

A Psychosocial Study of the *Second Nose* by Yashpal

Divya

Research Scholar, Department of English, Om Sterling Global University, Hisar

INTRODUCTION

Yashpal (1903-1976) was an eminent writer of Hindi short stories. His mission was to show the Sham of our cultural activities through his stories. He is compared with Tolstoy. His Novel *Jhootha Sach* is compared with *War and Peace*. As a writer of Hindi short stories he has been compared with Anton Chekhov. He was unflinching realist like Chekhov; his Mission was to eradicate the backward and unrealistic elements in Indian society. Yashpal, as a prolific writer, covers the diverse fields of Indian society in his short stories and novels. We can find in his fiction - from the social, cultural and political issues of the day to the sea pirates plundering vessels. *Nose* has always been very valuable thing throughout the history of human being. For instance, *Ramayana* is based on nose, *Surpanakha's* nose cut by Laxman and Ravana took it very serious. Women activism, just demanded for women's freedom, basically started in Europe but later on came to India and they demanded that they should be treated as human being not as property:

Feminist therapists emphasize that societal gender-role expectations profoundly influence a person's identity from the moment of birth and become deeply ingrained in adult personality. Because gender politics are embedded in the fabric of American society, they influence how we see ourselves as girls and boys and as women and men throughout the course of our lives. Gender-role expectation tends to generate a false sense of self and force women to accept stereotyped gender roles. Women are expected to be a lady, to never swear, hit or get angry. They should strive to please men and, above all, never offend or best a man.

“Feminist therapists remind us that traditional gender stereotypes of women are still prevalent in cultures throughout the world. They teach their clients that uncritical acceptance of traditional roles can greatly restrict their range freedom. Today many women and men are resisting being so narrowly defined.” (Corey 335-336)

Yashpal always advocated for the progress of women. Yashpal's women characters are strong, intelligent, and courageous beings that are trapped in old-age sham of our society basically religiously deprived. His characters are from different sects of India – Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and so on. Yashpal questions religious faith, superstitions, male- attitude towards women, social bondages etc. His best stories are the *Devil's Blessings*, the *Priest who saw God*, *Kala Aadmi*, the *Testimonial of Loyalty* and the *National Anthem*. Yashpal criticized the British, questioned social customs, cultural traditions, political issues, and religious issues of his time. In Yashpal's stories, the message of story is always deep, his style is always straight forward and there is no complicated language, theme, or issues in his writings. The *second Nose* shows the patriarchal attitude of society towards women where women are considered as mere a commodity:

The French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray argues that images of frighteningly powerful, castrating women appear so frequently in male-dominated culture because man's first relationship in the world is with his mother. That mother is an overpowering being associated with the threat of engulfment. Men compensate for this initial state of powerlessness by engaging in an extreme rejection of the mother and of all that she represents in terms of care and empathy. For men to have an identity and to have power the mother must be subordinated and anything associated with her must be depicted as evil.

“The symbolic early object in one's life gets transferred, of course, onto women in general. This would explain why in traditional societies women are often made to appear under control of their husbands. They are forced to live in confined interior spaces and forced to wear body-covering clothing that marks them out as their husband's property. That many women freely accede to such subordination is a sign of how successful cultural conditioning can be even when it works against one's interests.” (Ryan 132)

Jabbar has come of marriage age and his parents has decided to marry him to a beautiful lady but meanwhile Jabbar has seen the Hasba's daughter Shabbu fetching water from the well and after seeing her he has lost his heart to her.

Jabbar is pining for her day and night. His parents thought that he was willing to be married to a lady. So they talked about Shamsul's elder daughter Jahunna in his presence: "Young and robust, when she walked carrying the big pitcher of water on her head, the earth shook under her feet, so firm were her steps. Adept at household chores, she would be an asset to the family and of great help to Jabbar's ageing mother." (Singh 259)

The above description of the lady shows that she is considered as a worker and helping hand not an identity. But Jabbar was unmoved. One day his mother requested him to tell what it was that was pinching him day and night. He said that it had been Hasba's daughter Shabbu to whom he had lost his heart. His parents were shocked to hear that. Basically his father knew that lady. She was very fragile and lean and was not fit for household works; they now and then praised Jahunna and disparaged Shabhu. But Jabbar was adamant to marry Shabbu. Seeing the conditions of his son one day Gaffar went to Hasba's house to settle the marriage but something weird happened there:

"Will you tell me what happened or just keep fretting? The old woman said, mumbling a prayer to take upon herself his misfortunes.... Do you know what Hasba said? And do you know that he did not even offer me a seat? "Forget about Shabbu, he said, giving me a cold stare. Her price is Rs 250; A bag full of Rs 250. That's what I must have before I talk to anyone about Shabbu's marriage." (Yashpal 260)

The above lines show the mentality of society towards women. They thought them as commodity. Both Gaffar and Hasba are arguing over money not for a bride altogether. But Jabbar was unmoved so Gaffar sold off his camels and arranged 250 rupees for her son's marriage and Shabbu came to live with Jabbar as his wife. But as said earlier, she was no use of family matters. She was always careful about her looks:

"Shabbu thought no end of herself. She bragged all the time about how Jabbar's father had paid two hundred and fifty rupees for her. When she went to the well, she returned with the pitcher only half filled, swaying her waist as she walked. Her neighbor, Meeran, warned her not to be so vain. 'Men don't want dressed-up dolls,' she said. They demand work from their women. One day your husband will give you such a beating that your waist will get twisted forever." (Yashpal 261)

She was unmindful of the social customs or we can say that we find a tinge of modern women in her. She tried to be a woman not a commodity:

"Shabbu was indeed vain, and fond of good clothes. She wore a black velvet waistcoat, three lines of mother-of-pearl buttons tacked along its seams. She washed her hair twice a month, rubbed butter into it and every time she went out of the house, she patted down her hair with moistened palms. Jabbar's mother helplessly watched the ways of her daughter-in-law. 'What use is she to me?' she would grumble to her neighbours, wrinkling up her nose. A costly doll – that's what she is. She has no time left from her fopperies." (Yashpal 262)

Jabbar was sent to find work as he couldn't be living at home forever as an idle fellow. He was married then and he had to find his livelihood to carry his family: It was a reluctant Jabbar that one day left to Bannu in search of work. His heart was still in the village. Hardly a week passed when he was overwhelmed by the longing to be with Shabbu. Unable to bear the separation any longer, he set off for his village one night. After trudging sixteen miles, as he saw hazy rooftops of the village arranged against the hill in the first glow of dawn, he suddenly stopped in his tracks. Won't his neighbours sneer at him, for his impatience at meeting his wife so soon? The thought acted as shackles on his feet. Sitting down on a nearby cliff he wishfully gazed at the door of his house, hoping to catch a glimpse of Shabbu as she came out to fetch water from the spring. With luck, he may even manage to exchange a few words with her and then rush back to Bannu, unnoticed by others.

Here we find the cultural and social aspects of love that if husband makes love to his wife he is sneered at by the society. You have to hide your love for your wife, you have to treat her as a commodity not your life partner otherwise society will laugh at you. Jabbar was waiting to meet Shabbu:

"Yes, Shabbu came, but not alone; there were two girls with her. Hiding behind a boulder he looked at Shabbu with hungry eyes, his heart pounding with excitement. But he could not bring himself to speak to her. What would her companions say? Shabbu came laughing and joking and went away the same way, swaying her hips. Dejected, Jabbar trudged back to Bannu. His mind was filled with jealousy. He was piqued at the thought that while he sweated his guts out working in an uncongenial town, she was having the time of her life in the village, as though he meant nothing to her. Perfidy, he realized, was another name for woman." (Yashpal 263)

Jabbar was casted in patriarchal outlook, he thought women as commodity. He never realized that Shabbu has her own way of life. Living away from husband was not her fault. She was as she was. But Jabbar was upset after seeing her living unmoved by his absence. He thought that there were many guys who could do mischief with his wife and she could be seduced by them. His mind was full of suspensions:

“Like an indigo spot on cloth which does not wash off easily, suspicion, once it takes root in the mind, keeps nagging with maddening persistence. ‘You had a gay time while I was in Bannu,’ Jabbar said to Shabbu. Shabbu was cut to the quick. What gay time?’ she demanded. ‘Gay time with whom’ ‘why, there are many. Don’t I know?’ ‘May I die if I ever cast a glance at anybody,’ Jabbar said, quivering with rage. To attract people with your charms! ‘So what’ Shabbu said coolly. ‘If people stare at me, am I to blame for it?’ ‘You try to show yourself off that’s why they stare at you.’” (264)

Jealousy has often been described as the “green-eyed monster,” and with good reason. Feelings of jealousy concerns that a romantic partner or other person about whom we care deeply might transfer their affection or loyalty to another – are deeply distressing. While most people think about jealousy primarily in connection with romantic relationships, it can occur in other contexts too; all that is essential is that a valued relationship with another person is threatened by a rival. But despite this fact, it seems clear that jealousy may exert its strongest and most dangerous effects in the context of romantic triads; one person becomes jealous over the possibility that his or her partner is interested in a rival. Jealousy is a major factor in a large proportion of homicides against women; women are most likely to be murdered by current or former jealous partners. So jealousy, it appears, stems largely from threats to self-esteem - threats that occur whenever someone we care about (a lover, work partner, good friend) seem ready to desert us for a rival (Baron 235-236).

He was very upset and decided teach her a lesson only to keep her with himself as a commodity, so no one can steal her:

“For Jabbar his misery had become unbearable because it seemed to have no end. It made him desperate. He brought out a knife from under his pillow. In the darkness his probing fingers searched for Shabbu’s nose. He caught it. With one stroke of the knife he slashed off her nose and threw it aside.” (Yashpal 265-266)

It took a long time to recover Shabbu in a British hospital from her wound of nose. But Shabbu was very sad to see her face as such. One day the lady doctor told her that she could arrange a plastic nose for her. But Jabbar was very upset after hearing that. Because he did not want to put her nose again as she would become beautiful as she was earlier and all would be after her. He didn’t want to lose his commodity. But Shabbu didn’t speak or eat for three days, finally Jabbar agreed:

“When Shabbu did not speak or eat for three days, Jabbar was disarmed. He reluctantly deposited fifty rupees with the hospital towards the cost of a rubber nose. But he made Shabbu take an oath by Allah: if she found anyone gazing at her, she would immediately remove the nose from her face and tuck it away into the pocket of her waistcoat!” (Yashpal 267)

CONCLUSION

The whole story revolves around the theme of women as product. Woman is not treated as an individual. She is treated as a possession, even she can't be stared at otherwise she will be nosed off, not the people who stare at her. Such is the condition from earlier age up to now. Every caste whether Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, or Shudra, even every strata of society whether rich or poor, she is thought of as a possession or thing to use. Her labour has always been exploited at every level, she is denied good food, good clothes, good education, and property right and most important the freedom that male enjoyed in the society.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Baron, Robert A., and Nyla R. Branscombe. *Social Psychology*. Pearson India Publishers Noida, 2017, pp. 235-236.
- [2]. Corey, Gerald. *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Cengage Publishers New Delhi, 2013, pp. 335-336
- [3]. Ryan, Michael. *Literary Theory: A Practical Introduction*. Blackwell Publishers New Delhi, 2007, p. 132.
- [4]. Singh, Khushwant., ed. *Best Indian Short Stories Volume II*. Harper Collins Publishers Noida, 2017, p. 42.
- [5]. Yashpal. *Second Nose and other stories*, Rupa and Company, 2006.