*, Earth Degradation, War and Nature

## Introduction

Tosic (2006) described eco criticism's origin from ecology which is the relationship of living organisms with their natural environment and environment in general. This analogy draws parallelism between literature and environment both depends upon each other. There are different ways through which human behaves with nonhuman objects in literary fiction. For him, the interdisciplinarity consists on combining together two poles of knowledge such as natural sciences and human sciences (p.43). Eco criticism is an approach based on reading nature in literary works since it emphasizes on "literary (and artistic) expression of human experience primarily in a natural and consequently in a culturally shaped world" (Cohen, 2004).

Eco criticism puts all natural and environmental elements into deep consideration. Garry (2004), quoting Glotfelty's definition as: What then is eco criticism? Simply put, eco criticism is the study of relationship between literature and the physical environment. Just as feminist criticism examines language and literature from gender-conscious perspective, and Marxist criticism brings an awareness of modes production and economic class to its reading of texts, eco criticism takes an earth-centered approach to literary studies (p.3). Glotfelty defines the interest of eco criticism by comparing it with feminist and Marxist critics and explored its earth-centered approach to the literary studies. Still this definition has not that clarity about how it works and what does it actually means.

### **Degradation of Human Beings**

In *The Almond Tree* (2012) degradation of land, natural resources and human beings has caused serious problems for the society. The conflict between Israel and Palestine has a great tension for the human beings and the destruction of nature. People suffer on various levels: physically, psychologically and mentally. The trauma of war makes people aware of their national concerns. For the nations people use to fight over the matters they know nothing about. Israeli soldiers start curfews in Palestinian boundaries to make people fearful and to let them stay inside the houses. The family life does not remain the same as it is before the war. Ahmad's family faces hardships of life from the beginning of the story till end.

In the novel the Jews exploit all the natural as well as human resources. They want to use the wealth of the people to keep them under their control. Soldiers arrest many Palestinians without any charge to keep them fearful. The story revolves around Ahmad and his family and the author has showed Ahmad's struggles against the tyrannical rule of Israel. His story is an inspiration for those who fights against their rights and are let down by problems and hardships. He struggles hard from his childhood to adult age for the survival of his family; while they don't even have a house to live. They prepare a tent for their shelter. His father is in prison and Ahmad is the head of the family in the absence of father. He tries hard against all odds and shows courage to gain power. The story can be related to the present scenario where materialistic approach increases day by day. People are only concerned about money making; they have no emotions, feelings and mercy for others. The moral value deteriorates and no one bothers about ones social duties and responsibilities.

Through the novel the writer has highlighted many issues of the Palestinians. They are not allowed to dig deeper wells for the water although it is their right as natives. They complain that new people have used their water for swimming, and the native people don't have enough water to drink. The land once was fertile full of olive, almond and fig trees but now with the arrival of Israelis the land has become barren. The Jews have planted landmines to make the land their own property. The name of novel has shown the authors concern about nature and the effects of dangerous weapons on human beings in this way she fulfills her moral responsibility towards environment. She is against those who utilize natural sources to make profits and gain power by devastating nature.

Land mining is the misuse of technology by Jews; through construction of mines in the land they exploit people on their own land in front of their eyes. This shows the unfair means of power. People have no concern towards consequences of material gain. Materialistic approach is condemned in order to save humanity, which should be the first priority of human beings. Human beings does not regard land, trees, plants and natural resources as living entities and degrade them. The exploitation of land results in making it barren. On the other hand if human beings want a balance life then land should be regarded as a living entity. Durer (1985) explains the fact that people do not destroy nature because it has close bonding with human beings. A viable environmental ethic can protect nature and establish communication with the nature through friendly ways. Nature requires attention but the over use of technology destroys it to its fullest. Fuss (1989) suggests that re conception and rethinking of nature gives it metaphorical status as a speaking and alive entity. Human beings must stop the destructive practices to environment. Modern society must rethink and refeel about nature. Industrial revolution and modern technologies have changed man's relation with nature. Fanon (1963) explains that for the colonized people the "most essential value, the most concrete first and foremost is the land, the land which will bring them bread, and above all the dignity. The land will make people owner of something if they will regard it an entity."

### **Statement of the Problem**

The writers who live close to nature and environment feel more sensitive towards the issues of land and destruction of nature by humans. Eventually their characters are created on the web that is characterized by their concern towards nature and environment and loss of human lives caused by land mines and attacks of bombs. Power structures of the society are responsible for these situations in any country. These issues demand to rethink and reframe the ideologies behind the problems. There is need to pay attention to what is happening around us in our surroundings to avoid such issues. Corasanti is one of those writers who are trying to resolve the problems of the areas affected by the war as Palestine and Israel. The characters eco consciousness arises when they face worse circumstances and then they feel more about nature and its protection.

### **Literature Review**

Nature and literature share a close relationship as evidenced in all the genres of literature about all cultures of the world. Eco criticism is a recent evaluation in the literary history as it emerged in 1990s, first in U.S and then in U.K. It is based on the assumption that human world and physical world has close links because they get shaped by each other. According to Love (2003) eco-criticism pays attention to the "interconnections between the material world and human culture, especially culture's tropes as language and literature" (p. 196).

There are many factors which play role on the whole in the destruction of environment and human beings. Griswold (2012) throws light on the cold war and its effects on every form of life. In *Silent Spring* (1963) Carson's focus is on the use of DDT and other harmful pesticides which itself is a tool of war. These pesticides are deadly poisonous as the cold war; both are harmful for

all creatures. Silent spring presented the view of nature with its dangerous elements as pesticides and DDT. Once these chemicals entered in the biosphere, they can kill bugs as well make their ways to the food chains to threaten birds and fish populations and ultimately can sicken the children. She has given all the calculation of destruction in one place, done by these poisonous chemicals. She has made a power idea that if humankind poisoned nature, nature would in turn poison mankind.

Nigerian Civil war is one of the remarkable event in Africa which leads life towards destruction at mass level. Nwosu (2014) talks about Chinua Achebe's *There was a country* (2012) and presents Chinua as the leading character and narrator of his personal history as a citizen of the secessionist state Biafra during the Nigerian Civil war. Chinua's classic narrative among other socio political and economic details encompasses also the anti environmental impacts of the war. Life south of the Niger river started for young Chinua as what he termed the magical years, a beautiful time of peace, merging diverse cultures, flourishing landscapes and the emergence of an avid generation driven by visions for excellence and merit, sadly a generation that never got to realize its full potentials due to the war. In the successive coup-de-eta's and events leading to the war Chinua and his tribes men are forced into a life of gruesome experiences in a struggle to preserve their lives.

At the end of the thirty month war, Biafra was vast smoldering rubble, with a fifth of its population gone, most of which were children. Even after the end of civil war the disaster goes on long years after the weapons are silenced. Entire towns and villages, farms and vegetation lay destroyed. Even roads and rural areas were littered with landmines that continue to maim man and animals. Families were reduced to individuals, some completely wiped out, and suicide hitherto an abomination, were now rampant due to wide spread psychological shock and crushed hopes. Chinua knew of certain that a huge responsibility laid ahead for him despite the impoverishment he had already suffered. Would his children and the next generation ever know what their world was like before the war?

The issues of environment and nature are not only limited to U.S or other European countries, rather they are everywhere in the world. In India there are many examples of environmental destruction in literature. Sometimes nature becomes cruel to men and most of the time human beings are the cause of over exploitation of natural resources. Colonialism has great importance in devastation of environment worldwide. History is full of such examples from Indian literature, and one of the prominent figure Rao has depicted south village cultures and environmental settings very realistically. In *Kanthapura* he has shown the nature to its fullest that how rivers and mountains play an important role in human life. They have specific name for river, they call it goddess *kenchamma* and they consider river responsible for their happiness and adversity.

Bhattacharjee (2012) explains the eco critical elements in *The God of Small Things* (2002) that deals with the nature and environment. She points out the environmental pollution through the description of the changed condition of beauty, greenery and the look of Ayemenem and the river *Meenachal*. She has used nature as images not only to describe the beauty or glorious atmosphere

of the region and landscape but also for exposing the polluted atmosphere of Ayemenem, and through the depiction of the river Meenachal. She contrasts the earlier condition of the river with its later condition. Earlier Rahel feels: "It was warm, the water green like reapplied silk. With fish in it. With the sky and it. And at night, the broken yellow moon in it" (Roy, 2002, p. 123). The river, during the childhood of Rahel, has become deformed and repulsive in her adulthood. Its charm and effect was deteriorating due to environmental pollution. Later, when the adult Rahel visits the river, it is different in look and has lost its inspiring appeal:

The river was no more than a swollen drain now. A thin ribbon of thick water lapped wearily at the mud banks on either side, sequined with the occasional silver fish. It was choked with a succulent weed (p.124).

Actually, this is because of the pollution created by the inhabitants and factories of the region. The novelist tries to show the harmful effects of urbanization on environment. She has delineated the picture of beautiful, lively green Ayemenem as well as the polluted and disturbed Ayemenem. By the help of many picture sequence, descriptions of scenery and region, she degenerated gloomy environment of the region. Manes (2015) has focused on the issue of environment. Her approach is eco-centric and eco-critic. She has also focused the environment of east-west encounter, racial prejudice, political turbulence and its harmful effect on the balance of eco-system. Her novel starts with the delineation of the natural beauty of mount Kanchenjunga. She delineates the beautiful mountain, and the changing seasons charmingly. The mountain is also used to reveal the gloomy mood of the orphan girl, Sai. He wants to live in peaceful atmosphere by isolating Himself from the messy world" (Desai, 2006, p. 1). The isolated, prejudiced, and ruthless man gets solace and feeling of intimacy from the animal (a product of nature). The writer has tried to focus the role of nature in human life. She shows the co-relation between mankind and nature. She has also dealt the effects of the political, racial and social environment on human-beings.

It is not only human beings who destroy nature sometimes nature also plays destructive role in human beings lives. Gosh is one of the earlier Indian novelists who raised the ecological issue in the literary studies. Anurag (2011) explains the relations between the state, the people, the poor, the flora and fauna and the physical environment. Gosh presents the tension within human communities and their respective relations to the physical world. The setting of the novel is in Sunderbans which is not only beautiful but also fascinating. It offers unpredictable and dangerous life. Tidal floods destroy the stability of life on the land of sundarbans. Gosh has warned the human beings about the over use of natural resources through his characters. He presents the cruel side of the nature by depicting the tidal floods that has disturbed the life on the land. He also emphasize that nature should not be over used for the material gains of the people.

Corasanti (2014) in her interview explains about *The Almond Tree* (2012) that revolves around the conflict of Palestine and Israel. The hatred lies between both countries on the basis of power structure. The writer has been asked about the inspiration of writing *The Almond Tree*. She responds that when she was at Harvard, she met an Arab who was doing his doctorate jointly with his Israeli professor and a Nobel Prizewinner; this makes her feel that how strong we can be if we

focused on our commonalities to advance humanity instead of our differences. In other questions' answer she states, that in order to be peace there, American Jews and Israeli's need to understand the Palestinian narrative of the issues (Michelle, 2014, times of Israel).

Jay E. Austin and Bruch (2000) states for how long has war devastated the environment, moral and religious codes have strong impacts of wartime actions. As in biblical times it is commented:

When you are at war, and lay siege to a city for a long time in order to take it, do not destroy its trees by taking the axes to them, for they provide you with food; you shall not cut them down. The trees of the field are not men that you should besiege them. But you may destroy or cut down any trees that you know do not yield any food, and use them in siege-works against city that is at war with you, until it falls (p.356).

However this is an anthropocentric view applying to the environmental destruction which clearly harms humankind. Similarly the Quran pay emphasis on the importance of nature and condemns the cutting of trees in Jihad, a Muslim Holy war. In Fact some Muslim forces have an officer whose duty was to check that trees are not burnt, not unjustifiably pulled out and also the women and children and the elders should not be harmed. Another way to classify environmental damage is ecological severity. Environment gets degraded in every way whether it's by the weather or war or climate change. It directly affects human beings and shapes their lives according to the changes. The war-like situations not only create hazardous environment for living beings but have also psychologically affected human beings. Morton (1996) explores the awareness of ecological consciousness in the age of global warming, where everything is affected from the ecological issues. Life on earth is not as safe as it was before this urbanization. He continues to state that life on its own cannot survive in this biological setup. Some or the other way, everything has to take help from other species for the survival.

Corasanti in *The Almont Tree* (2012) has shown her environmental concern towards nature and the need to improve the prevailing situations. Degradation of nature and human beings is not the solution of anything. This research shows the parameters through which harmony can be created in the world by enhancing the awareness in the public about the importance of cleanliness, healthy environment and nature. Violence against violence can never bring betterment in the society. Corasanti has presented Palestinian people who faced brutal treatment of Israelis and at the end only education and awareness helped people to come out of this relation of hatred. Due to these issues we are at this stage; where we are unable to have a healthy environment. Climate changes occur due to many reasons, sometimes by the global warming and ecological affairs and at other times by the war or bombings. The aftermaths of both have great effects on the living being of the environment.

### **Eco-Consciousness prevailing into the Characters**

The basic reason of destruction and differences between people is the isolation from nature. Corasanti wants to eradicate the evils from the society by spreading love. This novel is based on the conflict of war between countries and after effects of war. The story of Ahmad relates to other

people of Palestine and their sufferings. The way Ahmad handles this entire situation is different he tries hard to prove himself as an individual in the presence of Jews in university. He spreads the idea of promoting education. He wins Professor Sharon's heart with his intelligence. The relations between Jews and Arabs are becoming better with time they starts to accept each other. Ahmad in university feels heavy smoke arising from the other room. At once, he moves to that room that is of his Jews fellows. He breaks the glass of fire extinguisher, screaming for them to get up. All other rooms open and Israelis pour out in their night dresses. They help him in battling the flames and others battle the fire with the blankets. The hall is full of white smoke. The two boys inside the room appear from the back side of the building, they jump out from the window when they hear Ahmad screaming.

Ahmad, Jameel and all other Israelis work together for hours to clean up the foam in the hall. When they finish, everyone applauds for them by saying, you're a hero. They pat on Ahmad's back. Let's toast for Ahmad (Corasanti, 2012, p. 203). They go to the kitchen together; all Arabs and Jews and eat food. This is the prominent shift in every one's attitude towards each other. Now Israelis do not hate Arabs in the university. This is all because of Ahmad's efforts that now nobody hates him in the university. He has given love to others and helped them in their homework problems.

The positive approach of Ahmad is an example for the people to lessen hatred for the others and accept the differences. Ahmad finishes his BSc in Physics, Chemistry and Math and stays at the top of his class. Professor Sharon appoints him as a paid teaching assistant. Now Ahmad's pay is enough for his family as his mother spends money very carefully. Then finally the day comes when his father is about to be released from the prison. Ahmad and Abbas go to receive him. There are hundreds of women, children and old age men gathered to receive their family members. Mama and Nadia prepare food to welcome Baba. Fadi wants to come with them, but soldiers allow only two people. Ahmad wants Abbas to come with him, so that he can change his mind that violence is not the way. The only solution to their problems is to deal them with patience, acceptance and humbleness.

Abbas starts to follow other extremist scholars and their ideas about liberation of Palestine. Ahmad tries to help Abbas in walking but he refuses, the differences between them grow more and more. He still cannot bear that Ahmad works with Israelis. Ahmad all time works to lessen the differences of sects and religions between people because it makes people to hate each other. The character of Ahmad's father is symbolic instead of all the troubles he has a different approach towards hatred. Ahmad thinks that their father may cool him down by giving him the proper reasons and guidance. When they met their father, he is more lean and thin and he hugs Ahmad and Abbas again and again, saying that he cannot believe that Ahmad is a university student.

On father's response, Abbas looks outside the car's window as he has no idea what to say to him. When they reach home, everyone welcomes him warmly. Abu Sayyed gives him violin and mother presents a secondhand oud. It is like fourteen years have not passed. They sing and dance all night and now there is no fear of curfew and soldiers. The people want to lead a peaceful life but the war like situations makes them worried. They have high morals that they still find the

positivity in such life, full of troubles. Hatred can never give peaceful life so ultimately the family has understood this fact and they tend to live best possible life in all the odds.

Ahmad's idea of planting trees for his father is constructive from environmental point of view. He takes his father to the backside of the house to show him fourteen olive trees they have planted in his memory. The previous olive trees Amal and Sa'dah have grown tall and thick. Ahmad has spent many hours watching the Israelis as they harvested the olive trees confiscated from their village. They violently beat the trees with sticks to knock down their fruit. "I'd marveled that despite their exposure to beatings, arid landscape and fierce heat, the trees survived and bore new fruits year after year, century after century" (Corasanti, 2012, p. 214). Their strength lay in the roots that are so deep that if the trees are cut down, they start to flourish again and bear fruits and increase their growth. The people of Palestine are like the trees and their strength lies in the roots. They are close to nature and are protectors of nature. They learn from the behavior of trees and plants to be attacked again and again but still stand and bear fruits.

They love their land and they never want to degrade the land and disobey their country. They face every situation with courage and never leave their country due to the fear of war or being destroyed. Now the traditions of fighting against others have been changed as Ahmad's father advises him to go to Hebrew university to get a degree and earn respect in Jewish land and among their people. Professor Sharon leaves his Jewish wife Aliyah because she is against his meetings with Arabs.

The bond between Arabs and Jews gets strong with time both communities started to accept each other with their differences. After completing PhD Ahmad and Professor Sharon go to America for further projects. There Professor meets Justice, who is a beautiful lady with pure heart and marry her. She has no negative thoughts about Jews and Arabs. She deals everyone at same level as human beings. She appreciates Professor for appointing Ahmad as his assistant. Justice invites Ahmad and Sharon in her office and presents Ahmad a gift for agreeing on tutoring Nora. Nora is the president of Justice's peace group for Jew people. She works as a human activist. She helps poor abused women. She is an inspiration. Ahmad thinks that he has done nothing till now. Justice convinces Ahmad to tutor Nora on Arabic language.

Gracia (1997) supports the idea that for improvement of inter group relations is bilingual education. Language has been used historically in many educational institutes to bring different outcomes. To bring people closer language is used as a tool. When people learn the language of the other people they feel more attached. Ahmad and Nora start meeting on daily basis and falls in love with each other without thinking about their religious differences.

When Ahmad asks him he does not oppose his idea and says Jews are not their enemies. He speaks slowly, choosing his words. "Before the idea of the creation of the Jewish state, Jews and Arabs lived in peace together" (Corasanti, 2012, p. 235). Ahmad and Nora decide to marry as soon as possible. This decision is a step to eradicate discrimination of Arabs and Jews and to stop the fight between people. Nora is confident about her parents that they are liberals and they will have no issues with this marriage. When Nora and Ahmad visit them, they are shocked to see them married. Her mother and father have totally opposite views. They ask her what the need of marriage



is when they both can live together without it. Ahmad interrupts that it is not their custom to live together without legal relation. Nora stands up saying that her parents cannot accept Ahmad because he is a Palestinian. She says her parents are hypocrites. They work for peace in the world and now here is their inner self.

Villagers and Ahmad's family welcome Ahmad and Nora warmly. His father is happy but his mother avoids Nora because Abbas has left home due to her arrival. He is unable to meet a Jewish girl at his home. Nora is sweet to every person in the village. She is loved by all of them. Baba announces their marriage on coming Friday. No one protest about Nora's being Jew in the village. This acceptance could bring change for their people and land, because the people have started to accept each other.

Ahmad gives lectures to the universities of Israel once he goes to give lecture to Jerusalem University where Professor Sharon attends a call and starts weeping. Ahmad feels that something is not well. On the phone, Justice says to him:

I'm afraid I have the worst news imaginable for you.' We were protecting your family house. The soldiers came. They said your brother was involved with a terrorist organization. Their bulldozer crushed Nora. She died on the way to the hospital. (p. 263)

The sacrifice of Nora saves Ahmad's house from being demolished. Ahmad's family stops Nora to stand against soldiers but she does not listen. After Nora's death, Ahmad buries her under the Almond tree because it has witnessed everything that has happened to Ahmad's family and Nora.

The character of Nora is symbolic like the character of Justice, Professor Sharon's wife. Both of them want to bring peace in the world. Nora works as a human activist and helps many abused women to get their status in the society. They both believe in humanity rather than on the sects and other differences. They plan to visit Gaza for the betterment of educational system over there but before that Nora is crushed under bulldozer while saving Ahmad's house from the soldiers, who announce that Ahmad's brother is involved with terrorist community who is destroying the society. Abbas being an extremist leaves his home and joins a terrorist organization because he hates Israelis as he suffers his whole life due to them. He is crippled due to a Jew boy when he used to work with them. The homelessness and his father's imprisonment make him more of an extremist. He does not understand that fight is not the way to take revenge from others.

Revenge can be taken by other means too. The enhancement in education can also bring peace in the world. Abbas's extremist nature becomes troublesome for the family members. Ahmad hires private investigators to locate Abbas but all in vain. When Abbas is residing in Gaza, the condition becomes worse day by day. No one knows if he is alive or dead. Slaughtered Palestinians babies are in the rubbish heaps alongside Israelis army equipment and empty bottles of whisky are also there. The buildings of Palestinian refugee camp 'Shatilla' have been dynamited to the ground. A German officer in 1918 describes dumb, black stumps of shattered trees which still stick up where there used to be villages. Flayed by splinters of bursting shells, they stand like corpses upright. Not a blade of grass anywhere just miles of flat, empty, broken and tumbled stone. The ploughs in Flanders fields still turn up human bones every year. "Corpses of Palestinian

women were draped over a pile of debris” (Corasanti, 2012, p. 272). The year 2009 does not start well. Israel had been waging war on Gaza. It is becoming the place of terrorists and they are helping people to grow more hate against each other:

Ahmad turned on TV and it was reported that ‘today an F-16 fighter jet dropped a 2000 lb bomb on the house of Dr. Nizar Rayan, the reporter said. He was a top Hamas leader who served as a liaison between the political leadership and its military wing. The bomb killed not only Dr. Rayan, but also his four wives and eleven of his children, who ranged in age from one to twelve (p. 293).

Dr. Rayan is involved in terrorist activities and he has sent his twenty two years old son on a suicidal bombing mission in which he dies along with Palestinians. The footage of Dr. Rayan is shown on TV when Ahmad sees an aged crippled man who is sixty one years old now, and his hair has gone. Ahmad identifies the man as Abbas. He comes forward and says that he will avenge the murder of great leader Dr Nizar Rayan. Abbas is a part of Al-Qassam Brigades. It is difficult for Ahmad to watch his brother dying with phosphorus and atomic bombs in Gaza. Ahmad decides to save Abbas from the hell of Gaza. Ahmad and his wife Yasmine wait for months to get a permit to enter Gaza, but all the efforts go in vain. Ahmad shares it all with Sharon and with his links he makes it possible for Ahmad to enter Gaza through its never opening gates. Ahmad says he can see that everyone in Gaza is in need of someone to come and make them free from the prison of their country. While looking around Yasmine notices that there is no tree. She asks the driver about the lack of greenery.

Ahmad interrupts that his father has repeatedly tells him about the abundance of orange groves in Gaza. His father told him that no other oranges can compete with the seedless oranges of Gaza. The driver says that Israelis have uprooted all the trees. One cannot imagine that how an orange can be a threat to their security, if an orange falls on the ground, the land mines will burst. The soldiers uproot all the trees due to the threat of their own security. But no one thinks about the environment, about the absence of plants and greenery all around. Guin (2005) says:

My world, my Earth is a ruin. A planet spoiled by the human species. We multiplied and fought and gobbled until there was nothing left, and then we died. We controlled neither appetite nor violence; we did not adapt. We destroyed ourselves. But we destroyed the world first (p. 47).

The air is full of smell of acidic materials. All the buildings are destroyed as well as human beings. When Ahmad and his wife visit president’s house, the receptionist has a patch on her one eye and her two fingers are missing due to bombing. There stands Abbas, who is crippled, walking with the help of a boy. Ahmad hugs him and he doesn’t hug him back. He says, “I’m an old, crippled man. I like Nizar, would like to die fighting for my country. He wasn’t afraid to show his face to the world. Let the world watch the Israelis killed me” (Corasanti, 2012, p. 311). Abbas excuses for a meeting and ask Ahmad to spend time with Majid, his grandson. Majid takes Ahmad and his wife to his friends and shows them grenade from his backpack, and a fragment bullet. Ahmad asks them about their books and daily routine but they are without bags and books. Majid says they are “destroyed in the war” (p.311).

War has affected their lives in many ways. They cannot lead a simple and peaceful life in the circumstances of the wars. Majid and his friends trade with grenades and bullets instead of getting education. The children do not have complete body parts. Some of them do not have arms and others have missing legs. Majid called a boy of his age. The left sleeve of his blue sweatshirt hangs empty, he missed during a fight between soldiers and the natives. A missile from F-16 fighter plane blows his arm. Another boy of his age shows his one eye which is unable to move. His socket is empty. They show their parts by taking money from Ahmad. It's like a business for these kids.

War has not only affected human beings but it has also destroyed the buildings. The school in Gaza is without rooms and boundary walls. The building has been destroyed in war and the walls are full of holes because of the shooting. There is no electricity and other facilities for the students in the school. Some of the boys have scars on their faces. An old man on wheel chair comes to class room who is unable to walk on his own he is a teacher. He says that he wants to offer them chairs to sit but the chairs have been burnt. While studying in the class room, the sound of jets outside seems to paralyze the students. All of them are without books. They have no stationary and books because Israel has stopped the supply of these things in Gaza. This is to stop the students to get education and to be aware of their rights.

Ahmad and Yasmin visit Abbas's house. Abbas introduces Ahmad with his younger son Khaled and says he is also interested in science. He is Ahmad's copy, Ahmad feels like he is a teenager again. Abbas tells that he not only resembles Ahmad in appearance but also has his gift of interest in math and science. Abbas taunts Ahmad that his son has different principals as compared to Ahmad. Khalid recognizes Ahmad because he has read all his articles and knows about the research he has done till now. Abbas tells his son that Ahmad has spent his forty years of life collaborating with Israelis to do this research. Ahmad asks Khalid about his education and university he says he attends Islamic university.

The university is not safe from the attacks of Israelis as the science lab is demolished by them. Ahmad asks whether he is studying nanotechnology at the university, Khalid says that he wish he can study nanotechnology but cannot study in Gaza they do not offer it. MIT has offered him a scholarship but Israelis did not let him avail it. Ahmad gets furious that how can they stop him from getting this scholarship. Khalid tells him that "You think they want an educated population here in Gaza, it is ignorance and superstition that promotes violence" (p. 317). Abbas responds instead of Khalid, that its poverty, tyranny and desperation that promotes violence. Ahmad says to Khalid if he wants to get a scholarship he can help him, because he has connections in America. Abbas replies with bitter tone that Khaled does not want to help enemies in anyway. Ahmad is shocked how paranoid Abbas has become. Ahmad has a hope to change their thinking.

It is not possible for khaled to get a visas and Ahmad cannot help him because Gaza is famous for terrorists and no other country wants to have connections with these people. Many students like Khalid who wants to peruse their careers are unable due to the prevailing situations. Ahmad took all the children to the zoo, the zoo of Gaza, where all the real animals died in war with bombs. The zoo keepers put fake animals here because all the animals have died with starvation. Now to replace the animals they need much money and have to smuggle through

tunnels. Ahmad wants to show that there are a lot of things to do other than suffering and depression. When people are unable to fulfill their desires how can they lead a peaceful life? Ahmad informs khaled about the bad news that he is unable to get him visa this makes him deflates like a balloon. His eyes get filled with tears that roll on the cheeks. He thinks to himself that “I’m a prisoner in my own city. I can’t do anything about it. What I need is freedom” (Corasanti, 2012, p. 338).

Khaled tells Ahmad to watch a videotape with family. When the video plays, an image of Khalid appears. He has a black kaffiyah wrapped around his neck. In one hand, he has a machine gun and in other hand a script. Ahmad read the script: “I’m doing this to advance the Palestinian cause. I’m doing this to further our resistance. I’d rather die with hope and live a life of imprisonment. I’d rather die fighting for a just cause than be trapped in hell on earth. This is my only way out. There is no freedom without a struggle. The Israelis must understand: if they imprison us, they will pay a price. I can only control how I die. Israelis crimes against my people are countless. Not only do they oppress us, but they have convinced the world that they are victims” (Corasanti, 2012, p.341).

Khaled gives up his life because he could not fulfill his dreams due to the political and social problems in his country. Israeli soldiers have made life miserable for him. His dream to get scholarship and to study in Hebrew university remains unfulfilled. He wants to follow his uncle Ahmad but for him it is impossible to get out of Gaza. The condition of people living in Gaza is miserable. The children are not allowed to get education. Some of them have lost their body parts, like arm, eye and legs. The war has adversely influenced their lives. Their houses have been damaged in the war in fact all the buildings have been destroyed. In Gaza, life is not that simple as in America or any other part of life. The war has changed not only the condition of Palestine but also the sentiments of the people as well. Due to imprisonment, people have started to work in organizations.

Abbas’s extremist attitude makes him against his own family. He leaves his home because his brother Ahmad collaborates with Israelis. Ahmad follows his father’s advices that violence is not the right way to solve the problems. There must be a way to handle the situation with patience and courage. The environment in Gaza is dry there are no canals and trees and nothing is available in the markets. Even the water, a basic need, is not available to the people. The trucks outside Gaza are not allowed to enter the city because of the security threats. Israelis have left Gaza to make the situations worse. The violence can never bring any kind of positive change in the society it can only bring destruction and devastation. To change the situation of the family, Ahmad decides to work hard and get a scholarship in Hebrew university. Ahmad’s life story is for the betterment of the people to make them feel that they should work hard as Ahmad when he was a teenager.

Ahmad receives a call from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. The speaker on the other side says, “ I’d like to inform you’, he paused, on behalf of Royal Swedish Academy, we are pleased to announce that you and professor Sharon will be this year’s recipients of the Nobel Prize in Physics” (Corasanti, 2012, p.343). He tells Ahmad that he has read all his researches and he is glad to know that he has contributed a great deal in collaboration with Professor Sharon. He says

that he has gone through all his research and has found out that Ahmad's work for the advancement of the human race is extremely valuable.

When Ahmad receives his Nobel Prize he thanks his father and teacher Muhammad and his family. Afterwards, he narrates his life story he said "I have learnt that life is not what happened to you, but about how you choose to react to it. Education was my way out; and because of it I was able to rise from my circumstances. I have come to understand that when one person suffers, we all suffer. I have dedicated my whole life to my family, to my education and my research. He hope to inform people about what is happening in Gaza" (p. 350).

He further elaborates that Education is fundamental right of every child. Gaza at this stage is a breeding ground for the future terrorists. Their dreams and hopes are crushed. Israel has stopped scholarships for these students and there is no supply of books and stationary. Thousands of students are waiting for the scholarships but unable to get out of Gaza. He now dreams of a world in which we rise above race and religion and all other dividing factors and find a higher purpose. Like Martin Luther King Jr before me, I have the audacity to dream of peace (p. 350).

The audiences rise to applaud for the spirit of Ahmad. Ahmad announces that he is going to dedicate this award to his nephew Khaled, who chose death. Ahmad forms a foundation that intends to supply school books and other opportunities of education. All the people happily offer their role in collection for the foundation. This is the outcome of the education Ahmad instills in him. His struggles make him to think for others and about how to lessen the problems others are having in their lives. Professor Sharon also contributes half of his awarded money to Ahmad's foundation. This is clear that cooperation between Palestine and Israelis offers the only real hope for peace. History has proven that one person cannot achieve security at the expense of another's life. This proves that war and fights on the other territories result in only disasters. The positive aspects presented in this novel, show real meaning of peace to the world.

The people who are living in the areas where war is still going on, life has become paralyzed there. They need to change their attitude towards the happenings of life. Ahmad has shown an inspiration for the people to change their destiny with their own determination. He supports the idea "make love, not war" (p.350). It is necessary to eradicate all the vices from the society without being violent, to make it a peaceful place to live in, as violence against violence brings nothing but destruction and eventually more violence. Ahmad's character is an example for everyone he promotes education and tries to help the people in need so that they can live a better life. He said hatred brings more hatred and it is not the solution of anything. War destroys human beings as well as nature and ultimately is the loss of humanity. This needs a change in the approach that through education social setup can be changed and betterment of environment is the only way to live in harmony.

## **Conclusion**

These heart wrenching scenes make people feel that what war has done to the people is irrecoverable and the victory is nothing when human life is not safe. This research makes me feel that safety is the most important thing one need in the life and everyone should be given it properly.

It should be the responsibility of the government to set a safe and healthy environment for the public. So that people can live in harmony with each other. War not only destroys the physical properties but it also affects human psyche. By keeping this view in mind there should be proper check and balance in the war-torn countries.

The solution to these problems presented by the author is courage through the character of Ahmad, whose strength and will power makes him believe that through his dreams of success of success, he can overcome all the hurdles on his way. Instead of bloodshed torments, sufferings and prejudices he is firm in his belief that one day he will be able to eradicate all the vices. Ahmad believes in love, not war. This idea is the main objective of this research that love is the only solution to all the problems. Hatred can never let free from the sufferings and depression. Ahmad suggests to work together to cooperate and enhance trust among the opponents. Philosophy of struggle and success is required to create balance in the world. Through education the message of peace can be spread. Oppressors should understand that everyone wants to enjoy life peacefully. This requires the confirmation of equal rights, citizenship, no violence and the basic rights for everyone. Awareness can make people realize that they have to fight for their rights but it is not necessary that the fight should be in form of war. It can be through education and awareness, which leads towards understanding and positive change.

History is of no use, if the people do not learn from it. Now this is the time to change the situations by making themselves stronger against all the odds. The power structure of the society needs to change the policies. They education system should be strong in the countries that are in danger of war. Through education a powerful military can be defeated. Ahmad tried to remove the uncertainties from the hearts of his people against the Israelis to settle the disputes and tensions with his intelligence and hard work. He suggests that war is not the solution of any problem. He points out that if the oppressed will behave in the same way as oppressors then there will be no difference in both.

The positive use of technology is promoted throughout the novel as the Israelis use advanced technologies to bring about destruction in Palestine. This is condemned by the author. The advancement of humanity is the basic motive of the novel. Technology should be used positively, to bring peace in society and there must be eradication of all the vices as hatred and desperation. The degradation of human beings as well as nature should be banned. The war like situations should be handled with patience and courage. The environment should be clean from the acidic gases excreted from the factories and chimneys. A healthy environment will nourish a healthy generation. The government should play positive role in advancement of humanity and it should be the basic concern for all. The people should be treated equally and there should be a balance in society.

More research is needed to enhance the awareness about environmental issues and its consequences on nature and human beings. This research invites more scholars to pay attention on this field of study for the betterment of humanity. Education is a medium through which awareness can be spread among people. War-like situations should be avoided and the causes should be condemned. There is a need to understand the differences of other sects and communities and

acceptance is the way out to avoid war and fights among countries. Government should play its positive role to enhance the awareness to save environment and nature from destruction.

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