

HISTORY IN DELHI

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ABSTRACT

Delhi, a novel, has the unfortunate distinction of receiving a great deal of public notice, but the attention that has been focused upon it has no relevance to the novel at all, with the result that the genuine strength of one of the major works of fiction published in 1989 has not been adequately appreciated, Khushwant Singh told a journalist soon after the publication of Delhi, In present research paper I have tried to give attention on the part of history in the Novel Delhi.

KEYWORDS: *Delhi, Khuswant Singh, ancient culture*

Gone is the culture of Delhi it breaks my heart. I no longer want to see Hauz khas or go to Suraj kund which was a good four mile walk or visit Tughlakabad that was almost of slums with construction all around I came here when there was no New Delhi. I saw the whole city being built. A that time all see these ruins were accessible to us. You could see them for miles. There were no roads. One walked to them. Now they are smothered in the name of development, art or what have you.... Delhi has not produced anything that will last. Apart from Ghalib. (1990).

Khushwant Singh says that he was motivated and inspired to write Delhi by Ivo Andric's, the bridge on the Drina (1945). The Yugoslav Nobel Laureate's celebrated a set of three literary compositions on one subject, each complete in itself, the bridge on the Drina, Bosnian Chronicle, and The Women from Sarajevo, which was composed during World War II, provides a picture of Bosnian history from 1916 to World War II. Andric presents, in his work, traditions of realism and modernism. His novels provide epic impulsive force, and deterministic philosophical views along with a great sense of pity. He writes in a language of great beauty and purity.

One may observe Delhi as Singh's revision of history that upsets the officious view and offer a critic of the not natural historiography that is often authoritarian, prescriptive and monologist. The text resists from linear referentially producing an effect of carnival ensue. It records the major historical events over a period of 600 years i.e. from the Muslim invasion- the year of 1265, beginning of the reign of Sultan Ghiasuddin Balban- to the assassination

of Smt. Indira Gandhi, followed by massacre of the Sikhs. Baghmati, as the chief persona, acts as the counterbalancing force to the all pervasive violence that marks the history of Delhi. A possible clue seems to lie in the phenomenon of androgyny. Wisdom by virtue of their being male (rationality) and female (instinct) at the same time.

The fictional cosmos of the novel penetrates with the definitions of violent acts and violent events /situations. To know some of them ; MAHMUD of Ghazni who invaded Hindustan seventeen times used to chop off the fingers of the Hindu Rajas he defeated in battle his treasury was full of Hindu fingers. Singh writes for Ghiasuddin Balban ;was raised his eyes to look at him . He kept two huge negroes beside him to hack off the head of people he sentenced to death (55) There are several other descriptions of ambitious plots and for throne leading to blood like are terrible violence. Khushwant Singh sketches out paradigmatic examples of a perfect human being, a model individual interested in the business of living and trying to get as much out of the unavoidably troubled and gloomy human existence as possible without causing hurt to any other person.

What Delhi most certainly is not is a book of history, its careful attachment to the facts of history notwithstanding. Apparently the city, Delhi, lays itself bare chronologically from 1008 A.D to the 1984 massacre. But when we look back after studying the book , we are not conscious of sequential narrative but of numerous voices that rise in violent multitude , mix and become a symphonic musical entertainment : voices of kings and

nobleman and their hirelings rebels and turn-coats ; lonely kayasthas and half caste anglo- Indians; native Indian soldiers Gurus and aulias ; faithless women and friends Khwajasaras , Hindus , Muslims , the untouchables and Christians ; whores and a being in which characteristics of both the sexes and combined (hijra) . Singhs joy for success its present a city Delhi which disregards the logic of times. He transforms it in to an organic whole by according the time past and time present of the historical, time bound Delhi a simultaneous presence. the unmistakable voice of the persona that Delhi dons to speak to us is that of the authors himself . The vehicle that Singh uses to communicate to his readers is the metaphor of the hijra (eunuch).

I return to my mistress Bhagmati when I have had my fill of whoring in foreign lands . Delhi and Bhagmati have a lot common. Having been long misused by rough people they have learn to conceal their seductive charms under a masks of repulsive ugliness. It is only to their lover that they reveal their true selves.....what you have to do for things to appear like a gangrenous accretion of nosy bazaars and men looking hovels growing around a few tumbles down forts and mosques along a dead rivers .

Love is a process by means of which one may transform ugliness in to beauty-“Then the skies over Delhi marbles places turn an aquamarine blue;its domed mosque and pencil-like minarets are spanned by rainbows ,Singh presents that hijara (eunuch) “stands for a symbol of sterility . It can never conceive and I thought this was a wonderful symbol for a city in which so much has happened like a sexual intercourse that repeats him “Delhi is not a ready reckoner for the lewd. Singh’s use of the prurient or bawdy is deliberate and best handled. He expresses his disgust through metaphor, which is the chief weapon. Bawdy has in fact been used to equate with caricature. The use of bawdy by Khushwant singh seems funny, and conic. Singh told a journalist: I have been deliberately misunderstood by many people who have not bothered to read the book..... I have used four-letters words. Perhaps the test is racy, bawdy and has a lot of sex. That is me. And that is also a lot of people.

Pakistan newspaper, jung, leveled charge against him that Singh’s novel makes him a Sikhs Salman Rushdie because he was presented Muslim emperors drinking or indulging in an orgy, Singh says;”Nowhere in novel have i said a word against Islam or the Prophet or the Koran. I have described the lives of Monarchs who happened to be Muslims. It is all taken from their diaries....Why should Islam be linked with the decadence of a monarch and “dying city”. The Hindus live on “stale diet of past glory,” are “fawning latherers” ungrateful and cowardly, their manners, unlikable, and their ethics. Questionable.

Delhi is a human document presented in a salient way. Anger veils admiration, disgust, love and gross sexual loathing express intense fascination of the chief person in the story and authors alluring influence. Singh’s exciting hatred of the object of his wish provides him remarkable insight in to the heart and the soul of the city and in habitants. It is the story of the people who have failed to protect the values that makes values that make a popular discover and realize themselves a culture and civilization that have crumbled before attaining its real destiny. Traces of the Glory that could have been serve to increase one sense of the magnitude of that failure.

Markand paranjebe (1990) presents, It is a saga of greed, violence, oppression and injustice.....There is little to counter the gloom with which the book endsYet one cannot help but going back to the transforming and healing power of those who oppose such devices forces of hatred, those only men from Nizamuddin Aulia to Guru Arjun Singh to Mahatama Gandhi.....who are the real Badshahs of Delhi.

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