

Justified and ancient by simon lewis

[History](#), [Ancient History](#)



Is he on a vacation backpacking across the globe spending his rich father's money or is the only reason for his tourism the drug deal? Is he going back to Delhi or all the way back to England? Since he has both a girlfriend with potential wife-status and a child to take care of at home my guess is the last possibility - he is simply a rug dealer buying incredibly low-priced cannabis in India for re-selling in his home country. His statement at p. 21. 70 is obviously pointing in that direction: " My Job? Re, I don't really have one as such. " Ironically enough, Lee is filled with self-congratulation as he leaves the village.

Overwhelmed with compassion he has given the children the gooey biscuits he himself described as revolting and unpalatable. Maybe he does not consider the fact that he refuses to give the children something that would actually help them: rupees. Money, he earlier referred to as " Joke money'. Instead he uncompromisingly shoos the child away with a " No! Don't touch me, you shouldn't touch! " Lee seems to be an egoistic, ignorant and unpleasant figure from what we are described - and is possibly supposed to symbolize the typical western tourist.

Though we are not given a lot of information about the village people, they seem shy and reserved. Lee makes no two-way communication with any other than the president and one of the kids for a brief moment. It might be that Lee considers the village people naive and ignorant, but as the story surprisingly twists in the end, all is turned upside down, and it is obvious that Lee has underestimated the president. He has not fooled the president - it is he himself who have been deceived. An ancient, proud chieftain is not the obvious one to suspect for depraved actions.

As he may seem proud and honorable on the outside, the president is the exact opposite on the inside. At the end of the story we are suddenly having another perspective - that of the woman leading her donkey to the village. She entrusts us with the president's secret: " Sometimes the president and his slimy friend Punned got drunk and talked more than they should in the presence of the women. The president was a shrewd man, and under him the village ad prospered, but he was a man without honor. " (p. 4-5 l. 158-163) The president has actually prostituted himself and given up all his pride and honor for money.

The president cooperates with Ram, the police commissioner, who gives him money in return for information about tourists like Lee. In this way the president can profit from his unfortunate customers buying cannabis and receive money from the police at the same time - and he does not at all seem to care about the people he may harm in the progress. Suddenly the gesture of trust on page 4 l. 123 seems more as a scorn than anything else. Lee is nothing more out a Oarlock In ten pralines game, Ana It quickly becomes uncertain who to sympathize with.

At first it was the president: The proud chieftain of an ancient village thinking he made a good deal with another tourist, but at last it is the poor Lee that is the victim: And he will suffer his deeds. " She knew that Ram and the bullies he used as deputies would be getting drunk now, and when the foreigner came down they would greet him, smiling, and Ram would laugh tapping his tick wooden cane against his leg" (p. 5 l. 165) It is here that the title

becomes paradoxical. Lee may have been greedy and disrespectful but does he deserve to get beat up?

Lee is a man with a girlfriend and, to a certain extent, a child at home both depending on his financial success - is it a justified laugh that bursts from the president's mouth and follows Lee down to the foot of the mountain? I do not think it is. The chieftain has become just as grasping and greedy as any western president. And from where has those influences emerged? The boy with the Walkway bobbing his head up and down (in what seems as a prayer but very remarkably is not) "karaoke's" the phrase: "We are justified and ancient.

And we drive an ice cream van from Killis single "Justified and ancient". This is a very good clue for interpreting the title. Given that the phrase "Justified and ancient" does not only refer to the president but to all of the people living in the village, a more general view is set on the story. The village may be justified due to the western influences that have had negative influence on their society and their culture. To combine the word justified with the more concrete word ancient does not normally seem irrational.

After reading this short story it does though - because the ancient village with the old president represents something honorable, sacred and proud: values that have been destroyed by western society - it is now all about materialism and money. The president does seem proud to have flourished the old culture, surviving the civilization below them from the mountain summit - but he wants more than just doctor visits and he has broken the traditional way of behaving in the village. Whether or not the village people

are (the president is) Justified or not is a discussable topic - a topic that provokes us to think the term Justification over.