



Melancholic Existence in “The Last Lear” by Rituparno Ghosh

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This research studies and explores the effects of panoptic power and how powerful it is. Basically, the study examines the technological advancements controlling people and their behavior. Aparna Thomas' source for this study is Rituparno Ghosh's multiple award winning feature film, “The Last Lear”. Rituparno Ghosh is a Bengali director who won more than a dozen of awards for his contribution to Indian cinema. Rituparno made this film in English language and the film won the National Award from the Govt. of India.

The researcher expresses her concern that people are being watched everywhere. Everything, everyone everywhere is being observed and controlled by the latest gadgets, cameras, and applications. Everyone is exposed everywhere. Whatever a person is doing in private or public is watched by technology. We are in that era nothing is hidden. All our activities, actions, and behavior is being watched or controlled knowingly or unknowingly. Be it network cameras, communication system or even our personal phones, everything is under surveillance and on target.

To understand this, the study focuses on surveillance theories. Slowly and steadily surveillance has become a vital and inevitable part of social world. Michael Foucault was one of the first who understood the importance and the role of technology in panoptical surveillance, but he failed to describe such advancements in this field and the increased role of panoptical surveillance. In today's world, cameras are installed on each and every corner of the roads, shops, and intersections. To some extent it helps keep an on the antisocial elements but on the other hand activities are also controlled using these technologies. In that sense what to do and what not to do. What needs to get done through employees and service people. This means that these spying techniques are both helpful and harmful. This study especially focuses on the terror spread in the air because of this omnipresent surveillance and fear and feelings in minds of the people suffocating under the supervision of modern technology.

In the movie, The Last Lear, the director convince a stage play actor to work in his film but that actor hates working in front of the cameras. The camera kills the originality of actor's performance. The camera and technology can even the face and expression of the actor.

In the words of Aparna herself, *“In the film, there are several scenes that show how both this regimes of control can influence the actions of the people under the surveillance. One amongst them is the scene in which Harry tries to get rid of a man who pees on his wall outside. Even when all the shouts and scoldings of Harry went vain without creating any effect to the man, the very sight of Siddhartha's camera lens made him to run away in a fraction of second. This shows the tactful creation of the regime of shame. The regime of shame keeps people meek and obedient as efficiently as any control coming from outside. Rejecting it, is unacceptable and immodest. It also creates a culture of fear. This gives us the profound understanding on how the camera gaze and technology can influence the feelings and states of mind of the people.”*

Even though the camera surveillance does not harm directly by keeping an eye, it highlights the panoptical nightmare of complete visibility. It also observes the fact that everybody's life is under surveillance of omnipresent cameras and we are become the subject of interpretation without our knowledge. We are using mobile phones continually and as a result of that we are persistently participating in our own surveillance. Software companies are keeping a strong eye on each one of us, our behavior, our taste, our likes and dislikes, our friends and even our enemies. This is easiest

form keeping an on everyone that too is possible in a hidden way. No one knows when, where and how we are being watched and controlled.

Conclusion: Undoubtedly, the research studies the pros and cons of panoptical surveillance and technological advancements in depth. The readers would definitely understand the importance and limitation of surveillance. Aparna explores in depth the nature, behavior and actions of the characters in “The Last Lear”. She keeps her focus intact understanding how a person behaves when is being watched through close surveillance. Though there are several theories for panoptical surveillance but those theories shed a very little light on individual and people’s perspective and their subjective feelings and experiences.

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