



Analysis of Cultural History in Gurcharan Das's Play 'Larin's Sahib'

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Abstract: - We study the past to understand the remembrance, and we understand the present to guide the future. History is of gigantic value to social scientists intended in research. It vouches of us to discern one's correlation with one's past. It restores the orthodox and culturalequivalent of a society, and serves as abeacon shining, guiding society in resistingdifferent calamities. Literature isthe defined through culture aspect, the language from literature helps give culture expiation of live in different society. It is term that carries multiple meaning and is understood in very many ways. In my present paper, I have attempt to convey forth the glance of Punjab after the authority of the colossalking, Maharaja Ranjit Singh 'the lion of the Punjab' in the historical play Larins Sahib written by the collective guru and the Ex-vice President for Procter and Gamble Worldwide. This play focuses the differentpositions of the eighteenth century Punjab rotatingover Henry Lawrence. Das notes in the introduction of this play that how during his travels in the bazaar of Punjab, marketing Vicks Vaporub; he began to delve into the history of Punjab. It was then he came across the unusual Lawrence brothers: out of whom Henry Lawrence was the most interesting and the least imperial. His brother George was a soldier in the North- West.

Keywords: - Culture, language, literature, authority, position etc.

Introduction

Gurcharan Das play Larins Sahib is a attractiverehabilitation of the extend to capacity and impact in the Punjab in the years 1846-47 of Henry Lawrence, who was nominated Agent of the East India Company to the Sikh Kingdom. The publishers note on the cover of the book serves as an inauguration to the play:

It is 1846. Seven years after the death of the formidable Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and the Sikh Kingdom has suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the East India Company. Henry Lawrence, already a legend on the North –west Frontier is appointed the company's Agent to the Government of the late Maharaja's boy son, Dalip Singh. Preferring Indian officers to British in an attempt to restore Sikh self –respect and endeavoring to root out corruption in the court, Lawrencealienates his superiors. This prize winning play traces the development of the hubris, which together with

Lawrence's love for the beautiful Rani, brings about his downfall.
(Three English Plays, 7)

The colonial encounter between the Indians and the East India supplies the general background of the play. The main action focuses on the dilemma of the hero Larins Sahib who is ripped between his professional faithfulness to the East India Company and his pity for the Sikh Singh Dalip Singh. The play adapts the conflict between two forces—the British Imperialism represented by the East India Company with all its power like Harding, Curie and Elliot, and the Indian King, Dalip Singh, Henry Lawrence, who is Iqbal 30 known for the executive effectiveness and dutifulness is furthered as the ruler of the Sikh Kingdom and directed to be the care-taker of Dalip Singh. The play depicts the irresolute relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, which is pointed by political contempt and dislike on the one hand and by spiritual pity and understanding on the other. It falls into the category of Raj nostalgia remembrance, as it recollects the parable grandeur of the British court in India as well as the unhappy, sleazy story of how kingdom after kingdom was taken over by the British because of backstabbing conspiracy among India Rulers.

The play epitomizes the three avatars of Henry Lawrence; Lawrence – the notify kingdom – builder, Lawrence – the latter day Loin of the Punjab and Lawrence – an assist to the East India Company. Right from the beginning of the play we learn that Lawrence is known for his pity for the under – standing of the native problems of India. It is primarily for his non – imperialistic habit that he has become a butt of ridicule among the East India Company officials. When Lord Harding, Governor General, camps at the riverbank of Sutlej, halfway between Lahore and Delhi on 20th March 1846, he is ambitious to meet Henry Lawrence and analyse the details of administration of the Sikh Kingdom with him. Everybody has heard about his prestige and acclaims him for his capability. As Elliot addresses to Lord Harding, Henry Lawrence- ...

has built up a phenomenal reputation. Just two years on the border as a minor clerk with the Revenue Survey and he's become a legend. I believe he's on the first name terms with most of the nobility of the Punjab. They swear by him, and the Peasantry of the Ferozpur district thinks he's same kind of savior. (3)

Tough a servant of East India Company Henry is known for his pity for Indians and for his wearing an Indian dress, which makes him unpopular with his own British officers and companions.

Currie comments upon him to Lord Harding, "Your Excellency, We should be thankful Mr. Lawrence is at wearing his regimental colors. Normally, I am told he finds native dress more comfortable." (Larins Sahib, 4). In the identification of Lawrence's splendid and successful ability he is nominated by Lord Harding as the agent of the North – West regions of India:

In consideration of your generous services in the Punjab, in view of your knowledge of the North – West territories. I, Henry Harding, Governor-general of India and her majesty's the Right Honorable Privy Council hereby appoint you Agent of the Honorable East India Company to the Government of His Highness Dalip Singh, the son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh... come on, Show some sign of life, you're promoted to the Resident ship... the destiny of the entire North– West is in your hands. (Larins Sahib, 9)

Now as Henry has been selected as the Resident, he has a considerable opportunity, higher power and higher range to accomplish definite reformatory tasks left unfinished by the late Maharaja. But Henry knows that this is not going to be easy as the Punjab has been occurred poorly by the local fight. He learns the bitter truth that Maharaja Ranjit Singh's kingdom lost the fight owing to inner disloyalty rather than an account of the so-called military Powers of the East India Company.

But Henry Lawrence looks at Indian and their life from a sympathetic point of view:

Ranjit Singh died seven years ago. Since his death there's been chaos everywhere and a fierce struggle for succession. The sardars have been quarreling like dogs. And understandably so. For he not only created the Punjab from a mass of Petty states but in fact his personality united the kingdom. He established no institution which would live apart from him. When he died the Punjab died. (8)

The East India Company misjudges this sympathetic attitude. Mr. Currie calls Lawrence a clown and an Orientalist, thereby giving inlet to his imperialistic scorn.

Currie half-heartedly appoints a native officer Sardar Sher Singh as assistant to Henry Lawrence. Lawrence knows the wickedness of his authority and resolves to do his best to continue the work of one-eyed Lion of Punjab. He is much influenced by the late Raja Ranjit Singh's nature that he wants to elevate himself to that level so that people may compare him to the late Maharaja. Whether this is an identity crisis or some type of complex, one thing is definite: Lawrence's plan of comparing himself with the Lion is related to obtain glory.

To unite Punjab, to restore their trust back, to make them glad, Lawrence makes his mind to being certain improve. To him reform means ending of certain wickedness and bring forth welfare. Reacting to the event of killing of cows by a British officer, he sees this as an chance to start with his idea of reform. He declares:

To convince you of our serenity, I have decided, to waive one month's land revenue for the citizens of this district... we want to begin by listening to you honored citizens, rather than by ordering you about like "Lord Sahib's. We want to build canals, bridges,

roads. We want to ensure as much justice as possible to each citizen. (60)

Such a reform elevate a few significant questions concerning the category of Henry Lawrence Being a British what political advantage he would want from the marginalized people. Would such a reform not provoke the British think – talk? Is this a political plan to obtain instant reputation among the man's? Is this a real try to better the ruled society? All these questions cannot be answered through wild guesses. However as history opens, Henry's renewal not only win him acclaim but also hearts of people so much so that during the 1857 rebellious people of Punjab stand by the British. His kindness and goodwill builds him dream of a broad world for the native.

In reality this instant is something different. He is so much influenced by the late Ranjit Singh's nature that he desires to follow his unique and resembles himself as the "like" of late Maharaja to the monarchs. This may be identified as character crisis – the attempt to compare himself with the Lion and obtain the measure of his reputation. In the time of Henry Lawrence he has to face a number of challengers in his administration. The dispute between Christian culture and Sikh culture and that between British law and Sikh law generate a variety of problems for him. For example, when a small distance of English soldiers was clearing the Shah Jhalami Gate, the road was blocked by a herd of cows. The officer in command being unaware of the Hindu repudiate for cows cleaned the street the immediate possible way by gunning down the cows. The Hindu sentiments being deeply hurt, the natives generate a grand hullabaloo over the vulnerable issue. The chaos and confusion generate a lot of tension in the kingdom. He therefore, goes to Rani Indian kaur to describe the sad happenings and wants to apologize publicly the next morning. The Rani and her Wazir Lal Singh becomes angry and hurt by the miserable killing of cows. There, in addition to, cultural dispute there is also a regal conflict. Lal Singh ensues that the young officer who killed the cow should be tried according to the like law.

Henry Lawrence who understands the responsiveness of the cow matter and takes the young officer Lumsden to task. He slaps him and even intimidates to suspend him from duty if he repeats his errors. But the other officers of the East India Company are not very sympathetic towards the Indians.

Now a day's cultural studies take into account all respects of living such as dream, food means of entertainment etc. But in the British era when India was colonized, culture was only associated with the way and values of the upper crust of society. Larins Saheb foregrounds the contrast between the aristocracy and the lower class people. The aristocratic class is represented by the British and that lower class by the natives. The play also highlights the way British humiliated the natives in the first act, Henry Lawrence is portrayed as a strong advocate of the principle of natural justice, a lover of the natives and a just efficient administrator. There is a suggestion of subtle irony in the reference that his face has been self-tanned in the heat of the subcontinent and that he can easily be mistaken for a native. Lawrence's appearance at the Governor General's Durban makes the white occupants of the room look

suspiciously as if they are about to receive a stronger from another land and not one of their our real. Their snobbery and prejudices against the Indians are apparent is the observations, they make about Lawrence.

Conclusion

Thus, Gurcharan Das has nicely depicted an Indian culture and especially Panjab culture in his play Larins Sahib. The play not only weaves various cultural aspects such as custom, traditions and people's belief in Panjab but also show how intensely cultural aspects affects people of India. Besides cultural aspect the play also touches historical perspective which especially throws lights on political upheavals during the freedom movement of India.

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