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Political Thinking in 'Novels'-as the Modern Indian Literature

Abstract

Political and social aspects are the invisible parts of the human world. Both are co-reflective and co-relative aspects of human life and humanism. The valuable place consisting of these two aspects is the unignorable part of the human world. Literature gives sound to these very important aspects which have been woven in human life. The Modern Indian Literature is the reflection of the exact condition of India during and after the time of Independence. The political thinking urges the authorities to set the social structure and the bases of the social structure the people face their good and bad days, better and worst growth. Novels, as the part of the Modern Indian Literature acquiring the valuable expression of the extremely productive and sensitive minded authors such as Raja Ram, Mulk Raj Anand, Mohan Rakesh, Nayantara Sahgal, Manohar Malgaonkar, Bhabhani Bhattacharya and many of the prominent writers have not just provided the literature which reflect the people affected by socio-political-cultural transformation but also their literary creations have been proved as the utmost significant monumental preservations of the human struggle for existence. These writers' works are proved to be the means of total political awareness artistically without distracting or overburdening the mind of the readers and make the human sensitive toward being the rational, imaginative but strong to be the part of the organized socio-political-cultural thinking and applications.

Introduction

Regarding the Indian context, political thinking is a very important and remarkable discipline and it has become like the mental make-up of the Indians which has been taken as the most discussable matter from generation to generation from history to modern time. Indians have been living in political indifference from thousands of years. Social-political-cultural aspects are the seeds of the Dharma-Artha-Kama and Moksha. Apart from the regional authorities and the rulers, the foreign rulers and the attackers over India were sensitive towards the socio-political atmosphere. Political structure is the framing out of any nation and the social structure is what the structure of growth and the mentality of the people who live in the society. India has seen the worst oppressive political-social scenario in the nation itself and has provoked the opposition against the oppression both with the *weapons* and without the weapons in form of *Ahimsha*, both in the battlefields and in the home-town fight to protect the dignity of humanity as the human of the *Hindi Rashtra*. India is a cosmopolitan country which consists of various colors of the religions, languages, cultures, civilizations, trends, customs, etc., but could never tolerate the oppression and the indifference of rights, dignity and self-honor as the individual of the *Aryan culture*.

Fiction is the direct and straightforward expression of the social-political and cultural ups and downs. The political and social consciousness slowly seeped from the grass-root level to the reflection in the world of literature. The earliest novels '*A Journal of Forty Eight Hours*' (1835) by K.C. Dutt and '*The Republic of The Orissa*' (1845) by S.C. Dutt successively prove that the political and the social awareness can be articulately woven in the mind of the people of India through fiction. 1930's period was considerable contribution of the fiction writers in Indian English fiction.

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Gandhi's brightest splendor added the glorifying colors in politics and arose the new age of Gandhian Era in the literature too. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* reflects the fragrance of the political atmosphere of Gandhian Era.

Political thinking flows in the blood of Indians and in the expression of the Indian literature. The subjugation of the foreign powers arose the hidden realization of the human heart and came with very bold words in the shape of fictional description. Swami Dayanand Saraswati focused over 'Swaraj' and 'Swadharma' frequently in the work of 'Satyarth Prakash' and preferred freedom as the most benevolent against the foreign rule. The word 'Swadeshi' brought by the political leaders like Tilak gave birth to the new class of the people in the politics. 'Swadeshi' movement inspired the new nationalistic poetry, prose and journalism. The word 'Swadeshi' is directly relevant to the economical social political sphere of India.

'The Prince of Destiny' (1909) by S.K. Ghose and 'Hindupore' (1909) by S.M. Mitra, both reflect the political consciousness when the foreign rule was in the most highlighting and there was echo for self-governance for the people of India. 'Hindupore' reflects both the liberality and the cruelty of the Englishmen and the good coordination of the English and Indians. 'The Prince of Destiny' isolates the ignorance in the privileges of the native prince, and the die-hard effect of the self-governance made the relation sour among Indian and the English, while 'Hindupore' reflects only the limited perspective of highlighting the misbehavior, disrespect and humiliation of the Englishmen toward the Indians. 'The Young Zamindar' belongs to the political consciousness too. Here we can find the tribal princely religions and the other part of the regional authority was greatly interfere by the Englishmen which provoked anger among the people and greatly opposed. Ahmed Ali's 'Twilight in Delhi' (1940) reflects the indigenous Muslim culture and the Muslim's anti-British stance in the novel. 'Shunkur A Tale of The Indian Mutiny' of 1857 (1885) reflects the remarkable uprising of 1857 and the two sided brutality of Nana Saheb and the English men. 'Murugan the Tiller' (1927) and 'Kandan the Patriot' (1932) reflects the Gandhian politics is written by S.K. Venkatramani. The novel reflects the Gandhian Satyagraha and aspiration of freedom, Ahimsa and regeneration of the new nation. Murugan, the protagonist is "an exponent of Gandhian economics." For he advocates the Gandhian call for go back to villages and graphically highlights the aimless life of the Western education. *Kandan the Patriot* is an exponent of Gandhian politics. Kandan and Rangan both are the Gandhian protagonists who embody the Gandhian

virtues and follow the path of devotion of the self and fight for the poor and oppressed. Raja Rao's 'Kanthapura' (1938) is the classical memory of Indian freedom movement of Indian socio-political-cultural atmosphere Moorthappa called Moorthy is the strict follower of Gandhian ideals. He is considered as the second Gandhi in the novel by the people. Mulk Raj Anand's 'The Sword and the Sickle' (1942) captures the atmosphere of political and economical ideology of 1920. Mulk Raj Anand reflected the communist movement in its vertex and in its dissipation. 'Tomorrow is Ours' (1942) and 'Inquilab' (1955) by K.A. Abbas deal with the same political period of 1920's and 1930's. 'Tomorrow is Ours' depicts the atmosphere of the Movement of Non-corporation and also the communist struggle between China and Russia, which fired the imagination of the people. 'Waiting for the Mahatma' (1955) by R.K. Narayan expresses the charisma and essential of humanity. Amir Ali's 'Conflict' (1947) depicts another dimension of the Indian movement. The youth consciousness about nationalism has been reflected. 'Train to Pakistan' (1956) by Khushwant Singh, 'The Rape' by Raj Gill and 'Ashes and Petals' (1978) by H.S. Gill all convey the human waste in wake of Partition. People living in perfect amity for generations together in sleeping village are fired with communal nationalism with horrendous repercussion with human terms. 'The Rape' reflects the political speeches of the approach of the Sikhs towards Muslims during the independence. Attia Hosain's 'Sunlight on a Broken Column' (1961) depicts the 'effect of partition' on Muslims. Chaman Nahal's 'Azadi' (1975) focuses over the causes and consequences of the partition from perspective of a Hindu family. Mulk Raj Anand's 'Death of A Hero-Epithaph for Maqbool Sherwani' (1963) presents one significant aspect of the post-independence reality of the confrontation between democracy and secularism, bigotry and obscurantism on the other hand.⁴

Aura of Political Atmosphere-Reflection and Results

The political atmosphere reflected and resulted novels mostly based on some sparkling thematic bases, such as:

- Early phase of the political novels based on the armed rebellion against the British rule.
- Novels based on Gandhian Ideals
- Novels based on communal riots and socio-political-economical disturbance.
- Novels based on the comparison of the pre- post-Independence.¹⁴

In this research paper, it has been presented humbly to discuss some of the novels based on the two contrast

issues:

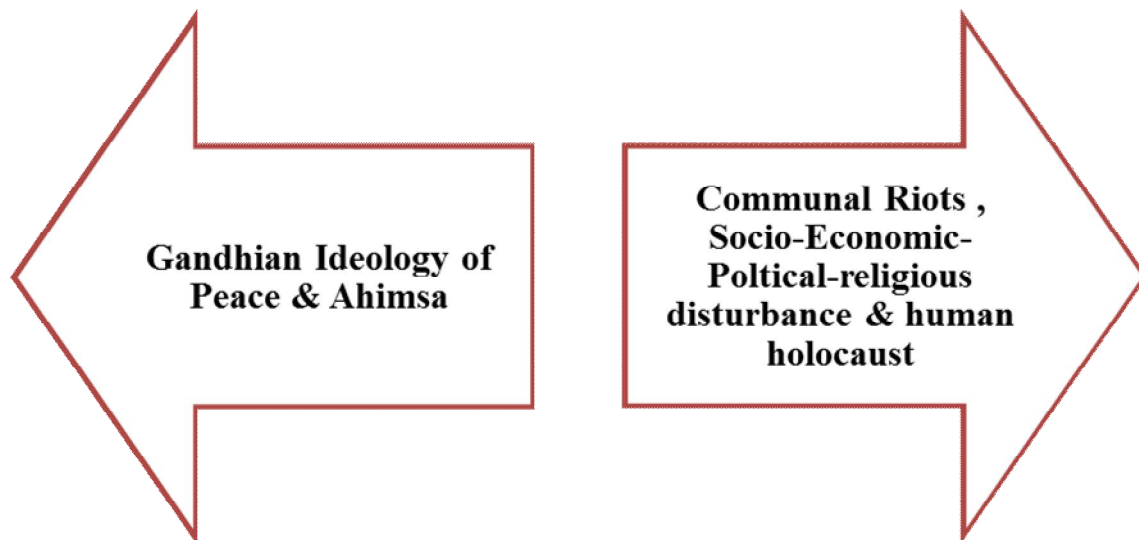


Figure 1. Contrast between Gandhian Ideology and Communal Riots, Socio-Economic-Political-Religious Disturbance and Human Holocaust

Gandhian Ideology of Peace and Ahimsa

Raja Rao's '*Kanthapura*' and Kamla Markandya's '*The Golden Honeycomb*' deal with the highlight with the political awakening and national sentiment in the remote areas of the country. '*Kanthapura*' portrays the freedom movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi in the 1920s to liberate India from the hands of Imperialism of Britishers. Gandhi is presented as the incarnation of Lord Krishna who will assuage the distress of the Indians. Moorthy, who is the main protagonist of the novel sprays the fragrance of Freedom in the novel by following the Gandhian ideals. The novel '*Kanthapura*' presents the atmosphere of religious, political and social at the same time. These three aspects are deeply rooted in the culture and the motive of the people. The entire novel is the monument of the Gandhian movement and struggle for freedom. Gandhian struggle and consciousness is presented by Moorthy. Moorthy who follows the Gandhian ideals and the path of life where Moorthy goes to the low caste community, takes tea and lunch, though he was a Brahmin and tries to convince the people that he is one of them and also establishes equality as Gandhiji was taking the low cast addressing by new name '*Harijans*'. *Kanthapura* gives the profound reflection of the effort of Gandhi where religion, conservatism, imperialism was at its extreme stage. Gandhi mobilized the masses by awakening them to realize their own strength and the profound aspiration of the freedom and desire of equality. '*Kanthapura*' focuses on the encounter of the two cultures and shows how while countering the imposing culture the weaker one redefines and reinterprets its tradition while it seeks its identity. Raja

Rao reconstructs the myth of the power of the foreign rule having obstacle in the way of freedom, Ahimsa and Satyagraha. Moorthy teaches the aim of Mahatma, to spin the wheel and boycott of foreign clothes. Moorthy inspires the village women to spin the wheel and produce the Khaddar of the own country, in their free time besides the meditation of singing the *Bhajans* and meditate one's own self with the present time. Rangamma's house turns something into Congress House. Moorthy makes the people understand the policy of the foreign rule who buys the yarn with 'Our money' and this money goes to foreign, across the ocean. Instead the Indians should learn to utilize the cotton produced by them in our own country. The Skeffington Coffee Estate was situated near the village and was owned by the British who were exploiting the poor Indians working as coolies in their employment. The estate was infested with snakes and the workers died of snake bite and some due to bad climate. The young officers molested the young Indian women. Moorthy was spraying the awakening among the people to be fearless and self-reliant. Even he confronted with Bade Khan and his motivation leads the *Kanthapurians* bold and courageous. Moorthy visits the Pariahs' house and distribute the spinning wheel and seer of cotton to spin the yarn to each of them. Bhatta is the only one who did not associate with the Gandhian activities. He rejects the equal right of the Pariah with the other people (Chapter II, Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* and Kamala Markandaya's *The Golden Honeycomb*). He is narrow minded and orthodox. Swami, Venkamma, Bhatta all these people were against the Gandhian movement. People started to boycott power of Bhatta and Swami. Moorthy rejects the taxes of the lands loaded by the

government. Besides Moorthy opposes the Toddyshop. Even Moorthy decides to parallel government in place of the British government to run the administration. Rangamma and Ratna support Moorthy for non-cooperation movement. Only *Khadi* was sold and the Congress workers started *Prabhat Pheries* and *Pooja of Satyanarayan* in fields. Police started showering *lathis* over the innocent people. The red-Man's soldiers fired the village houses and killed several people of the village. Out of 39, only 30, Satyagrahis were left alive. '*Kanthapura*' is the novel of the Indian sensibility. "*Kanthapura is the finest example of the genuine Indo-Anglican novel with its sensibility, its form and style-all rooted firmly in the soil and drawing sustenance from it*" (qtd. in Bhattacharya 279). *The Golden Honeycomb* (1977) not only reflects the national consciousness but also it is a brilliant artistic woven work of art. This work reveals the sense of conscious realism and the historicity, artistically woven of the issues which could be found unmatched in the Indo-English literature.

Communal Riots, Socio-Political-Economical Disturbance and Human Holocaust

Raj Gill's '*The Rape*' begins with March 1947, the point of the time of the Hindu-Muslim-Sikh relations has got the worst site of the tension and communal rage. When the novel starts it shows that India has already been standing at the edge of the partition and its impact turned the peace of the whole country into terror and bloody strife (qtd. in Communal Holocaust- Raj Gill's *The Rape* 1)⁵. The novelist criticizes sharply the British rule 'Divide and Rule'. The hero Dalipjit loved the Muslim girl Leila but due to the communal riots can't be together besides Leila raped by the father of Dalipjit. The chief focus is over the pouring of the dissatisfaction of the people got poured by the personal ways too to teach the lesson of the particular community by damaging their self honour. Dalipjit didn't like Gandhi's agreement of accepting the vivisection of the country. He got puzzled about the approach of Gandhi. Before that in the prayer meeting he refused strongly to divide the country in to India and Pakistan while when Viceroy put the proposal he accepted the partition. Dalipjit is the symbol of those thousands and thousands of sensitive youth who were so emotional related to the Partition and division the country on the cost of the life of the people. 200 people were killed in Gurgaon. Troops fired on Gujranwala and it was declared high alert by the General of police, Punjab. Curfew was in Lahore. Muslim started perpetrating limitless cruelty on women. Women were seduced and shameless scene of the women leading the procession of Muslim is expressed

with real description by the pen of writer (qtd. in Shukhjinder, *Communal Holocaust-Raj Gill's The Rape*).⁵

Azadi is considered as the best novel of Chaman Nahal. In 1977 it won the Sahitya Academy award. Chaman Nahal was himself inspired to write this novel when he was living in Sialkot at the time of Partition. He himself views that "*Azadi...a hymn to one's land of birth, rather than a realistic novel of the Partition.*"⁹ Nahal has presented the picture of the horror of the Partition and due to the Partition of the holocaust created by the communal rage and the impact of the Partition over the life of the people live near the border of Sialkot. The novel *Azadi* begins with the announcement of Partition. *Azadi* deals with the dawn of freedom, tragedy of partition, effect after partition, migration, large numbers of people came as refugees. What Nahal reflected was the hidden anguish and the unanswered questions in the eyes of the people at that time. It is a story about Lala Kanshi Ram and his family. His son Arun fell in love with the Muslim girl Nur. What was taken lightly in their study time by the other classmates now was looked strangely and as Hindu and Muslim girl's romance. It was looked by the Muslim boys as a Hindu boy carrying a Muslim girl. The Muslim boys looked them menacingly (qtd. in *Azadi* 73)⁹. Nur has no courage to convert herself in Hindu instead she recalls the masculine power of Arun to be converted into Muslim. But for the parents and as the old age support of the father he decides to be with his father. Arun cannot embrace Islam. Mohan Jha observes that "...in the flush of his youthful romance Arun could have elected to go in for Nur in preference of his parents, but the communal holocaust suddenly makes 'A Man' of him and he chooses to share the joys and sorrows of life with his parents."⁶ Politicians give ideas legs and numbers of innocent loving people become victims in the hands of bloodshed of Partition. Partition not only gave lots of pain to the people and fired their minds but also fired their homes, villages and the cities to cities. "The large scale of killing and looting happened in Lahore, Gujarat, Gujranwala, Ambala, Jullundhar, Rawalpindi, Multan, Ludhiana and Sargodha."⁹ Lala Kanshi Ram feels lot of disturbance to live as a refugee. He could not sleep for nights to nights by the thought that "*I was born around here, this is my home-how can I be a refugee in my own home?*"⁹ The life of Hindus in Sialkot became so panic and miserable. The Hindus are forced to undergo and displacement experience and migration. Lala's daughter Madhu and her husband Rajiv were killed in the train of coming to Sialkot. Lala, Prabha Rani and Arun became heartbroken when they heard about the unwanted and uninvited death of Madhu and

Rajiv. Nahal succeeds admirably in recapturing the vividly and one of the most haunting nightmares of the blackest period in Indian history, the refugee caravan, the atrocities perpetrated on the unoffending, battered...."¹ Nahal has given the realistic picture of thousands of abducted Hindu and Sikh women who were seduced, raped and killed naked. Besides the procession of the Narowal Bazaar, the parade of Hindu women who were naked and shaven headed, helpless to cover their head or body having down head and full of tears eyes but the inhumanity and damaging of the self-honour dried their tears. They all were sobbing. Their arms were free but so badly had been used. (261) Many women were forced to be converted into Islam. The rest were mass raped. The rape was followed by atrocities, chopping off the breasts, and even death. Many of the pregnant women's wombs were left torn apart open. Yet all these was unaffected the politicians. The Partition done between the two countries proved as the horrible, life snatching, loaded with unexpected deep pain, wounds on not only the body but also on the self-dignity. In form of Lala, Chaman Nahal focuses the thought that *Azadi* has been achieved on the cost of the enormous suffering and hardship. The political atmosphere brought the partition between India and Pakistan but it is the monstrous holocaust ever witnessed.⁷

The Partition has left the uncured wounds over the psyche of the people of India. It has not only showed the present scenario of the post-Independent time but also decided the unvoiced but certain framed the future of India which we face right in the present modern time of the 21st century. Khushwant Singh has reflected the light over those undried, horrible, sudden and unexpected wounds of Partition over the soul and psyche of the Indians. The political authority which does not get that much impact but the decision taken by the political leaders and the authority people left the unsolved and horrible results before the people of India. Partition of 1947 has been proved one of the greatest upheavals to the Indian history for human separation. 12 million people were uprooted from homes and hearths. Thousands of people from both sided borders were killed heartlessly, butchered in cruelest ways. Women were raped and children were cut from part to part of body. The partition has created such hostility in the human world of India which was unimaginable and unexpected. Khushwant Singh's '*Train to Pakistan*' is the boomrang for Indian-Pakistan traumatic issues. Communalism created the merciless killings during Partition both of the human as well as of the animal world too, the Nature was in disastrous condition in India. '*Train to Pakistan*' is the story about the obscure

village of Mano Majra. The village is situated over the border of the two nations, bifurcated in 1947 on the basis of the population and the religion. Mano Majra village has the railway station beside bank of the river Sutlej. The trains were stopped only for the up and down passengers and for the majority of the entire village activity. The novel depicts the three major symbolic representations of the modern India, namely Juggat Singh presents the passion and the ordinariness, earthiness of the common people of India, Hukum Chand presents the officialdom and Iqbal presents the rationalism who receives the shock by the murder of Lala Ramlal without knowing the actual reason of his murder. He is very sensitive and sensible social worker in Mano Majra who came to understand the people the communal harmony and the brotherhood in the village impacted by Partition but gets fail. Khushwant Singh has artistically drawn the religion which was the symbol of communal harmony of the people in India before independence, after independence it became the reason of holocaust. The ignorance of the political leaders was responsible for the communal holocaust in India and Pakistan. The Partition is the seed of the suspicion sown by the political leaders. Man and cattle both were suffering from the scarcity of food. Both human and cattle were giving endless miseries, pain, shelterless condition, slaughtering, killing, murdering, robbing and tortured. The destinies of the two newly Nations by the decision of the political leaders gave birth to the uprooted base of the people, mental-physical torturing, communal riots and the endless vast holocaust. The train which comes from Pakistan was loaded with the horrible and ineffable dangerous and showing the unimaginable cruelty of the mankind who divides the nations and invite the enormous destroy of the human mass in the same nation. Partition brought the train with full of dead bodies which created the problem for the police and the authorizers how to bury or give them last funeral? The dead bodies were burnt, some of were buried together in a large pit and many of them were thrown in river Sutlej which provoked as the biggest disaster for the humanity when the dead bodies came by rotten and Sutlej looked extremely horrible death deriving river. Khushwant Singh has shown the communal barbarism due to the Partition in India which has been dealt by this writer with great deal of the satire and the irony (Jitendra 59-60).

HS Gill's novel '*Ashes and Petals*' presents through the medium of the Partition, the story has been depicted in the journey from Pakistan to Hindustan in which the Hindus and Sikhs were killing their young daughters from dishonor of being raped. And after many years the

love story blossomed between Ajit Singh and the Muslim girl Salma.¹⁴

Balwant Singh Anand's '*Cruel Interlude*' is the reality-based novel of the real person's experiences given in reality rather than the imaginary description. It presents the untold experiences of the refugees which were graven somewhere in the hidden corners of their heart and turned into wet wounds besides the sufferingful experiences in the camps. The records of the experiences are much more real so creates the more unsaid painful impact over the mind of the readers.¹⁴

Conclusion

The overall focus of the study draws the attention on two perspectives during the Independence and after Independence that the whole freedom movement of India started by mass strength of the Indians having different culture, civilization, language, caste, creed, etc., but after the Independence demand of the two nations, that is India and Pakistan, the Partition killed the equality of the Indians. They became the particular holders of the particular nation. And people of the two nations became thirsty of each other's blood. The politicians became observer and indifferent while and after partition. The Independence from Britishers became ask for nothing after Independence but the Partition gave birth to communal holocaust and killing of mankind arose brick by brick. The Gandhian peace was root of *Ahimsa* while freedom movement but the aspiration of power and demand of the secular nations gave birth to Partition and ultimately unimaginable horrific results came which snatched the humanity of human and turned into the cruelest out coming from the hatred. Politics was the field where each gathered for the Indian freedom movement with equality but it's the same field where after Independence the loud voices blew for the secular nation. The decisions not only affected the life of human but the cattle and the Nature too. Communal unity turned into communal holocaust and equality, fraternity, brotherhood, humanity, fight for the one motif of Nation became like dream which never comes true during Partition.

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