

Khushwant Singh as a Columnist

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Khushwant Singh is the great scholar of 20th Century. In the novel *The Company Of Women* he refers to the British education system. Before 1947 many Indian landlords flattered in British authorities for personal gains and this fact has been highlighted in *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingales*. He supported the concepts of fundamental rights of man and equality between man and woman. Columns were written by him on different issues. His Column in *The Hindustan Times* is still popular as he writes on past, present and future. Khushwant Singh has aptly been admired for his positive vision of life. Actually he shared his likes and dislikes with his readers and did not impose his thoughts upon them. At heart he was shocked to see the growth of terrorism in the Country. His columns give instruction as well as delight.

Khushwant Singh is the great scholar of 20th century. He becomes popular all over the world as he raised his voice against British imperialism. He observed the social, political and economic conditions of Indians and sympathized with them. Not only has this he suggested ways and means to the British authorities as to how the conditions can be improved in a rational manner. Since he had lived in pairs for a short time, He knew how the poor people suffered immense problems there too.

Khushwant Singh describes major event of his life in his autobiography and takes his theme of his second novel from his experience of Britain. Even in the novel *The Company Of Women* he refers to the British education system. Here he exposes the unethical conduct of so-called refined people. In his autobiography and *Train To Pakistan* he refers to the tensions as cheated by the partition of the country. However like other national leaders he felt delighted with freedom of the country.

Khushwant advocate the concept of democratic socialism. It is true that he is champion of have-nots. It is note-worthy that he supports the concept of a welfare state. They raised their voice against exploitation of man by man. Industries had been established in England and the labors were not paid their wages properly. Before 1947 many Indian landlords flattered the British authorities for personal gains and this fact has been highlighted in *I Shall Not Hear The Nightingales*. Khushwant Singh supported the concepts of fundamental rights of man and equality between man and woman. Like T.S. Eliot, E.M. Forster etc.

he raised his voice against the authorities who produced terrible weapons to earn money. He asserted that state is a means only and people are important. Terror had been spread by the supporters of Hitler and Mussolini and nobody could raise his voice against them.

Columns were written by him on different issues. Sometimes he reacted against dictatorial forces. For example, Khushwant Singh failed to tolerate his imposition of Emergency in India in 1975. When the Golden Temple was attacked by the Indian army, he felt disgusted. These columns establish the fact that he was a minute observe of man and manners. His vision was positive and he had the courage to express his observation in bold words. Inspire of being tolerant, he could not control his sarcastic tone.

In his column *Himalayan Holidays* he laments that one faces many problems due to the shortage of water and electricity in this advanced country. The people living in the Himalayan regions have compromised with this situation and so should the others:

Some days there is no water, other days no electricity. And some days there is neither water nor electricity. So you have to stock plenty of soda or mineral water. You may have to brush your teeth with fizzy soda water and wash your bottom with Bisleri. Also keep Condles and match boxes and a flashlight ready at hand you never know when you may have to go to the look at night and the light switch refuses to illuminate your way. You have to learn how do without your daily bath.

In the Column 'No Pride, Only Prejudice' he laments the fact that Indians still

Continue to be the victims of racial prejudices and hence suffer the agony of isolation. They forget the teachings of Buddha, Kabir and Gandhi and continue to quarrel in the name of religion. They still feel that society is divided into four sections. There is a clear visible gap between the Dalits and the upper classes. Unfortunately, they do not give up these prejudices when they settle abroad. He laments:

What is more distressing that our people carry the load of prejudice even when they leave Indian to settle abroad? They stick to their own religious and linguistic groups. Though settled abroad, they arrange their children's marriages within their caste. They make little effort to mingle with people whose nationality they readily accept. At the same time, they are the loudest in protesting that they are at the receiving end of racial discrimination. That is a lot of humbug.

Khushwant Singh is proud of Hymns of Gurus and Indian Culture. At so many places he has requested to deliver a few lectures on Indian history. Then he admired the principles of Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism etc and does not forget Gandhism.

Here he mentions the contribution of the Persians, the Mauryas, Greeks, Guptas etc. and quotes from the poems of Jayadeva:

**A teacher failing in his moral teaching,
A priest unscholarly who's still preaching,
A King whose subjects look for help in vain,
A wife whose voice portends a husband's pain,**

References:

1. Khushwant Singh : With Malice Towards One And All in The Hindustan Times , June 11, 2005, p.10.
2. Khushwant Singh : No Pride , Only Prejudice in The Hindustan Times , September 24, 2005, p. 10.
3. Jayadeva in India : An Introduction ;p-148.

**A shepherd, who on urban pleasures broods,
A barber dreaming of the hills and woods,**

All six- avoid them. Everyone can be as lethal as a leaky boat at sea.

His Column in The Hindustan Times is still popular as he writes on past, present and future. Since he is interested in Indian history he reveals several facts in India: An Introduction. Moreover, he does not forget problems that the people are facing these days.

Khushwant Singh has aptly been admired for his positive vision of life . Actually he shared his likes and dislikes with his readers and did not impose his thoughts upon them. As spectator of mankind, he observes the various political and them makes comments. His autobiography is a sublime piece of art and not an act for self-recommendation. He tried to establish harmony between ethics and politics and succeeded in his mission.

In some of his columns he recollected his early childhood and how his family members had friendly relations with Muslims. Most of time he quoted from Urdu poems as he enjoyed reading Faiz , Iqbal, Saadi , Firaq , Firdos , etc. At heart he was shocked to see the growth of terrorism in the country.

Thus Khushwant was a great columnist. He wrote without fear. He did not write for the pleasure of the leisure class. He highlighted the problems of his time. His columns give instruction as well as delight.