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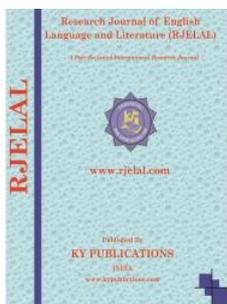
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RECIPROCITY OF CONSTRUCTION AND REPRESENTATION OF RELIGIOUS IDEOLOGY – A STUDY OF KUSHWANTH SINGH'S - TRUTH LOVE AND LITTLE MALICE

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ABSTRACT

The social arrangements or the social system with dominant ideologies constructs individual ideologies. A writer with these dominant ideologies is entertained by the publishers and motivated by the government. Thereby, such writer is made popular. The writer represents these constructions in their writings and the same ideologies are identified and recognized by the critics. The dominant ideology is circulated to the readers. Therefore thoughts, beliefs, ideologies, values, attitudes of influential writers are not autonomous, sovereign and independent systems but constructed and fostered by social factors. Once constructed, these ideologies are represented by the individuals. Once, represented they are circulated to their readers. Therefore, we can trace a circular motion of ideologies independent of individual writers.

Key Words: Dominant Ideologies, Social Arrangement, Construction of Ideology, Representation of ideology, Reciprocity of Construction and Representation

At the juncture of history, the old ideological systems crumble due to their irrelevance, uselessness, or even because old systems of beliefs bring havoc and catastrophe to the lives of people. Immediately after independence, the same thing happened in India which aimed at the economic and material development of the nation. Production in all sectors had to be improved in order to feed and cater to the needs of the vast population. Transport and communication, large scale industries, small scale industries, had to produce goods to the nation right from pins to jet engines. For speedy production, the PM Nehru thought of introducing machinery and goods existing in the international capitalist system rather than developing indigenous systems of production. The national leaders thought of bringing the whole idea of developed nation in western terms and thoughts. Moreover the

communal unrest and differences, strife's had to be brought to control for the stability of the nation. This was necessary to build confidence among its citizens and economic growth of the nation. The word socialist in the Indian constitution necessitated upliftment of the marginalized, downtrodden, weaker sections, minorities and women on par with the rest of the population. These new thoughts gave birth to new ideologies.

Generally speaking, newly constructed ideologies stays for a fairly many decades because its negative effects start to show and come to the experience of the masses only after many years. As these new ideologies needs to be propagated and advertised, eye catching advertisements, attention grabbing writers, speeches of influential people are entertained by the all powerful administrative

system. Ideologues are chosen and given space for their voices both by the governments and sycophantic publishing companies who want incentives and sops from the government. Immediately after independence government was the all powerful agency of all action in India. The publishing companies were more worried about their profit than people's concerns, society, culture, tradition. The government and publishing houses, who buttered the government, did not overlook the help of ideologues in maintaining ideology supported political, economic, cultural system.

According to Erich Fromm an individual realizes his inner potentialities and needs based on the opportunities a social arrangement offers. (Lindsay & Hall 345) The same thing happens with media maestro Kushwanth Singh also. The mayhem of partition necessitated the control of communal situation for survival of the government. The terms of agreement between the congress and the Muslim league were in practice from the time of the establishment of the congress and Muslim league. The newly formed Congress government led by Nehru was ready to do anything to save the partition torn India from becoming anarchic even at the cost of appeasing and coercion of the minorities. It made policies and programmes to accommodate the violent unrest and loud voices of the minorities. In the later decades this strategy was used to maintain the Muslim vote banks in its favor by the congress government.

Kushwanth Singh was victim of communalism erupted due to the partition of India. He had fled Lahore fearing attacks and threat to the lives of Sikhs. His family had to leave their birth place, ancestral property because of communalism. All this left a long lasting impact on Kushwanth Singh. He became a staunch advocate of secularism. His religious ideology was in tune with Nehruvian ideology of religious which is a combination of various ideological points, socialism, religious democracy, secularism, relativism, and universalism. Indira Gandhi overlooked her father's wise words that secularism should be decided by the people themselves according to the time and circumstances in India. (Roychowdhury) The word secularism meant separation of politics and religion as in the west. In a

secular country, the state cannot aid any religious institution. It cannot hinder the activities of religious communities. But Indira Gandhi's secularism deals with religious freedom of minority communities and it opposed oppression of Dalits and women within Hinduism. It supported state supported religious reform. (Secularism) This pro Muslim stand led to the consolidation of Hindutva voices and manifested in upsurge of parties like BJP and RSS. "Secularism in India means anti Hinduism. India's brand of secularism rests on minority appeasement". (Danino) Kushwanth Singh is the biggest mouth piece of Indira's secularism. He writes "I made *The Illustrated Weekly of India* a forum for Indian Muslim opinion, whenever there was a Hindu-Muslim riot, since most of the loss of property was of Muslim; I adopted a distinctly pro-Muslim stance." (Singh 235). Kushwanth Singh almost became an ideologue for Indira Gandhi congress government. He was made member of Rajya Sabha by the congress led Indira Gandhi Government. He supported government's religious policies and Government supported his model of dealing with communal situations. Both were reciprocal to each other.

This led him to be branded as pro- Muslim and ideologue of minorityism. He lists the common features of his career as an editor of popular news magazine, *The Illustrated Weekly of India* in his autobiography *Truth Love and Little malice*. One such persistent characteristic he undertook as an editor is efforts to reduce the plight of Indian Muslims. He felt that they were discriminated on the pretext of breeding pro Pakistani sympathies. He noticed that the unemployment of Muslims in both government and privately owned industry is because of the suspicion of the business houses largely controlled by Hindu Industrialists on the loyalty of Muslims to anything other than their communities. He writes, "They had virtually no forum to ventilate their grievances, except Urdu newspapers which had small circulations restricted to their own community. I made *The IWI* a forum for Indian Muslim opinion. Whenever there as a Hindu-Muslim riot, since most of the loss of property was Muslim, I adopted a distinctly pro- Muslim stance. I also felt that friendly relations with Pakistan were a

must to instill a sense of security in the minds of Indian Muslims. I did my best to put Pakistani point of view on issues where Indian and Pakistani stands were at variance. (Singh 255) He writes, "After Indo Pak war the Kushwanth Singh led IWI persisted in coercing the government to release 93,000 Pakistani prisoners of war when it was over. The IWI carried a large number of articles on Islam, Islamic history and Indian Muslim freedom fighter. When Kushwanth Singh took over as the member of Rajya Sabha, many said " We have another Muslim in Parliament'. Others who disliked my views called me an unpaid agent of Pakistan. I call both views as compliments" (Singh 256)

Kushwanth Singh was extremely sentimental about his place of birth, ancestral home and culture. On his visit to his birth place Hadali, a small village in Pakistan in 1987, he writes, "My last visit to Hadali was in the winter of 1987. The partition of India had brought about a complete change in its population. Not a single Sikh or Hindu remained. Our homes were occupied by Muslim refugees of Haryana. I drove from Lahore and reached Hadali early in the afternoon. Village elders awaited me on the roadside with garlands of silver and gold tassels with the words – Welcome- inscribed on the in Urdu. I was escorted to the High school ground where a dais with the Pakistani flag fluttering over it. Over 2000 Hadalians sat in rows on chairs and on the ground. I said I would have liked nothing better than to be left alone to roam about the lanes of Hadali and rest my head on the threshold of the house in which I was born. Then, I was overcome by emotion and broke down. They escorted to my former home with the entire village following me .fireworks were let off; women standing on the rooftops showered rose petals on me. Who was the author of the perfidious lie that Muslims and Sikhs were sworn enemies? no animosity had soured relations between the Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs of Hadali. Muslims had left the Sikh- Hindu Dharmasala untouched because it had been a place of worship for their departed cousins. (Singh 10)

To sum up, construction and representation of ideologies are reciprocal. An individual can never be sovereign of his attitudes, beliefs, values.

Kushwanth Singh's autobiography *Truth love and Little Malice* gives ample proofs for the interdependence of construction and representation of religious ideologies.

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