

Urdu Novel: Technique and Tradition

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ABSTRACT

Novel is such a form of literature in which the realities of life are presented. In Urdu Language, this form has come through the medium of English. Therefore the Western effects are evident on it. The novel has nine important components by using them a standard novel can be obtained. With reference to the topic of the novel it has been divided in various kinds. According to these kinds a great number of novels have been written in Urdu language. The beginning of the Urdu novel is from the reformatory novels of Deputy Nazir Ahmed. After this a great number of novelists joined their share in this form of literature.

KEYWORDS: urdu novel, urdu novel tradition, urdu novel technique, urdu literature, urdu language

1. INTRODUCTION

‘Novel’ is the word of Italian language which means unusual and new or strange. In literary term, novel is the tale or story in which various aspects of human life are deeply observed and after that, are presented by the novelist in a particular arrangement and ability in the light of his own feelings and experiences. Realism and truth is the base of novel writing. Human life is its topic. There is no capacity for the unreal and supernatural elements in the novel. In other words it is true picture of human life (Bukhari, 1960).

Before the development of novel, Dastans were used to be written. They were for the refreshment and recreation. These dastans had a plenty of supernatural elements in them. We see that the novels were written in a period when there was prosperity and peace. But when the time changed and Mughal Empire met a decline. The English came to India and snatched rule from the hands of the Muslims. The life became difficult. The people came back from the world of imagination to real world which had so many problems, pains and difficulties. Now they began to watch the life with the real eyes. Then the prose gained seriousness. The story which was entangled in the imaginative surroundings of dastan gained a realistic style. Dastan presented imaginative life, whereas the novel narrates real life. Novel is a story in simple language, in which events of routine life are presented in such a way and technique that may arouse interest in reader. The interest is created with the help of plot, imagery and characterization.

There are some contradictions regarding the history of novel but no one denies the fact that novel represents the real life. Novel can be a long story but it has not extraordinary length of dastan.

Novel tells the story of the whole life. It has different aspects of life in it. It has a central story and the secondary stories also but they are not like those of dastan. The secondary stories in novel are also secondary stories but they are always integrated with the central story.

2. THE ELEMENTS OF NOVEL

Novel has different elements (Farooqi). All of them have their own importance in connection with the formation of a good novel. They are as under:

2.1. TOPIC OR STORY

The most important element of the novel is the topic. Some story or some character of a story can be made the topic. The life of a character or the events of his life can be made the topic. Such events are made the parts of novel which are quite near the real life. Sometimes the stories of the novels are presented with such mastery that

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they seem to be the actual events and characters of the real world. Sometimes real circumstances of the life of some prominent personality are narrated in the novel. The story of the novel can be taken from anywhere but it must have novelty in it.

Story is the most important element of the novel. It is considered the back bone of the novel. It is the story which brings the element of the interest in the novel. It creates suspense to provide more interest in the readers and maintains the journey of events. The writer watches different stories present in the society. He saves all those events in his mind and then arranging those makes a part of the novel. He carries on with the story to satisfy the suspense already created. At the same time he keeps on creating new suspense to maintain it up to the end. The end of the story is complete close of the suspense.

2.2. PLOT

Plot is the most important element of the novel. Plot is the skeleton around which the whole story revolves. Plot is a technical colour map of the novel. The plot of a good standard makes a good novel. The art of a good novelist depends on a standard plot and its being according to the story (Sadiqi, 2008).

As much continuity and accordance in the plot is there, so much the story will be according to standard, the novel will be living and energetic and the chains of the novel will be integrated. If the relation of the chain of events breaks somewhere the novel becomes defective. Another quality of a successful plot is to be natural and according to the real events of the world. The introduction of the characters is in the first part of the story, then their mixing with one another, then separation conflict comes and in the last part of the novel a natural solution of all this is necessary.

2.3. CHARACTERIZATION

The story is impossible without characters. In novel in addition to hero and heroine, there are some opposing characters also. There are some helpful and some natural characters. The characters are puppets in the hands of the novelist. He must have ability to move them in the required manner according to their related characteristics. There must be a natural and gradual change and development in them. They must have human qualities and weaknesses also. There are some real characters in the novel that he has seen himself. He can also devise the real characters on the pattern of his own life. He presents the different experiences of the men and women through his characters resembling them. He has the liberty of making changes in the actions and circumstances of those characters according to the needs of the novel and to make more real and interesting. The characters and events relating to them complete the plot.

The characters in novel are the cause of creating interest in it. They add to the depth of the novel. The characters present the philosophy of life in the novel. The reader gets used to them and begins to take interest in them. They become familiar with these characters. In fact they are already familiar with them as they are the characters taken from their own society. They see the reflection of their own life in them. So they begin to love them. The negative characters are also taken from the readers own society so they hate them and take it as their moral duty to sympathize with the good characters and mentally oppose the bad ones. When the hero wins they feel happy, when the villain wins worldly, they become sad. There are many other characters in the novel. There are some secondary characters along with the central characters. They help the central characters to go ahead with the novel.

The novelist not only brings the movements of the central characters to light but also exposes their mental and psychological condition through their actions and talk. Another thing that must be in the character is the change which makes them living. They must have ups and downs in life which make them look real. In this way, they represent the society from which they have been taken.

2.4. DIALOGUE

The talk among the different characters is called dialogue. Dialogue is the best source of exposing the characters, moreover to enhance the story forward. It is a medium of expression. The dialogue should be active, short, to the point and representing the character according to its mental level. The dialogues full of life and natural attitude make the novel fine and nice. When the characters of novel converse with one another their personality comes to light and the novel becomes more interesting. So the novelist takes a great care in presenting their dialogues. The language of the dialogue must be according to the status and personality of the character.

2.5. CREATION OF SCENE

To create scene is not only the drawing of beauty of nature but it is also to reflect the character's etiquette and feelings, emotions and environment of that age. The presentation of civil life and social gatherings and functions also add to the charm of the novel. In this way the novelist tells that he is presenting a scene so that the reader may also see it. The novelist has so many scenes haunting in his memory. He must present them with such mastery of language and narration that they must feel original and of the real world.

3. THE KINDS OF NOVELS

In view of events and topics, the novels have many kinds. These are briefly mentioned hereby.

3.1. CHARACTER NOVELS

Such novels have some particular character in the center of the novel. All other characters revolve around it up to the end of the book.

3.2. EVENT NOVELS

In these novels events are of more importance than any other thing in the novel. A great attention is paid to a certain event in the novel.

3.3. DRAMATIC NOVELS:

These novels are dramatic in their nature. The events of the novel change rapidly and dramatically. The result is often contrary to the expectations of the readers.

3.4. ADVENTURE NOVELS

In such novels the novelist takes the reader to new worlds. He explores new worlds not in supernatural way but on the wings of possibilities.

3.5. IDEOLOGY NOVELS

In such novels a particular ideology is supported through events and circumstances. Such novels are also called philosophic novels.

3.6. HISTORICAL NOVELS

In these novels, keeping in view a certain period of history, novel is written. Abdul Haleem Sharar, Muhammad Ali Tayyab, M. Aslam, Sadiq Hussain and Naseem Hijazi were historical novel writers.

3.7. DETECTIVE NOVELS

In detective Novel the foundation of the plot is composed of curiosity, anxiety and finding clue of a complicated matter. Teerath Raam Ferozpuri, Qaisi Rampuri and Ibne e Safi are the famous deductive novelists.

3.8. REFORMATIVE NOVELS

These novels are written with the aim of reforming society. The novels of Deputy Nazir Ahmed fall into this category (Ashraf, 1994).

4. SOME ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF NOVELS

In the construction and building of the novel, the language, technique and style of the writer has a great importance. Technically, the success of the novelist depends upon the quality of the language. It may be assessed what kind of words he uses. What is the style of similes and dialogues? What kind of words and phrases does he use? Are the dialogues suitable? How the texture of sentences is and what role do they play in the construction of characters. If the style is philosophic the novel shall lose the interest of the readers (Hussaini, 1987).

4.1. UNITY OF EFFECT

In a novel sometimes more than one and sometimes different events take place at a time simultaneously. At the time of description of all these events they are to be linked on a central single point and they have to be related and integrated. All this combination must be done in a natural and wise manner.

4.2. SUSPENSE AND CURIOSITY

The novelist should arrange the events in such a way that the story may advance logically and the attention of the reader may not stray from it. To achieve such hold, suspense, wonder and an alarming mystery must be created in a natural way so that the attention of the reader is not diverted.

4.3. AIM AND BASIC OBJECTIVES

The ideology and disposition of the writer has a great importance in every novel. No novel is written without objectivity and the nature of objectives depends on disposition and inclination of the thought. Some novelists write for enjoyment, some for reformation and some for technical objectives. There aptitude is present in the novel and shows the ideas and aims of the writers clearly. The writer should present his entire novel in such a way that not only his objective is achieved but also his objectivity may remain hidden under the intelligence of his art as the novels of Deputy Nazir Ahmed have a clear seal of objectivity on them.

5. A REVIEW OF SOME NOVELISTS AND THEIR NOVELS

Some of most important novelists of Urdu language and review of their important novels are as under:

5.1. DEPUTY NAZIR AHMED

Deputy Nazir Ahmed is considered the first novelist of Urdu language. He was associated with the movement of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. The companions of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan worked for the educational and ethical betterment of the Muslims. Deputy Nazir Ahmad wanted to write such novels as have a reformatory aim in them. He was an educated person. He wanted his daughters to be educated also. He was in search of some books, having simple moral lessons, for the girls, with instructions for household work but he did not find such a book. At last to get this objective, he wrote such books himself for them. *Mirrat ul Uroos* is the first Urdu novel. Deputy Nazir Ahmed wrote this novel especially for women. In this novel in addition to moral teachings there are so many instructions for good house hold. Another novel written by him is *Binaat un Nash*. It is also for the aim of reformation of society (Adeeb, 1934).

Ibn ul Waqt is one of the early novels of Deputy Nazir Ahmed. It has 128 chapters. The method of division of chapters is very strange. Wherever he needs a new idea to be explained, he opens a new chapter. In this novel religious and moral colour is dominant. In short there is a clear objectivity in his novels where he has laid great emphasis on the rights of the women and the rights of our fellow men.

5.2. RATAN NATH SARSHAR

Sarshar belonged to Lakhnao. His most important and mentionable book is '*Fasana e Azad*'. Under environment prevailing there, he writes the novels for entertainment and we can see the glimpse of the Lakhnao's culture. He has a great power of observation. His other books are '*Ser e Kohsar*', '*Jam e Sarshar*', '*Khudai Foujdaar*' (Sarmast, 1973).

5.3. ABDUL HALEEM SHARAR

Abdul Haleem Sharar wrote more than 100 novels out of which 23 novels are historical. There is a colour of objectivity and religion in his novels. He wanted to reform the Muslims. He was of the opinion that the Muslims should follow their ancestors to gain their lost glorious place. Some of his important novels are: *Malik ul Aziz Vargna*, *Firdaus e Bareen*, *Zawal e Baghdad*, *Azize Misr*, *Subh e Undlas* (Manglori, 1978).

5.4. QAZI ABDUL GHAFFAR

The novel 'Laila kay Khatoot' is a romantic novel. Its style is romantic and it represents 'Taraqi pasand tehreek'. Some critics have called this novel progress loving novel.

5.5. SAJJAD ZAHEER

'London Ki Aik Raat' is an important novel of Sajjad Zaheer. This novel gave a new style to Urdu novel writing. We see progress, truthfulness, realism and rationalism. This novel is the spokesman of English and Europe. Its characters, their emotional lowness and complexities have been presented. Positively young men have been highlighted in it.

5.6. KARISHAN CHANDAR

Karishan Chandar is a great name in Urdu novel writing. He added to the psychological analysis. 'Shikast' is his important novel which has a new style with the search of a new world.

5.7. AZIZ AHMED

'Guraiz' is the novel of Aziz Ahmed, in which he explains the tussle among nations during first and second world wars.

5.8. ISMAT CHUGHTAI

Ismat Chughtai is a female novelist. Her important novel is 'Tairhi Lakirain'. The central idea and topic of this novel is that environment makes or mars the personality of man (Pasha, 1992).

5.9. MIRZA HADI RUSWA

The important masterpiece of Mirza Hadi Ruswa is his novel 'Umrao Jan Ada'. It is best novel of Urdu Novel Writing in that environment. It has a blend of imagination of events. This novel keeps all good qualities of the modern novel. The novel keeps all good qualities of the modern novel. The novel of Mirza Hadi Ruswa is not limited to Urdu language. He keeps individuality owing to having universality. He did not use the already set traditions and conveniences of the time but rejecting them invented a new style of his own which is the main proof of his individuality. Mirz Ruswa was an expert in characterization, dialogue and drawing scene. He is included in psychological novelists. The remaining novels of Mirza Hadi Ruswa are 'Afsha e Raz', 'Akhtari Begum' and 'Sharif Zadah' etc. (Ruswa, 2012).

5.10. GHULAM US SAQLAIN NAQVI

Ghulam us Saqlain Naqvi is a novelist of high status. He has presented his novels in an impressive style. He created only two novels in his literary carrier, 'Bikhri Rahain' and 'Mera Gaon'. He has presented the picture of village in a wonderful way, presentation of rural scene and description of components in superb. We get psychological hints in the novel from place to place.

5.11. QURATUL AIN HAIDER

She is such a great novelist who has left such brilliant effects on Urdu novel which will be ever remembered. Quratul Ain Haider made Urdu Novel writing rich with her new techniques. She gave it a new atmosphere, a new thought and a new approach. Many novels of Quratul Ain have been published. The names of some of them are 'Meray Bhi Sanam Khane', 'Safina e Gham e Dil', 'AagKa Darya', 'Akhir e Shab Ky Hamsafar', 'Kar e Jahan Draz Hay', 'Gardish e Rang e Chaman' and 'Chandni Begum'. Her novel 'Aag Ka Darya' has obtained a high status in the history of novel writing. This novel has changed the trends and traits of Urdu novel (Abdulsalam, 1983).

5.12. ABDULLAH HUSSAIN

Abdullah Hussain was a renowned novelist of Urdu language. 'Udas Naslain' is his best novel. It was written in 1963. The story of 'Udas Naslain' is basically related to the society of United India. His other important novels are:

‘Bagh’, ‘Qaid’, ‘Nadar Log’ and ‘Raat’. ‘Nashaib’, ‘Dhoop’, ‘Jla Watan’ and ‘Wapsi Ka Safar’, are included in the collection of his short stories. Abdullah Hussain is one of those writers who cannot create the fiction mere from imaginative world (Hussain, 2010).

SUMMARY

After its start, Urdu novel gained a great acknowledgement in literary circles. This form of literature found so many good writers. So a large number of novels were written here. In the same time, soon it established a standard; prominent writers of Urdu tested their talents and capabilities in this field and with their admirable work brought forward a practical shining treasure which can compete the international literature of any other language.

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