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MUSHARRAF ALAM ZOQI: AN EXISTENTIAL JOURNEY

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Among the Urdu novelists who have made the fabric of their novels with existential thought, the name of Musharraf Alam Zoqi is prominent. Somewhere in the veins of his characters there is existential fear. Somewhere there is a grip of existential meaninglessness. Somewhere the sense of incorporeality has taken the characters under its siege. Somewhere existential boredom seems embedded in the soul of every character. Somewhere the fear of death becomes an existential condition. At some point the character feels connected to the existential concept of freedom. The interference of others is playing a role of hell for him. Sartre said "Hell is other people".

One of the existential phenomena is death. All existential thinkers make the tragedy of death a special topic of discussion. According to Heidegger, real life is constituted by the constant awareness of death. The ease with which death ends life and existence reveals the futility and hollowness of life. Commenting on life, Sartre writes:

"Our existence appears in the world without any reason or necessity. All living beings come into the world without any reason. They carry the burden of constraints and weaknesses and one day they become victims of accidents."

(1)

Our great values and our honor and dignity are being auctioned and we are silently bearing it all. Musharraf Alam Zoqi's novel "Neelam Ghar" presents this defeatist mindset. Here death comes as a symbol of happiness. All the characters in the novel are afraid of death. This fear arose as a result of riots in which people's houses were burnt. Women were exploited in the name of religion. People were deprived of their freedom, people were imprisoned in their homes, people lost faith in life because they saw death hovering over

their heads. In the novel *Karim Beg*, Anjum, Amit and all the characters are suffering from the fear of death. See the quote:

"The eyes which did not know the fear of death before independence, those eyes were becoming afraid that now the fear of life has arisen even from their brothers. There is no good now." (2)

The concept of death is seen differently in different novels of Zouqi. The concept of death in the novel "*Slaughter*" is not the death of a single individual, but the death of the whole family as a result of the death of one person. Here, it is not just the concept of death, but the concept of family poverty. The death of the individual is affecting the family, his women are thinking what will happen to their family after death. In the mind of those left behind is not only the concept of death but also the concept of poverty, destitution, helplessness and neediness. The death of an individual manifests as the death of the whole family. See the quote:

"After them we will be alone? If we become homeless then who will come to help us in this old age? Tell me, who will support me, then who will bring my son's two meals a day and push him? If you spread your hands, no one will give alms. We will not sit outside the door wearing a burqa to be shameless and be humiliated, so that the world will come and spit on us, look at us with contempt and say that the widow of Janu Mian is sitting to beg." (3)

The novel "*Slaughter*" depicts a society where religion is being used for oppression, social injustice and the killing of democratic traditions, where people are put to death just because they are Muslims. Houses are born. What can be a greater tragedy?

The novel "*Bayan*" depicts the deaths resulting from the Pak-Hindu war and the resulting fear of death in the people. The character of the novel, Balmukand Sharma Josh, is in a state of existential death even after the war. He is so scared that he can still hear the sound of helicopters. The fear of war and the fear of people dying sits in his subconscious. He is afraid of being bombed again and that death. Do not go under the auspices of. Zoqi describes the ravages of war and the resulting effects on human psychology. See the inner fear of passion in this quote:

"They stare intently at the road. . . . Why is it so quiet? Has there been an accident? . . . Why are all the shops closed . . . and this in the sky Why are the helicopters dancing.... War will happen Mian, war will happen..... (4)

The scene of embracing death as a result of love is also present in the novel. Josh's cousin Izdah Sharma had an affair with a neighbor woman, so Josh's grandfather declared that Izdah should not come before him as long as he was alive. Due to failure in love and father's displeasure, Izada Sharma chooses death.

A unique concept of death is found in "*Le Sans Bhi Khuli*" where the death of power is discussed, which means that for them death is not only the death of

the material body but also the death of morals and character. Modern man is just a breathing machine whose role is dead. Here it is not the death of the individual but the death of the cultural character that is connected with the death of man. In the novel, the family of Noor Muhammad and Abdul Rahman Kardar resides in their respective mansions, which are a symbol of their glorious past, but when Abdul Rahman's father dies, Abdul Rahman sells all the land and the mansion and takes a house in the colony. Abdul Rahman's mother cannot bear the separation of the mansion, which is a symbol of an old civilization and culture, and dies. Here, Abdul Rahman causes the death of the old civilization and the birth of a new civilization. In the life of the rich Kardar, when Abdul Rahman talks about selling the mansion, the irrigator expresses his anger like this.

"This mansion is the center of centuries of civilization. If you give the shroud of changing time to this mansion of our ancestors, it is not possible in my lifetime. Yes, after me, your will is your mansion. Keep it or sell it." But all this will not happen in my lifetime.....Memorials of ancestors are not for sale.....Civilizations of centuries are hidden in them."(5)

In the novel, the culture of adults is dying at the hands of the little ones, the difference between the big and the small has disappeared. In the novel, the feudal system and the oppression of this system, the slaves are living the lives of men while being alive, it is best depicted in the novel. Hafeez Jalandhri says:

There are meetings with men on the move
Life seems like discoveries

Another type of concept of death is also found in the novel "Marg Anbuh" where the concept of death is presented in a different way. Here the laws being made to protect the citizens are only for the protection of Hindus. Their main task is to wipe out the Muslim race. The Muslim nation and other minorities are being deprived of their rights. The concept of death found here is related to the death of humanity, that is, if someone is asking for justice or speaking, send him to death. In this era, protesting for survival comes as a part of human death. Now this death is not only the death of humans but also the death of rivers and water is a metaphor. The water is dying or the trees are dying. This death is necessary for the survival of human beings because humans are going to die collectively by giving death to the trees. Characters like Raymond in the novel are the representative characters of this young generation. Want to see Jumut as an experience. Here death comes as a metaphor where the younger generation has lost all charm in this world. They do not see any color, beauty or anything new in this world. They feel that they have seen as much of the world as they wanted to see at the age of one year. The world has no more charm left for them, so after all the enjoyments of this world, they want to experience death on themselves so that they know what death is. What is its reality and what new things are there for them in the afterlife. Here death becomes a creative experience. Which the new generation is using only for their enjoyment minute. A new generation of young people buy into the "excitement" of death and fall victim to the blue whale. There is a game called

Blue Wheel which is actually a death game in which players have to play till level fifty and then the player accepts death. He commits suicide as a psychotic patient. Pasha Mirza and his friend Raymond are drawn to the Illuminati. Death is the most interesting fantasy for those who get power from evil spirit and Blue Wheel game gives them fun and exciting experiences. Raymond is ready to face death.

"Raymond felt himself at the bottom of the sea that night, among the raging waves. He was swimming. The waves were rising fast. He did not lack courage and strength. He swam away, arms and legs flailing. The wind escapes." (6)

A character in the novel, Subhan Ali, a friend of Jahangir Mirza, has his house invaded by red ants. Subhan Ali has painted the walls of the house with saffron color because these ants are afraid of saffron color. Here houses are disappearing overnight and these houses also belong to Muslims. A large number of people are being reduced in different states of the whole country, people are becoming swarms of red ants. Here, in a symbolic way, the oppression of the minority i.e. Muslims in India has been revealed. See an excerpt:

"I have ants on the walls of my house, often I look at these ants for a long time and think, where do they go in a row? Where do they come in an army? Where do they find sustenance? We insects. And have become worse than ants." (7)
Subhan Ali's wife Sadia and daughter Samira organize a ceremony to hoist the tricolor on Republic Day in a spirit of passion and patriotism. Just as the tricolor hoisting ceremony begins, they are attacked by terrorists. Four people, including Subhan Ali, are killed while his daughter Samira is kidnapped, then gang-raped and murdered. In the novel there is a magician who is scaring people by performing tricks and also disappears. Trials are being made against those who dream of killing a magician. Dreaming is also prohibited here and actions seen in a dream are prohibited. Magic is the rule of the present era. Zoqi presents the magician as a metaphor.

"Murg Anbuh" is the document of death. It is a red book with death written on every page, created by a sorcerer. This red book is actually a book of constitution and constitution, we have been excluded from this book and the only means of our salvation is death.

The novel "The Woman in the Mortuary" is a part of the "Death Mass" in which Muslims around the world are shown to be in the grip of death. The main character of the novel, Masih Supra, is a living character of this society who, fed up with the living, considers himself dead and turns his house into a morgue. Everything here is associated with the concept of death. Supra had seen death, he could hear screams, the scream of democracy, the scream of law, the scream of men, and Supra imagined himself dead in the middle of these screams. In this regard, Ali Hasan writes:

"The main character of the novel "The Woman in the Mortuary" Christ Supra is a symbolic character who represents a minority. This character declares

himself dead, fed up with social oppression, social oppression, psychological rage and political rage." (8)

Here, the concept of death is connected with the death of human society, that is, democracy is dead, law is dead. Humans are dying. Everywhere there is a scream of someone's death. Which gives credit to the main character of the novel. He thinks that after death, a person can live in peace, but when he lies dead in the morgue, he realizes that until he dies, he cannot leave the comforts of the world. This world constantly keeps him in trouble. He also has a clear sense of the death of society's indifference.

"Those who are alive are those who are outside, all are dead. And that is why I am alive, because I am among them." (9)

Masih goes through various misadventures to prove himself dead in the super-independent India, even turning his house into a mortuary, with nothing in the house that shows signs of being alive. Message Supra's self-imposed deadness is the oppression of people and life. One day Gul Bano comes to the mortuary of Masih Supra. Gul Bano comes as a character who comes alive. Gul Bano becomes part of the Shaheen Bagh protest and after killing a policeman, reaches the Masih Supra morgue in search of a safe place. Christ says above that this is the house of the dead and you too must remain dead. Now there are two dead in the morgue, one who has killed the political system and the other who pretends to be a man to take revenge on the political system. Be it Gul Bano or Masih Supra, it is clear from these two characters that not only these two, but all of us are dead. Our culture is also dead. Our brotherhood and glory are all dead. In the novel, two people appear as symbols of death, this death is the death of the system of society where the shadows of death dance everywhere.

"Not everything is the same
As in a dark night
When we sleep
In the comfort of their own homes
Some people even then
They come to kill us walking in our sleep." (10)

In the novel, there are symbols like old building, new building, joker, dog, monkey, saffron color, mortuary, character of Masih Supra, nomad, rat, chickens, woman with black veil and 1992. Through these signs, Zoki has penned down the Indian politics after 2014 and the mistreatment of minorities, especially Muslims, by the current government. The symbol of the new and old building is used by Zoqi in two ways. The old building refers to the India where everyone was crying in peace and quiet, the problems were there even then but not so serious that life was forbidden. The new building refers to the government of fanatical and violent people. Those who made life difficult for the minorities, especially the Muslims. All the symbols are describing the scene of death. The color saffron is used as a symbol of government time and for religious leaders. They include soldiers, policemen, clerics, pundits, RSS goons, government ministers and rulers themselves. These reflect a mindset

aimed at assimilating Muslims in India or depriving them of fundamental rights. Along with this, "Kheta and Bandar" have also been used as symbolic characters. These symbols represent the government officials whose job it is to gnaw bones like dogs. A monkey is the symbol of anti-Muslim organizations. Those who consider it their religious duty to harass Muslims and kill them. The symbol of the woman with the black veil is the symbol of death. This is a symbol of the innocent and poor people living in India who become victims of these cruel people. While reading "Woman in the Mortuary" there is a strong feeling that where are we alive? "There is no one who can say with certainty that we are alive." (11)

Christ is a victim of supersensation. He has admitted his non-existence. Our existence is the same as our non-existence. Today we are alive but it doesn't matter. Tomorrow we will die and still it doesn't matter. Masih Supra is so dominated by the sense of incorporeality that when he goes to buy food and drink from the market, seeing people, he realizes how ignorant these people are of their own death. He realizes that these people will not be around tomorrow. All of them will die one day. Therefore, they are living an aimless and worse life. He says that we open our eyes with lumps of unruly flesh, then this unruly flesh is one day lost in the house of the dead. These thoughts lead the Messiah to the desert of senselessness and meaninglessness. He thinks: "These people are not part of tomorrow, none of them will be and how ignorant these people are of their own death" (12).

How helplessness and helplessness drives a person to the face of death is reflected in "Trace of Volcanic Movement". The subject of the novel is the fictitious encounter of Muslims in the Batla Encounter House. The main character of the novel is Osama who is afraid of his name being Osama.

"Shakespeare said, 'What's in a name. But here the name became the source of my son's troubles. Little did I know that one day this name would bring forth a new face from the basket of time.' A new face that I won't even recognize." (13)

What a tragedy it is that someone should be killed for wearing a cap, having a beard or having an Islamic name. The fear, fear and helplessness of Muslims living in India can be seen in the novel. When the hope of improvement in the society is lost, the name of civilization is gone, people are breathing in the atmosphere of hopelessness, then it becomes impossible to live in such a society. When there is no discipline in life, a person is not alive but is living a dead life. According to Houze Sara Magu, "Death is only the result of disorder." (14)

Loneliness is one of the states of existence. Existential loneliness is a special type of loneliness in which a person feels alone even in a crowd. Despite the presence of thousands and hundreds of people, the feeling of loneliness within the individual is intensely awakened. Even in a crowded world, if he doesn't find someone to whom he can talk his heart out, so that his sorrows can be resolved, he becomes a victim of loneliness. People are suffering from existential loneliness. Munir Niazi says:

What is in these houses?
Except for soulless people (15)

If we take the attitude of existential loneliness in Musharraf Alam Zouki's novels, Sunil Kumar Roy, the main character of his novel "Poke Maan Ki Dunya", seems to be suffering from this loneliness. This novel by Zoqi has a unique position in terms of subject matter and rarity of narration. The novel features cyber children born in the age of computers and the Internet. Globalization and its negative effects are discussed in relation to the new generation. The deep color of existentialism is seen in the protagonist Sunil Kumar Roy of this novel. Sunil Kumar is a judge by profession who belongs to Gopalganj, a city in Bihar. Working his way up through hard work, he became a judge and reached a beautiful bungalow in Delhi's Legal Street, but could not escape his past. He does not tolerate the free movement of his daughter and son's friends in the house and the daughter's tight clothing in the name of fashion but he is forced to tolerate them because with all his intelligence he is helpless and constrained by the situation. His children do not value him, his helplessness in front of the situation is the cause of his inner defeat, despair and sorrow, and as a result he becomes a victim of extreme loneliness. Sunil Kumar's daughter calls her father's words a generation gap.

“ Riya shouts loudly...” This is the generation gap....Bacteria of wrong wordsUr so kuns vvoto and so old fashioned.....You will not accept us in changed times,.....”(16)

Sunil Kumar Rai tries to make his presence felt in the house but is called old fashioned by his wife and children and sent back to his room which is called Lock Up. He can express his feelings in front of which he can lighten the burden of his heart.

“I want to go back to being Sunil Kumar Roy of Gopalganj. Years have passed. Today the children are speaking. are talking The reason may not be crime, but children are talking. What else will they talk about with a Hajj? We will talk about the crime, won't we?" (17)

Sunil Kumar with his wife, daughter and son sleeps, wakes up and wakes up with his unique thoughts and feelings. He cries and laughs inside. In spite of everyone, he feels very lonely at times. He remembers the village of Gopalganj. At the dinner table at home, when everyone is conversing with each other, Sunil Kumar Roy starts talking to himself. The words of his son and daughter are like an arrow to his heart. All these motivations cause an existential loneliness within Sunil Kumar. Houze, who suffers from the same situation of existential isolation, is the main character of Sara Mago's novel "All Names", Sinhoor Houze, who is a menial employee in a nameless city and lives alone in a crowded world with only There is no such person, no relationship, no friend to whom he can lighten the burden of his heart by explaining the pains of his life. Fed up with his existential loneliness and jeopardizing his job, he fulfills his passion. He steals the cards of the rich and famous from the Central Registry Office. Loneliness has made his life so burdensome that he doesn't care about the consequences of his actions. In the

end, his attempts to escape loneliness and search for love lead him further into the quagmire of loneliness.

Musharraf Alam Zouki's characters seem helpless in front of time. They are unable to stop the change in society (Partition of India). The changing culture, the separation of selves creates helplessness and consequent isolation in these characters. The characters of "Le Sans Bhi Khulu" are also suffering from the same conflict. These characters are unable to stop the changing culture and conditions, so they suffer from isolation and alienation. At the very beginning of the novel, the old man is shown confined in isolation. Whose eyes had to see the gruesome scenes of oppression and looting or forced to see it during the partition. See the indication of the changing civilization in this sentence: "From one civilization to another civilization." (18)

After the partition of India, how the separation and their memory pushed people into the mire of loneliness, we can see Rahman's mother. Rahman's mother's brother who is across the border and sister cannot even meet him. See what agony she is going through in this quote:

"Partitioned.....made Pakistan.....hearts separated by the less fortunate.....left there to die alone. If I want to ask for my brother's tears, there is a border in front of me. If there were high cities and Delhi, they would have left, but here there are borders of two-sided thorns, which cannot be crossed." (19)

Rehman's mother is separated from her parents as a result of migration and in this loneliness and anguish she leaves the world. But after her mother's departure, Nadira is not able to express the loneliness and alienation she is going through in front of her father, but she addresses Rehman like this.

You know Rahman.....I miss mom all the time but can't speak because of Abu. I have to drink all the tears in my eyes. Why do people leave Rahman.....? One day everyone has to go..... Isn't it.....? The games of life go on and on. Then one day these eyes are closed forever. I pray. Not because I have to pray for myself in prayer..... I look at my mother. My mother's face is in front of my eyes as soon as I raise my hands to pray. I talk to her a lot....." (20)

In the first case, migration has caused the separation of two people, resulting in loneliness, meaninglessness and alienation, but in the second case, death has caused two people to become distant and lonely.

The characters of "Naala Shabgir" are of great existential importance. In the novel, there are themes like social exploitation, social restrictions, feeling of oppression on women, fear, terror, habits of treating women as toys, indifference, alienation and deprivation. The first character of the novel, Sofia Mushtaq, suffers from loneliness and meaninglessness due to deprivation. Sophia's parents died when she was a child due to which she was always deprived of love and affection. Her brothers always considered her a burden and were ready to get her married to any man to take off this burden. This was

the reason why she was forced to leave home. When no one pays attention to the condition of a person and he spends his whole life under the feeling that there is no one to love and care for him and he is alone in the presence of everyone, then he becomes a victim of meaninglessness. There are also three female characters in the novel, Khadija, Nazia and Naheed, who are living in a society where men rule, due to which elements such as fear and terror, meaninglessness of caste, repression and rebellion against society are seen. Khadija and Naz are characters who endure cruelty and excesses, but Naheed Naz is the character who represents the strong-willed girl of today. The fact is that in this era, there are great characters like Khadija and Nazia who are so forced and helpless that they accept the oppression that happened to them as their fate. From infancy to boyhood, Naheed is accompanied by men close to him. This sexual harassment has turned Naheed into a rebellious girl and filled her with a masculinity poison that spreads throughout her body over time and comes out completely in the final part of the novel. See his thoughts for women in the following excerpt:

"Girls are born with a body like honey and are first frightened in their own home by the prying and staring eyes on their sweet bodies.... Man cannot change his nature." (21)

In his novels, Zouqi has presented politics full of prejudices and especially the conspiracy to target the minority in his fiction. "Woman in Mortuary", "Death Mass", "Naala Shabgir", "Trace of Fire", "Muslim" and "Zabeeh" are such novels in which the fear of being a minority is present. The existential condition within "Woman in the Morgue" stems from a sense of insecurity. Internal feelings resulting from insecurity are coming out. There is fear of being a minority here. Wherever there is a minority, whether in India, Pakistan or Germany, there is fear within it. How does being a minority become a crime? How the minority suffers from loneliness, how fear comes in, is particularly shown in "Woman in the Mortuary". If you look at "Murg Anbuh", there is also fear among the minority, especially the Indian Muslims. Helplessness is seen in Muslims. The exploitation of the Muslim community is seen. Zouqi has shown the ugly face of Indian politics to the people in the novel. "Murg Enbuh" which in English is called Holocaust (complete burning). The name suggests that Zouqi is seeing the same changes in the conditions of India as Hitler's Nazi army did to the Jews and genocided the Jews. Muslims in India are also slowly being pushed towards this holocaust. Dr. Zakir Faizi writes about this novel:

"Musharraf Alam Zouqi has become more of a Muslim or an Indian than a writer. He worries about the survival of Muslims in India and wonders about India's future. Being an Indian, he fears that Indian civilization will become a wild and tribal civilization. May it not be changed or else India is once again occupied by another country." (22)

If Musharraf Alam Zouqi's novels are viewed as a whole, then the feeling emerges that the individual has fallen face down on the level of inadequacy in achieving modern social adaptation. From each of his actions, the element of helplessness in the search process of Rosen in the prison of life is prominent,

and by looking at the plight of individual characters in detail, the Shafi answer to the question, "Why are the bags of the cage colored?" is found.

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