

Novel: A Genre in the Hands of Capitalist Class

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Abstract

The 'Novel' as a literary phenomenon is new to India. In comparison to, Epics, lyrics, drama, short stories and fables that have its ancestries which go back to several centuries. In the west, the literary tool 'Novel' was the offshoot of industrialization whereas in India, it was due to the Indian scholars educated in English who introduced it to the literary world. Both the part of the world used it to cater the needs of newly structured society. Industrialization drew rural population in search of jobs towards the cities. This led to the change in the social realities and life styles of the people, eventually resulting into unpredictable consequences and struggle for them. In spite of it, the Capitalist system was able to hold them back. The previous genres were not reflecting the current realities in which people were living. All the new realities created, had a unique demand that led to the formation of Genre 'Novel'.

Keywords- *Genre, Literariness, Fragmentation, Representation, Realism, Socialism*

Introduction

In India, the novel was not having the similar historical background as in Britain; it had different forms and understanding. The ancient India had the tradition to pass on the legacy of wisdom to the upcoming generation through story telling. It was a social playful act. The roots of such fiction are traced back during the days of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata by Valmiki and Vedavyasa. The different conventional modes of narratives prevalent during those periods were prose Chronicles (akahyayika) romantic talk (Katha), an episodic story (Upakhyana) an episodic story sung and enacted by a bard (abhiney) didactic bird and beast fable (nidarsara) a story in dialogue form (Pravathika), a story satirizing society (Matallika) a tale narrations several adventures (parikatha) a partially narrated well known story (Khandkatha) etc, These were not really novel in complete sense as per the standard set by the definition of Novel.

Novel started breaking the old traditional belief of idealizing the hero worship. The romantic attitude of people was making them self-dependent for survival issues. Contrary to earlier times when religious doctrines and institution were more governing the action of person in society. The society started observing shift from utopian concept to realism and individualism due to scientific discoveries, which were establishing the faith in human power. Subsequently, all the transitions were reflecting in the Genre. As an impact, People were more interested to read about their contemporary socio-economical realities. On the other hand in India, it was used to criticize the social evils. It was more of a capitalist tool than a literary tool. This is self evident in the tendencies of the famous novelists during 19 century who published chapters of their novels in magazines and news papers for their audience's response. It was food for thought for the authors. Now since, the new life was creating an environment, attitude and culture. It was forming a class which produced commodity, used it and was as a commodity in the hands of the capitalist class.

The manufacturing and distribution of the middle class ideology to prepare this class had already been rooted in the 18th century which is depicted through the novels like *Amelia* by Henry Fielding (1751), *Things as They are, or The Adventures of Caleb Williams* (1794) by William Godwin, *The Adventures of Hugh Treror* (1794-1797) by Thomas Holcroft and *Nature and Art* (1796) by Elizabeth Inchbald. These novels were found talking about the down fall of morality, the growth of self centeredness and corruption as the common somewhere it was creating these thought process to be trends. And happening related to these issues as acceptable not something which is morally challenging to digest.

The mechanized system of Industrial societies was to run on the concept of consumerism. The capitalist class was not only to focus on the production of goods but simultaneously had to create people's ideology of consumption as the concept of progress. The capitalist model constructed each

and every aspect of the middle class's life which was a kind of psychological game in creating this class. It resulted in the formation of the new consuming class. This class was the western middle class, who would not only help the system as the employee or working class, but at the same time as the consumer of the goods they produce. This class was the soul of the capitalist model, around which the whole concept of industrialization would revolve.

Novel was a gift to the new consuming class by the middle class scholars of the western world. These scholars felt pride in writing about the plight and misery caused by the capitalist class to the constructed working class. Novel acted as a sensuous tool to kill the possibility of revolution amongst the middle class. "Elizabeth Gaskell's first industrial novel *Mary Barton* (1848) deals with relations between employers and workers but its narrative adopted the view of the working poor and describes the "Misery and hateful passions caused by the love of pursuing wealth as well as the egoism, thoughtlessness and insensitivity of manufacturers." (Wikipedia)

"The Proletarian novel according to the Encyclopedia Britannica comes out of the direct experience of working class life and "is essentially an intended device of revolution", While works by middle class novelists the William Godwin, *Caleb Williams* (1794) and Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* though they are sympathetic to the hardship experienced by worker "are more concerned with the imposition of reform from above than with revolution from within."

The same was the condition with the proletarian novel in other countries, "But the proletarian novel has also been categorized without any emphasis on revolution as a novel about the working classes and working class life perhaps with the intention of making propaganda and this may reflect a difference between Russian, American and other traditions of working class writing with that of Brittan"

The rising of Marxism in the later part of the 19th century was clearly evident. Russia was observed to be deep rooted in the concept of socialism. At the same time the situation in Britain was diplomatic as the novelists were having intellectual war. "Jack London wrote from a socialist viewpoint, which is evident in his novel. *The Iron Heel* neither a theorist nor an intellectual socialist, London's socialism grew out of his life experience. As London explained in his essay "How I Became a socialist" his views were influenced by his experience with people at the bottom of the social pit. His optimism and individualism faded, and he vowed never to do more hard physical work than necessary. "

The change in the society was throwing new demands. Modernity brought people closer into the city space. The city space demanded certain harmony which was brought up by certain concepts like equality, fraternity and liberty. These concepts promised freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of action. These were scrutinized by the capitalist class for their interest.

The British colony in India was a good avenue for expansion of the market. This was done by the colonizers through establishment of the missionary schools. William Macaulay promoted English medium of instruction to train skilled work force for clerk jobs in the country. This workforce was none other than the upper class who was the privileged class of the Indian society. The class was educated in English with the orientation of western capitalist model. The motive was to create the middle class on the basis of the same role model that was of the western world.

The literature based on the middle class of western world was taught. It was done to create a limited identity of a middle class, so as to create the foundation of industrialization and capitalist model in India.

The English educated class used novel as the tool for the created middle class. The Indian novelists imitating the trends present in Britain wrote about the social evils present in the Indian society. The western social norms were considered to be an ideal one having the solution for all the evils and sufferings present in the Indian society.

The target of western education system in East was to uproot the ancestral knowledge legacies. This is quite apparent in lines by Srinivas Iyenger.

On English education alone "this exclusiveness had proved disastrous it became a matter of false pride for some Indians then and later and last even now – to educate their children in total ignorance of their own mother tongues. The remedy to the old disease of obscurantism was not this poison of up rootedness lewdness, this complete divorce from one's own ancestral moorings. Trying to swallow the west wholesale, some of these newly educated man become comic imitation." (28)

During this phase the Indian writer's were promoted by western world and appreciated to boast their morale to write novels of certain kinds that would provide occidentals with sufficient insight to make strategies of governance. The British started researching on the historical background of Indian society to know more.

The information gathered through research helped them in creating identity crisis amongst the Indians who would in future become Indian middle class. This class would be used for multiple purposes. Macaulay's celebrated minutes states the same. "He declared that, It was both necessary and possible" to make natives of this country good English Scholar and that to till end our effort ought to be directed". (27)

The knowledge from India and other colonies of the British helped them generate the concept of middle class creation and its importance in the capitalist model as the soul of it. The education system in other colonies was done earlier but in the England it was done in the latter half of the 19 centuries. By then it was Sunday school, where bible was taught to them.

The confused upper caste was now a middle class. The class had root in India who believed in the principle of considering their mentor as God. This could be inferred by the tendencies of seeking for the affirmation and acknowledgement from their mentor western world. On the contrary, the mentor politicized this belief, and installed the intellectual dominance in the created scholars. The principle stated introduces the belief of Indians for their mentors.

Guru Brahma Guru Vishnu Guru Devo Maheshwaraha

Guru Saakshat Para Brahma Tasmai Sree Gurave Namaha

Meaning: Guru is verily the representative of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He creates, sustains knowledge and destroys the weeds of ignorance. I salute such a Guru

This period is marked by the support of British to the Indian novelists who talk about the social evils of the Indian society as in the novel, Raj Mohan's wife talks.”(1864)

From 1851 to 1900 English education took rapid strides and the climate was favorable for a new flowering of the creative Indian genius. The next 20 years saw a further spreading of English education but the note of dissent and discontent was heard. also (10)

The Indian educated in English started using the language in writing, like Bankim Chandar Chatterjee's first published effort Raj Mohan's wife (1864) in English. It was followed by Durgeshnandini in Bengali, which appeared in an English translation in 1890. Kapal Kundala, Vishavriksh (The poison tree: A tale of Hindus life in Bengal), Krishnakanter Vyil (Krishankanta Will) and Anandamath Devi Chaudurani and other novels appeared between 1866 and 1886. There were several of them that came out sooner or Later in English version. In the meantime Raj Lakshmi Devi, The Hindu wife was Published in 1876, Taru Dutt's Bianace in 1878, Kali Krishna Lahirrs Roshinara in 1887, H. Dutt's Bijoy Chand in 1888 and Khetrapal Chakravarti's Sarata and Hinsana (1895). These novels wrote in English have for us today no more than an antiquarian or historical interest.

Maximum Translation was done in this period by Indian and western scholars. So that, the information gathered from these sources could be used to establish the *colonialism* in the Indian soil. This was done only to create followers and not leaders. The sense of pride about their cultural philosophy was dismantled and replaced by a negative one. This imposed philosophy was in toe with colonizers dominance over the colonized.

1900-1930 Period

During this period Indian English literature is felt to develop in real sense because novelist tries to spread the nationalist feeling amongst the Indian population through their writings. It was this

phase in Indian history when Novel was appropriately used. The novels were dealing with themes of common interest to unite rather than divide.

The western world is observed with social crises due to the failure of the modernism. The concept was expected to make life of human better, safer and securer whereas it made the life of the westerners' restless. It is seen to observe world war first during the period. Aurobindo is not accepted to be scholar of genius because he was more influenced by Indian philosophy. He propagated the concept of Vedic Gurukul tradition in education system of India.

India was reflecting its confidence to be independent under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi in spite of being educated in English was found visiting his cultural roots for inspiration. Through these cultural roots, reconstruction of national identity was well used by him. To quote, "Then came Mahatma Gandhi and from 1920 to 1947 since then we are going through the ardors and trails of reconstruction sometimes elevated by hopeful vision sometimes depressed by gloomy fore bodings" (p.10)

All those writers who were not promoting the model were looked down because of the revolutionary themes in their novels. The dual game to confuse the Indian scholars was beautifully planned. They did this by neglecting some scholars and supporting a few. Rabindranath Tagore was given Nobel prize as scholars like him was not deeply rooted anywhere neither in the western nor in Indian philosophy.

The world wars I & II were due to the clash of interest between empirical powers. The allied and the axis powers were in tug of war to quench the thirst of better avenues for their capitalist model. It was not a moral war, of right and wrong, but a war wanting to establish consumerism in the world versus the side wanting to establish socialism in the world.

1930-1947 Period

The Indian novelists, the saviors of the capitalist middle class, who talk about the social realities of their times and help the British administration to observe the movements and form a rigid plan to knock out the intention of getting independence, so novels like. Dhaukhane Nain, Bhaumik Project a utopian that is to be born as the result of the class war. Manoj Basu's Jalajangal has been translated into English as The Forest Goddess by Barindra Nath Bose, Here the forest is shown as re-asserting its primal sway.

1947-1980 Period

The independent middle class who was still slave in thoughts and behaviors. This class imagined development to be economical in nature as India at that time had suffered poverty a lot. The deviation from Meta-objectives of life from the society due to long history of invasion was even the themes of certain novelists. The concept of utopian world was the politicized resulted into the

aspiration of the class to attain the unattainable. The independence from colonizer after physical and mental revolution ultimately landing up into chasing what the colonizer intended us to chase.

The traditional longing and the urge to revive ancient cultural practices was reflecting in the themes and stories of the novels which were on topics like, Talks of partition, pain, misery, struggle or good qualities of Emperor times etc. All this was not acclaimed by British, the conformist for the Indian novelists. “Dress, cooked food, machinery using the telephone pedaling the bicycle, blood transfusion, injection of medicines in to the human system, all are difficult and artificial, and in a way sin against nature and offer an affront to human dignity and self respect”. (12)

K R Srinivasa Iyenger in his starting remark of inaugural lecture at the University of Leeds on 14 January 1959 narrates the plight of the Indian English literature. The novelists looked forward to gain a place in the western world even after independence. The people with whom we fought our independence were the one to confirm, where we stood in different walks of life. This, itself show the state of mind of the novelist in the period between 1960 to 1981. The crisis of period for the Indian English novelist is well expressed in the words of KR Srinivas Iyenger.

The problem of the choice of a subject the choice of the medium, the choice of the technique the choice of the audience the problem of choice at various levels bristles with endless difficulties. (321)

The created and next generation of the early middle class was found to be unrest. The middle class was needed as the cog to the capitalist engine for further growth.

After independence, however, novelist in India have shown themselves susceptible to the influence of American and European (especially Russian) models and also models from the Oriental Countries (319)

Three choices were left under the internal political crisis for the created middle class of post-independence era, there new generation is marked migrating to different parts of the world, who felt themselves safe under the broader banners of the three choices available to them. Srinavasa (Murgan the Tiller (1927)

Kedari is ME :- and in prose Mylapore alone, or in the legal profession alone, education, professional standing status, social grace and connections, are all mobilized towards one end.

Success—success anyhow, success somehow, one must advance further and further. (279)

Now, India was left back with then the other types of middle class, who was loyal towards their Indian philosophical heritage, less educated but to some extent impressed by the structure of producing the middle class. The institution was already developed to an extent that could again create

the middle class. They sent their children to the deep rooted missionary and convent schools which were established since centuries in India.

1980-1995 Midnight and After of Post- Rusdie

The state the relevance of Midnight's children in India English fiction Meenakshi Mukherjee quotes Rajendra Yadav and Writes, "When we look back at the point where history takes a turn we usually find an event, a movement, or a person, who/which embodies the pressures generated by the impact of time and the forces of society sometimes, if we look carefully, we might even find a book"

Now here starts re-birth of the intelligence that is free to develop what is the need of the current times. The novelist like Rusdie who tries to break away from the shackles of the layers and layers of the structured historical background as the outcome of colonized past. This past that is given to the contemporary generation acts as the knowledge resource for them. So, themes, ideological structures and styles seem to be dramatically challenged and changed. The ray of spark by Rusdie, and simultaneously applause and appreciation from the western world gave a hope to the budding novelists, who started making innovative style in their approach in portraying realities.

In the novel Rusdie intermingles the Garrulous grand narrative of Indigenous oral traditions with the magic realism of Marque the self conscious narration of the sterna and linguistic playfulness of Desani. Impact of Gunter Gass, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Laurence Sterne, G.V. Desani and of course *Panchtantra* and *the Arabian Nights* can be simultaneously perceived like Iristram the self conscious narrator of the novel *Saleem Sinai* drifts his narratives thought in his own dream memories, night mares and Kantasier like Scheherazade in *Tales of Arabian Nights*, his stories are an act for survival."

The boundaries between the fact and fiction are constantly blurred and the narratives dispense, with realism exhibiting deliberate intermitted breaks and narrative discontinuity.

The exchange of texts and stories within Bollywood and novelists is marked visible because of the economical gains that it promised to each other. The concept of entertainment and popular fiction gradually started over taking the traditional themes of the novels during the period.

The purpose is precisely to surprise the audiences and liberate them from the tyranny of linear narratives simultaneously to create an epic fiction that will suit to alternatives and multiple realities of Indian subcontinent: its myths, histories, memories, language and politics. The critic Malcolm Brand bury acknowledged it as a new start for the late twentieth century novel. Another noted critic John Mee underlines the ground breaking influence of this pivotal text by stating that the appearances of a certain postmodern playfulness the turn to history sensual frankness even the prominent reference to Bollywood, all (Contemporary Indian English Fiction writing)

The observation of the first world literature over the common wealth literature was always on. The celebration of the colonial past by the common wealth novelists, its representation in their works was also somewhere fulfilling the intention. In support of their intention they used to introduce new concepts by promoting research on marginal literature like dalits, feminist etc.,. As earlier, they tried to convince the Indian but now marked intellectual uprising, so started confusing. The education system and the global interaction developed analytical sense amongst the Indian scholars who started capturing the present state and to understand the politics behind it. As the denial of enquiry into past to make correction and trace out the politicized trap's of tunnel in which the mediated Indian middle class was put by the western. The politics of post modern theory and its wide spread popularity, which not only lead the present generation of metropolitan cities duelers who were not able to critically examine and evaluate things were left in the over intense and rapid flow of information through the game of information technology advancement, which created to greater extent the pseudo liberal concept in creating a belief system that all that is needed to know I can get through a click of mouse either on computer or a smart phone. When it was the time to observe critically, the outer realities which was the outcome of historical past, they were directed and diverted to the inner realities. It is the like talking about the problem and thinking about solution, while you think of the problem you actually move and get governed by the center of problem, left to dive deep into nowhere, reacting endless into circular tendencies, whereas, while a person thinks about solution so the individual break's away from the centre and its influence to be liberated soul.

But the capitalist class, who always has a keen eye on the happenings of the world, keeps on searching and reserving every possible way to maintain and sustain the ideology of capitalism. So, they promoted Rushdie, who was actually a product of mediated Indian middle class, thinking to support the Indian middle class, but unaware of the macro politics under which he was actually subjugated for serving the politicized end of the capitalist model.

Not only this, but the well structured strategies of talking about the old Vedic philosophy and its concept, under the new banner of post modernism was again a Macro self supported strategy of the capitalist class, which wanted to up keep the making of the middle class and provide the intellectual food, that to which is their own, and it was genetically and mimetically fabricated to create a appeal with minimized restriction and revolt. This could even be observed in the thesis of Rahul Chaturvedi, To quote from his thesis

Post modernism has rejected the unity, coherence and autonomy of western humanist self celebrating fragmentary, chaotic and incoherent nature of human subjectively. Drawing on the theories of Nietzsche, Foucault, Freud, Lacan and others post modernist have announced the death of the man highlighting his constructedness a

prey to ideological cultural, linguistics or, such other forces. Emptied of 'essence', Man becomes merely an effect, always in process, bereft of individualism or independent autonomous identity. If we closely look at the major philosophical meditations on 'self' we find that Indian philosophical nations of self seem to anticipate what post modernism has to offer in this regard Paranjape writes.

Yet strangely thus (anti essentialist) conception of human nature can find lots of backing in various traditions of Indian thought. In India we have never believed in the autonomous human being capable of free agency and will but rather in an idea of self which is the outcome of a web of causality called Karma. This is very similar to other ideas of determination, whether they are social, historical or ethical so I would say that Indian psychology has always recognized the provisionality of the self.

For – J. Krishna Murthi, the self is merely an outcome of the individual's particular conditioning this in expert survey, it seems to me indicates very clearly that we in India have never been enamored by any essentialist nation of human nature. In its most lofty flights as on in Sri Raman Maharshi the Indian conception of self becomes so an expansive as to exclude nothing from its purview: there is only the self, no other Thus, either we deny the fixity of the self so as to deconstruct it or widen its scope so as to include the entire universe both methods to avoid duality and other are available in Indian thought Hence, I am not sure what postmodernism has to offer us here ("Postmodernism and Indian")

Thus it could be inferred that the propositions of post modernism has its roots in Indian philosophical texts. Moreover, the development of consumerism and capitalism in the name liberalism of economy and globalization made its way to the Indian soil. This phase even observe support from western world. As current updates in the trends and thought processes could be known. To write more for the decision making process through projection of social realities and specially the one who were deconstructing the historical identity and challenging everything from philosophical, spiritual, religious belief system in a dramatized and convincing way. The illusionary space and freedom seemed to be nationalist in approach at the micro level to the novelist, but were superseded and controlled at macro level by the capitalist model. This was the post-colonial strategies of the western world.

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