



POST COLONIAL SOLUTIONS

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Post Independent Indian literature has offered artist's solutions to the problems of Communalism. Before Indian Literature awakened to the Post Colonial consciousness, Kushwant Singh is the only writer who responded to the problems of communalism. Post Colonial India has a galaxy of writers who probed the communal tensions analytically and offered the appreciative solutions. It is viewed that a didactic work of literature is one designed to present a moral, religious or philosophical thesis in a persuasive and imaginative form. Such works are distinguished from purely imaginative works for the sake of presenting or enforcing knowledge. The writers are considered as sages to represent the crucial discourses. Despite the inherent pitfalls in a representation, it is incumbent on an intellectual with caution and without prejudice to deconstruct socio religious issues and offer some pragmatic and ideal solutions. This is performed by many of the novelists in Post Independent situation while representing the communal problem. The novelists Bhisham Sahni, Bapsi Sidhwa, Shashi Tharoor and Taslima Nasreen have showed remarkable ingenuity to harness the functions of literature- to instruct and delight.

For them literature is a powerful tool in the hands of creative writer to modulate and change the existing pattern of the society. With sorbing plots of their novels they strive to show how communal violence has been generated by the lunatic fringe in all communities. All these novelists are staunch humanists and echo the same sublime sentiments. Besides offering

incisive insights into human nature and throwing light on the cobwebs of communalism, they showed a variety of ways and means through which the evil forces can be checkmated. They have curbed the fanatic forces to the greater extent when other identities are subordinated to class identity. Kushwant Singh is the writer who has comprehended the real identities with all objectivity. His novels *Train to Pakistan* & *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* subscribe to the elements of Post Colonialism, Post Modernism, New Historicism, Post Structuralism, Feminism etc.

Promulgated by Frantz Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth* (1968) and Edward Said in *Orientalism* (1978), Post Colonial perspective explores the past. Exploration of the Past and interrogation of the past reveals the dichotomy of the past as glorious past and inglorious past. The claimed glorious past is confined to few sections of the society. Unclaimed inglorious past continuous to influence the society to the greater extent. Kushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* & *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* succinctly explore the past and reveal the dichotomy of the past. The inglorious past of pre Independent India is exhibited in a realistic manner almost to the extent of constructing new History. The inglorious communal history of India is revealed. The novels have captured the evolution of Nationalism in India. John Meeleod in *Beginning Post Colonialism* (2000) says that the consciousness of Nationalism is related to the British colonialism. India's independent movement and the initial phase of Nationalism is considered to be spiritual biography of the elite sections. From this perspective, it is obvious that the movement for Political Independence is completely different from the movement of Social Independence. The movement for Political Independence is concocted with created myths of nationalism. Meeleod says that the very creation of National Bird, National Animal, National Flag, National Anthem etc. are the symbols of myth created by the mainstream society. Ernest Gellner in *Nations and Nationalism* (1983) says that Nations are not inscribed into the nature of the things. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalisms* (1983)

considers nations as imagined political communities. The very narration of *I Shall not Hear the Nightingale* is based on tracing the evolution of National consciousness. The novel depicts the division of Nationalists into believers of violence and non-violence. Buta Singh displays his loyalty to the British for his personal gains. His son Sher Singh revolts against the British and joins the group of terrorist. The evolution of Nationalism is found in the conflict of Father and Son. Sher Singh is a representative of young man fighting fearlessly for National freedom. But his involvement with petty crimes fumbles his patriotism. The novel succeeds in locating the family relationships in the light of growing national consciousness. This is strongly present in his recent novel *Burial At Sea*. *Burial At Sea* is the recent novel of Kushwant Singh that effectively carries the Post Colonial propositions. It is about Victor Jai Bhagwan who is a follower of Gandhi, after Nehru. Victor adores and respects Gandhi. He disagrees with Mahatama's vision for the future of India. Determined to bring the benefits of modern industry to the subcontinent, Victor returns from University in England. After Few Years of India's Independence he becomes the country's biggest tycoon. Facing a midlife crisis, he falls passionately in love with a Tantric God woman. She introduces him to the unbridled pleasures of sexuality, but becomes the reason for his downfall. When writing a novel, one of the first things an author aims to master is the ability to make one's opening chapter hook the reader. The rest of the tale is told in linear fashion and it flows smoothly right to the end. The novel holds many stories, but it is an autobiography about Jai Bhagwan's life? It is a tale that delves into an exploration of tantric sex. Kushwant Singh speaks about the pre Independent communal holocaust that has cornered the lives of Sikhs and Muslims. *Train To Pakistan* is an obvious example of retelling the trauma and tragedy of partition through the stories of his characters. The Account that Kushwant Singh has rendered is the communal saga of subcontinent caught in the vortex of communal frenzy. The fate of Hindus and Sikhs living in the North West Frontier is described with authenticity. The novel has effectively rendered the evolution of human relationships.

The relationship of Hukumchand with Haseena and Jugga with Nooran offers a dialectical inquiry into the pre Independent communal circumstances. This aspect in the novel subscribes to the Post Colonial situation. The affections that Humans develop, the sacrifices that they make are analysed in view of the communal and secular circumstances. The scrupulous and unscrupulous nature of the human beings within the vortex of communal atmosphere is perfectly analysed. Kushwant Singh deserves accolades in depicting the true nature of Indian village atmosphere. In the remarkable interpretation of East

to the West, R.K. Narayan & Raja Rao provided a sacred and peaceful dimension of Indian village atmosphere. This has created a positive perception in the minds of the westerners. The hidden Communal and Castiest factors of Indian village life have not formed the subject of their fictional rendering. Kushwant Singh makes a genuine exploration of the past history of Indian villages only to retrieve the reality. The novel Train To Pakistan is a kaleidoscopic view of Indian village life marred with murder, love making, burgarly. The village is introduced as a place of exploitation. It is the murder of

Ramlal that introduces us to Malli, a dacoit. JuggatSingh another dacoit is introduced as a sacrificing character. His relationship with Muslim weaver's daughter Nooran symbolizes the sacrificial nature of love. Hukumchand represents the power and executive. His affair with Haseena symbolizes lust and opportunism of judiciary. It also reflects the failure of judiciary in preventing the communal riots. In a very significant way, it also makes us understand the connivance of judiciary with the communal forces. The congregation and consolidation of communal forces makes use of the village circumstances. The very evolution of Nationalism is posited at the backdrop of this atmosphere.

The novel records the conflict of Nationalism and communalism. The Post Colonial proposition of revealing the dichotomy of the past finds fulfillment in this novel.

Tim Woods in Beginning Post Modernism (2000) observes that Post Modernism represents self introspection and self reflexivity in the characters. The post modern self reflexive interrogations have freed the novel from obsolete conventions. It has established the distinction

between self consciousness and self reflection. Post modern theorists like David Lodge, Brian McHale, Ihab Hassan & John Mepham have successfully described the categories of Post Modernist fiction. The historical narrative, philosophical argument, pedagogical or ideological impulses and the series of textual strategies are employed by Post modernist fiction. In a different formulation Brian McHale has argued that Post Modernist fiction represents the conceptual shift from the epistemological and ontological domination. The nature of the characterization reveals the interior aspects of the characters. The circumstances that mold the characters are also revealed. The self reflexivity of the characters makes the readers to understand the split personality of the characters. The splintered psyche of the characters bring forth the unavoidable communal circumstances. This makes the readers to understand that the communal violence is the outcome of mania and imbalanced nature of the people. Another element of Post modernism is the element of transformation of reality into hyper reality. In Train to Pakistan Jugga's and Malli's character are depicted in juxtaposition. Iqbal the educated man combines the secular embodiment of love and hatredness. Imam Baksh is a muslim priest. Meet Singh is a man of peace. Every character's participation prevents the Meta narration of Communal history. It becomes mini narration from the perspective of every character. The history of communal violence which remained incomprehensible becomes comprehensible history. The fragmented mini narration gains legitimacy with the participation of every character. In I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale Sher Singh suffers from split personality. He oscillates in between nationalism and the fascination for extremism. His occupation with petty extremist groups mars his patriotic fervor and eventually puts him in the prison. Buta Singh also is torn in between the loyalty to the British and his personal gain. Buta Sing and Sher Sing caught in their self imposed exile experiences uneasy relationship as father and son. From the Post modern perspective the novel dismantles pedagogical or ideological traits with the series of textual strategies.

John McLeod in Beginning Post Colonialism (2000) has classified Feminism into First World Feminism, Second world Feminism and third World

Feminism. The First World Feminism is confined to rich and predominantly Europe and America. The Second world Feminism is confined to the women of Russia and its allies. Third world Feminism is confined to the women of Asian countries. Kirsten Holst Petersen and Anna Rutherford have used the term 'double colonisation' to convey that women suffer from colonialism and gender discrimination. Gayatri Spivak Chakravarty in her seminal essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* creates a space for women who are not circumscribed by these classified feminisms. Dalit women in India come under Fourth world

Feminism. Though the fictional world of Kushwant Singh fails to offer substantial Feminist propositions, the women characters in these two novels enforce us to bring forth different feminist readings. In *Train to Pakistan* Nooran and Haseena are the muslim characters. If Nooran is depicted as the symbol of love, Haseena is depicted as the symbol of lust. The very depiction of minority characters is from the sensuous perspective. In this novel women are depicted as the characters meant for love making. Fictional justice to their individuality is not observed by Kushwant Singh in this novel. The participation women in the freedom movement and their role in the creation of national consciousness is relegated. They are portrayed as obstacles in the way men in realizing the freedom and national consciousness. The portrayal of women in this novel is in constant negation with the attempts of Feminists to question the hegemony in representing the lives of women. Kushwant Singh as a writer terribly fails to do justice to the position of women in this novel. In *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* the character that saves the grace of Kushwant Singh is Buta Singh's wife Sabhrai. As the mother of Sher Singh, she is depicted as sacrificing character. Apart from the motherly love, she embodies paracelsian wisdom. She prove to be the central character in making the novel as the novel of human relationships. She drives patriotic fervor and offers the required consolation to Sher Singh. The central aspects of love, generosity, kindness and concern that cements the social and domestic relations are completely realized in this character. The portrayal of Chempak , Sher Singh's wife is again in the conventional mold of Kushwant Singh. Chempak introduces her husband Sher Singh to physical pleasures and

tries her best to deviate him from his participation in freedom movement. When she fails she finds sexual relationship in Madan. On the whole, Kushwant Singh depicts sensuous nature of women undermining the other significant characteristics that influenced independence and history of India in their own way.

Michael Bakhtin's Carnivalism, Dialogism & Polyphony become handy in deciphering the interpretations of these two novels. Dialogics is the key term in the narrative theory of Bakhtin. It is identified with the approach to the questions of language. It is referred to inherent addressivity. It is to be remembered that all language is addressed to some one. This makes us to understand the humanistic emphasis. Bakhtin wants us to understand the meaning of the novel in relation to dialogism (relationship between voices). There is an official

indeterminacy of meaning outside dialogism. Closed view of meaning is monological. For him the interaction of the characters decides the meaning of the novel and the act of reading the novel. This is an obvious existence in all the living events. These two novels take up for illustration provide us convincing application of Bakhtinian theory. In Train to Pakistan the characters of Juggat Singh and Hukum Chand

offer us binary juxtaposed views of life. It is in their binary juxtaposition the life is critically analysed. Hukmchand's affair with Haseena, Juggat Singh relation with Nooran offer the readers significant perspectives of life. The sagacity of dialogism lies in extracting the meaning of life in

the interaction of these characters. In I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale it is the social interaction of John Taylor's family and But Singh's family that sets the tone for fabric of human relationship. The interaction of Taylor's and Singh's is particularly seen as the interface of East and West. West is portrayed as accommodative and East is depicted as imbalanced in its attitude and perspective. The ambiguous East is presented in the uneasy relationship of Buta Singh and Sher Singh. Bakhtin's constant focus is on many voices 'Polyphony'. He is concerned with the author's voice and with the voices of the characters. In Train to Pakistan and I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale, it is the voice of the author that pervades through the novel. But Kushwant Singh observes equilibrium in providing a space for the voices of other

characters. Every character carries the influence of authorial voice. Every perspective of life is equally represented in the presentation of all the characters. The voices of Juggat Singh, Hukumchand, Malli, Nooran & Haseena are the apt illustrations of the perspectives of life. The representation of John Taylor, Buta Singh, Sher Singh, Chempak, Madan, sabhara etc brings in the complete fulfillment of the perspectives of life in *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale*. This is an obvious example of Polyphonic discourse in which author's voice is one among many and the characters are allowed free speech. Bakhtin identified Polyphony as the property of the novel. Polyphony is traced to Carnivalistic sources.

Mikhail Bakhtin in *Rabelais and His World* (1940) proposed Carnivalism. He contends that “the laughing people of the Middle Ages lived a second life outside officialdom”. Carnivalism is manifested in the folk culture of the people of middle ages. It is seen in ritual spectacles, comic verbal compositions & various genres of billingsgate.

Carnivalism defies “official” closure or the authority of a single fixed sense of any kind and exposes the violence, falsehood and inventiveness of Official institutions. Carnivalism carries subversive sensibility. To question, contest, overturn or annul is a sign of ‘carnavalesque’ impulse. It denies the closure of the meaning and authority. It promotes the reversal of hierarchies. Bakhtin traces the roots of the novel in the influence of Carnival. The two novels carry the elements

of Carnivalism to the complete extent. In *Train To Pakistan* Juggat Singh is the Carnival hero. Though he is presented as the dacoit he proves himself as the Carnival hero by subverting the hierarchy. The elevation of his character is gradual in the novel. From the dacoit's position he resurrects himself as the savior of Muslims from the communal riots. He fights ferociously with Malli and his henchmen and warns Hukumchand. His heroic role in saving the lives of the Muslims

by climbing the bridge to avert the blasting of the Train is on the lines of Greek Hero. The spirit of Carnivalism in questioning the authority and in subverting the hierarchy in the society is explicitly depicted by Kushwant Singh. His characterization is evolutionary. He acquires martyrdom through his grand death. The spirit of Carnivalism makes

him to establish goodness of man over humanity. In *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* Sher Singh is the Carnival hero. As a true Carnival hero he fights fearlessly for National freedom. He pooh pooh's the authority of Colonial rulers. He gets involved with terrorist groups. To uphold the heat of Nationalism he sacrifices the relationship with his father. He questions the authority and attitudes of his father on several occasions. He sacrifices the domestic relationships for the sake of national freedom. In the process of realization he gets confused with the destiny of independence and gets involved with petty terrorist groups. He eventually lands himself in imprisonment as Carnival hero. Thus Bakhtin's dialogism, Carnivalism and Polyphony finds their illustration in these two novels. Deconstruction of Derrida finds its application in these two novels. Derridian Deconstruction firmly observes that there is nothing outside the Text. Deconstruction while invalidating the closure of meaning spouses the causes of marginalized/suppressed or excluded. Deconstruction discloses the literary text as a dissemination of contradiction. It also discloses and empowers the subtext to expose the provisional fiction. These two novels have espoused the cause of marginalized sections. Particularly they have proved that the meaning of the text lies outside the text. *Train to Pakistan* & *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* made the meaning of life available in the pre Independent society. The two novels are the serious conveyors of different dimensions of life. It is the deconstructionist interventions that made the people to understand that culture is an ideological construction. The novels have proved that the culture of communalism is the construction of bourgeois and mystification. Communalism is the reproductive discourse and illustrates the naturalized hegemony of the elite sections. The Deconstructionist probe also reveals the dialectics of Power and Politics. The revelation of the subtleties of Power makes us understand the concealed Power from Michel Foucault's perspective. *Train To Pakistan* & *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* create the effect of defamiliarisation. It is the concept of Russian formalism emphasized by Viktor Shlovsky. It is technique of making the familiar world unfamiliar. It is like renewing and promoting the perception of the world. These two novels

with their realistic portrayal of Pre Independent Indian communal situation provided an effect of defamiliarisation. It is only to the dismay of the readers to experience the communal holocaust of pre Independent India. These novels refresh the view and the way of seeing of the readers as far as communal situation in pre Independent India is concerned. Gerard Genette in *Narrative Discourse* (1980) examines the new ways of writing the novels and studies 20 th century Narrative theory. ‘Anachrony’ and ‘Order’ are the important aspects in the narration of the novel. ‘Anachrony’ is either an ‘analepsis’ or ‘prolepsis’. ‘Analepsis’ is flashback and Genette’s term for flashback is retroversion. ‘Prolepsis’ is flashforward. Kushwant Singh subscribes to these narrative elements. The Narrative design of *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* is from the historical context. Mr. Taylor reveals the basic narrative design and the proposition of the novel. It is only from Taylor’s narrative account the reader is introduced to the family tree of Buta Singh. The very epigraph of the novel implies the unavoidable significance of knowledge. Knowledge is claimed as the source of love. It is in the narration the situations are developed. From these developed situations, the reader finds the evolution of the characters. The Narration of *Train to Pakistan* offers us familiar background to understand the significance of freedom movement. As a preliminary introduction to set the tone of the novel, the readers are informed of the evolution and consolidation of national consciousness. The amplification of the circumstances that paved the way for the partition of the country and the communal riots is narrated as a foreground to the theme of the novel.

New Historicism is another critical perspective that finds reflection in these two novels. Stephen Greenblatt in *Renaissance Self Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* has initiated the New Historicist perspective from the plays of Shakespeare. This represents the influence of Frederic Jameson, Michel Foucault, Jean Francois Lyotard who raised the question of art and society in relation to institutionalized practices. It questions the way history is conventionally

constructed. Kushwant Singh gives the new historicist perspective with his genuine depiction of communal history. Kushwant Singh is implicitly on the side of the liberal ideals personal freedom. He considers all forms of difference and deviance. In these two novels he exposes the power of the repressive State and holds it responsible for the communal riots. Almost on the lines Michel Foucault's 'Panoptic Surveilliance', Kushwant Singh makes out the intimidation of the Sate by the power of its discursive practices. On the lines of 'New Historicism', Singh examines Train To Pakistan and evinces the thought control exercises practiced by the elite sections in the society to uphold the hegemony. He concentrates on the decisive nature of 'context' and makes it a 'co-text'. The circumstances that brewed the communal riots acquire the historical context. This fulfills the idea that every facet of reality is textualised.

