

Postmodernism in Urdu Fiction

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Abstract:

The Paper has explored the application of postmodernist theories in the context of Urdu fiction. The paper applies the terms like deconstruction, extension, differance to suggest the postmodern elements in selected Urdu fiction with a concern for alterity as reflected in the selected novels.

Key words: Culture, tradition, transition, shift, meaning, contexts, milieu.

POST MODERNISM AND MODERNISM: A HOST-PARASITE RELATIONSHIP

Modernism and Post Modernism have been the two dominant theories in the last fifty odd years and much of the creative writings in all literature have been analyzed and reviewed against the parameters of the two said literary theories. Modernism though surrendered the initiative under the onslaught unleashed by the votaries of Post Modernism and the eponymous character of the critics in the recent past. Today in retrospect it might be deemed an exercise in construction to take into account some of the novels and short stories written in Urdu literature and determine their relevance in terms of

the theories of the day. Modernism breathed its last in the last half of the 20th century after serious deliberations on the mundane and existential nature of human drama with alienation being its hymn. Altaf Hussain Hali, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Shibli Nomani, the exponents of Modernism in Urdu literature though the benchmark of their time are relegated to the background in the context of the time much the same way as Nietzsche, Marx, Freud and T.S. Eliot have been dislodged from their positions of relative strength as it's the unwritten law of literature that nothing is stable, a term that gained circulation with the emergence of a new brand of thinkers and critics generally termed 'postmodernist'. But the important question is whether Modernism can be seen in isolation from Post Modernism or Modernism and Post Modernism has host-parasite relationship? To an extent the argument can be taken that the main focus of Modernism was the strong sense of isolation or doom as Prufrock celebrates the dilemma of being best illustrated in his hesitant and unwilling involvement with the culture of his time. Much of T.S. Eliot's poetry and dramatic writings pierce through the arc of existential threats and keeps reminding of serious cultural depravity and decadence. The civilized twentieth century English society had dwindled to a culture of hobos, of coots and bandicoots and in essence it lost the ethos that was its highlighting feature. T.S. Eliot, W.H. Auden, W.B. Yeats, Louis MacNeice, Dylan Thomas, Phillip Larkin, Ted Huges, Geoffrey Hill, Sylvia Plath, Seamus Heaney, Wallace Stevens, Wyndham Lewis, Leonard Cohen and Martin Amis share the ruling impulse of the time and write in tandem the cultural obituary of a society that was debased by its own inhabitants. The second generation of Modern Poets though were not as belligerent or scathing as the first for by the time they converged on the scene T.S. Eliot and W.B. Yeats had already submitted the reports of cultural autopsy to the larger audience and the poets that followed could barely tamper with the reports by the master artists. In a way Modernism castigates the loss of cultural roots and Post Modernism seeks

the restoration of the same. The paradigm shift or the fundamental difference in the theoretical statements of the two literary theories lies in the manner the issue of culture was approached. Modernism cries foul over the cultural decadence while Post Modernism rediscovers the lost culture that forms the basis of its discourse.

DECONSTRUCTING URDU FICTION

My objective here is to analyze the emphasis that Post Modernism lays on the issue of culture as the basic source of the writings with particular reference to Urdu Short Story writers and novelists. To say that I would stay focused on the deconstruction of Modern Urdu fiction and identify the works where literature manifests the cultural roots, its significance and writers' awareness of its presence will not be very wrong. Urdu fiction has been as rich as any other form of fiction could be and here one of my concerns is to suggest the manifestation of culture in Urdu fiction against the postmodernist theory. Post Modernism is essentially a study of the cultural patterns and the individuality of the society is determined by its cultural identity. The issue of inter-textuality is one such assumption that highlights the importance of the connections between the texts of the different societies of the world. Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Gramsci, Silvestre de Sacy, Ernest Renan, Roland Barthes and Edward Said have been more of cultural critics though writing against imperialism does not necessarily mean the study of culture. Edward Said has in his book *Culture and Imperialism* studied the authority of imperial power to influence the imposition of cultural tendencies. *Orientalism* emphasizes the importance of a school of interpretation deduced from a corpus of literature that has influenced all critical studies of philosophy, Anthropology, History, Geography and Lexicography. Essentially Post modernism underpins the significance of culture and the cultural studies in relation to the global tendencies. The Post Modern novels in Urdu testify the

relevance of such speculations and reflect the concerns on the part of the fiction writers to portray the society the way it is or it has been to discern a pattern of commonality in the textual designs irrespective of the time, a point, underpinned by Foucault.

Writes Edward Said:

Yet unlike Michel Foucault, to whose work I am greatly indebted, I do believe in the determining imprint of individual writers upon the otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like orientalism. The unity of the large ensemble of texts I realize is due in part to the fact that they frequently refer to each other. *Orientalism*, p 23

Edward Said raised some disturbing questions with regard to the imperialist politics and its connection to the evolution of a new culture which is akin to the cultural invasion as the imperialism was not political rather it was geographical annihilation with nefarious cultural intent. Said refers to the issue of inter-textuality and makes the point loud and clear that no text ever is independent of any affiliation and whatever one finds in a particular text is an extension of thoughts expressed in some form somewhere. If I buy this argument then it will be supportive of the contention that boils down to the idea that African and Urdu fiction also share the same concern reflected through their literature, for example, the fiction of the Apartheid and partition literature in Urdu and Hindi.

In the last ten to twelve years Post Modernism in Urdu literature has gained currency. The harbingers of this literary theory are Prof. Gopichand Narang, Shamsur Rehman Farooqui and Wahab Ashrafi. Prof. Gopichand Narang inaugurated the postmodernist theory in his book *Saakhtiyaat, Pase Sakhtiyaat aur Mashraqi Sheryat* wherein he discussed at length the finer aspects of Structuralism and Post Structuralism followed by *Jadeediyat Ke Baad*. Wahab Ashrafi

extended the boundaries of the same critical doctrine in his book *Maabaade-Jadeediyat, Mumkinaat-o-Muzmiraat*.

Wahab Ashrafi observes:

Modernism came about as a reaction in the west to the Romantic Movement and melancholy ruled it. One of the major problem lines of modern literature is alienation. It is firmly rooted into existential angst. It was a disconnect between the man and the society where as Post Modernism celebrates life and discusses the possibilities of human happiness and reasserts the importance of relationship between man and the society. One of the major postulates of Post Modernism is that a person is never alone and his/her relationship with the society is indispensable. Deconstruction is a common phrase though it focuses on the gaps within a particular text. With the advent of Post Modernism as a serious and ideological doctrine the relevance of author took a backseat and the reality of text alone remained the focal point of concern. This is also a disdainful dismissal of the biographical criticism. trans. from *Mabaad-e-Jadeediyat, Muzmira Mumkinaat*

It's worth noting that Wahab Ashrafi categorically points out the fundamental principle that governs and guides the Post Modern literary Theory, is the reality of the text and its myriad interpretations. Urdu fiction since the partition of the country has been rueing assiduously not the loss of the geographical areas but the culture and the local habitation dislodged by the mindless guzzling of the human conscience though engineered by the ill-conceived wisdom of the votaries of politics. From Aziz Ahmad to Nayyar Masood, the novels and Short Stories have remained clung to the shattered Muslim psyche. Post Modernism probes the genesis of such tendencies. *Aisi Bulandi Aisi Pasti, Kaali Raat, Adhe Ghante ka Khoda, Ek Gadhe Ki Sarghusazst, Godan, Anandi, Tetwal Ka Kutta, Mere Bhi Sanam Khane* and *Pital Ka Ghanta*, conform to the postmodernist principles of critical judgments. Post Modernism stresses the importance of culture as any rite, ritual; tradition,

custom etc form its very basis. Post Modernism argues that any literature is a manifestation of its own culture having local odour and determines its own boundaries. Today literature appears to be universal and transcendental it cannot be refuted that literature does reflect a specific milieu of a particular society. The writers around the globe insist that no literature can be seen in isolation from the culture and its roots are reflected in some form or the other.

SYED MOHAMMAD ASHRAF'S NAMBARDAR KA NEELA

Against this background if we analyze the history of Urdu fiction we would be convinced that a novel is not a document of a particular culture rather its genesis lies in the odour of the local land, for example the novella of Syed Mohammad Ashraf's *Nambardar Ka Neela* is based on exploitation in diverse forms and at the same time discusses the possibilities of life on different levels. In this novel he unleashes a scathing attack on the capitalist forces in a highly symbolic way.

It was a winter sky and generally the winter's sky is blue. It was such a season where cold picks up rage. They were all sitting under a Banyan tree for the house was too small for a huge Panchayat. All Thakurs were silent because they knew the silence at times speaks better than speech. Their heads were down for they knew this kind of pose has its own advantages. All of a sudden the silence fell and a hiss engulfed all. When Odal Singh realized that the silence is too deep, a gentle stir can rip through the reigning silence, he regrouped himself, in a resolute and decisive style stated, 'I still believe that service to animal is my religion but if you people permit me, I can shoot the animal'. He held on, cried out, Ramdhin, get me the gun, four cartridges of LG also. The whole Panchayat shuddered. The members of the panchayat pushed their heads into their laps. Before the silence could grip further the quietness, a voice studded with terror erupted, "Fools, will you endure the curse of Cow-slaughter?"

In the above quoted passage, Sarpanch, Nambardar, the sky of the winter, panchayat, service to animal religion, cow slaughter and wine are all words associated with a particular culture which is simultaneously reflective of a particular society's character, its social mores and values. In short Nambardar has domesticated an animal which has run amok in the whole village. Though Neela is just an animal but it's also an apparatus of exploitation for its owner. Neela is a cow and the cow is worshipped in the Hindu religion and therefore Sarpanch Adhikari lal finds himself in a state of fix and finally delivers the verdict in favour of Odal Singh, the owner of the animal. Neela is a threat to the entire village but when it comes to shooting it, the Panchayat is not only nervous rather bills it as something akin to the cow slaughter. This idea itself is representative of a particular society and the whole passage can be seen in the same light. The question obviously is that had it been the case of any other society the cow would have been shot. If the society is independent of such serious cultural affiliations then these lines would have not been written. And therefore the writer, the creator finds it inescapable for it is about a culture which does not allow the killing of a cow and sees it in terms of a serious transgression. Urdu novel is full of such references. Godan belongs to the Brahmins and the kind of importance it has in Brahminical hierarchy is a common knowledge.

Wahab Ashrafi writes.

Nambardar Ka Neela has a special importance because Neela represents both the knitty gritty of politics and the apparatus of exploitation and the poor and the faithful fall prey to it silently. It can be said that our faith is also a part of the same culture and its layers are uncluttered very often by the fiction writers. From Premchand's Godan to Nambardar Ka Neela, Urdu fiction writers have been spilling out tales of exploitation. trans. from *Maabaad-E-Jaddedyiat, Mumkinaat-o-Muzmiraat*

QAZI ABDUL SATTAR'S NOVELS

Qazi Abdul Sattar is one such novelist who traditionally has been dealing with the issues of Zamindari and Jagirdari and there are many shades that they project and all these aspects correspond to a society thriving on aristocratic splendour. These all happen in a particular kind of society. Qazi Abdul Sattar is so adept and competent a hand that the issues he touches upon look infused with not only local colour but also reflects a mature vision of a particular society as his novels breathe in a specific milieu. Its culture catches his fancy and the deft touches he leaves make them appear naturally embedded with all the spicy ingredients that constitute such a social fabric.

If we look at any one of his novels, we may realize that he is deeply enmeshed, suffused and involved in the representation of a certain kind of society and projects them in such authentic ways as if they are beholden to his eyes. This is to suggest that Premchand did not go beyond the proletariat concerns and stayed glued to the idea of representation of the peasants, farmers, the subalterns and the ones discarded and abused by the imperious nature of exploitation. Qazi Abdul Sattar has a wider range of concerns since he remains pre-occupied with the delineation of the bourgeois, the aristocrats, the zamindars and Jagirdars but there is a serious effort on the part of the novelist to portray the culture that was generated by the haves of the society. His descriptions, illustrations, portrayals of the characters though generally and mostly drawn from the high ups, from the opulent sections, from the exploitative classes leave the stamp of observation and experience which represent a particular culture and the kind of diction he evolves to deal with such complex issues leave one gasping for breath. *Shabguzeeda*, *Hazratjaan* and *Peetal Ka Ghanta*, to quote a few are astounding creative explorations of the people of a particular generation, its habit and taste, the methods and manners of life, the traditions and cultural

complexity and his proximity to them as he writes with convenient flair and authentic details.

One of the most illuminating features of his art is the allusion to the ill bred arrogance of the Zamindars, their aura steeped in false vanity, their obsessions mostly misplaced and the shoddy dealing with the emaciated. He continues his rather ingeniously evolved diction imbued with local colour and the sense of contemporaneity lends a refreshing dimension to his art. He is an artist who operates on a wider canvass and draws upon a huge crowd of characters with a diction designed for everyone. Premchand though was more realistic, more down to earth in creating portraits of the individual and the society, his association with the cast offs, with the ostracized, with the humiliated was more universal in its appeal for he wrote not to regale the readers but to leave a discordant message that the society is immune to the wounds of the fallen whereas Qazi Abdul Sattar primarily is a writer of the elites, for the elites and by an elite though the subdued undercurrents of cynicism do not spare his art. Both write the culture, the rough and the fine, the happy and morose but Premchand leaves a shade of black humour while Qazi Abdul Sattar languishes in a self-created apathy and empathy for those he writes about. This is one of the reasons he could not create any Dhaniya or Gobar. We may see some of the passages from his novels to suggest further that the kind of authority he wields in the delineation of his chosen people and society. He has continued with the tradition of Premchand in his own way though he seems to have introduced some of the elements Premchand missed out.

“She sat on the stool. She put on a Necklace about her neck, a brace of bracelets wrapped around her one hand while in the other about a dozen bangles were tinkling in addition to the earrings. She sat silently, neither the tongue wagged nor the hands moved, only her eyes were wet, he kept staring at her.

Just stand up, put on the veil, I have taken the appointment with the doctor.

What is wrong with me? I am perfectly alright.

No, no, my mother used to say and kept saying that right up to her death. I have lost one and how can I leave another one like this?

Please go Ammajan, both insisted. One brought the veil while another one was busy doing the sandals. She stood like a statue. *Hazratjaan*. P. 257

The month of Bakhrid was about its fag end. Before it was the rainy season. Haji Baithe had already left after sending the pack of watermelons since that was Friday. Lalli was washing the stains of the dagger, sleeves had turned upside down. Now she was washing her face with two huge earrings hanging from the ears only to be intercepted by the cock a doodle do emanating from the Minaret. She was taken aback at once by the thought that Mangloo's butcher's calves might have intruded. She looked back to find the doors wide opened and a dog was lying over just outside it. On the courtyard red blood chillies were widespread and glistening. Turab was sitting right on the edge of the door of Mangloo butcher, Lalli was dazed and fazed to see and her hands went numb. The tall man was sitting on the mound but it appeared as if he was standing. What powerful hands and legs...wide like a wall and whenever he stood on the streets blocking her ways, Lalli had to crane her neck to see him with anger ridden eyes. She had seen Turab in her bachelorhood, during Muharram going around with Bana, imitating during the Holi and performing ablutions on the wells of Eidgah. But now just a look at him makes her blood boil. She knew it was the same Turab, the honour for the shepherds of Begampur. They had also gifted him a Buffalo having seen his abnormal and stout constitution so that the milk of the Buffalo aids his growth further. It was the same Turab who had abducted the bride of Bakhabassi and confined her to his home though the hapless Passis's villages watched with utter despair. He was the same Turab who had picked up the ravishing bride of a butcher as powerful as Mangloo. Though he used to say only for the heck of it that it was not Turab rather his own wife involved with him. But the people of Manpura knew that Turab never

offered prayers in a closed room with Chanda.
Shubguzeeda. P. 228

The two passages reveal the individuality of diction, the grand style, the selection of vocabulary, the references to the specific social tendencies, the characters of Lalli, Mangloo Butcher and Turab are serious representation of a given society where the Muslim culture thrives, where the description of dress also contributes to the development of the milieu. It's neither stark nor sombre rather a blend of the socio-political conditions and the style is scintillating though the prose remains whimsical. The references to bangles, bracelets, necklace, earrings, daggers, Eidgah, Wadu, daggers of the arms, mounds, podiums, veil and Toq all remind us that he is talking about not only the Muslim culture, but also the society as a whole. His narrative corresponds to a particular culture. It is however important that his works cannot be appreciated without a moderate exposure to the kind of conditions he creates and cultural dimensions he lends to his art. One of the fine features of his art is his proximity to every minor or major cultural shade and knows the art of its delineation. His grand style emerges from the same cultural background; his characters are born there only and that eventually paves the way to the creation of his art. It can safely be said that as far as the study of culture and its treatment is concerned, Qazi Abdul Sattar represents the postmodernist behaviour. This may also be realized here that novel is a vehicle of social criticism and the elements like culture, society come within its ambit and the novelist who walks along these lines somehow or somewhere consciously or unconsciously trudges the postmodernist ways.

IQBAL MAJEED'S NAMAK

The novel of Iqbal Majeed *Namak* takes us into a world which had been a part of our life and still it is not over. The portrait of such a situation is right before our eyes with photographic

fidelity. The changing conditions create new characters, memories survive, influences remain, its sign stay firmly entrenched into our mind and keep going down to the generations being a part of the collective consciousness. In the novel *Namak* every character lives in its own society and tries to disengage himself from the same which is a dilemma not negotiated comfortably.

What is this salt? The explanation could be, it is a part of the society the characters are connected to. In fact on the one hand *Namak* represents the culture while on the other it's the basic inspiration for the generation of characters. It can always be said that it is a Postmodernist concern though the writer may refuse to be identified as a Post Modern fiction writer but such refusals have nothing to do with the reality of the text.

INTEZAR HUSSAIN'S BASTI

Intezar Hussain's novel *Basti* has been the focal point of discussion for he is a novelist having an eye for the divine evolution or the origin of the species though the impact of Darwin is not apparent. But he is known to refer to it as inspirational and has decisively influenced the writing of *Basti*. In the novel he raises the issue which reflects his own association with the particular society and the relationship between man and God. In his art there is a continued tussle between the institutions of faith and the skeptical temper. The human wisdom cannot have access to all that is unseen but as a result of it the element of doubt creeps into the mind.

Observes Razi Abidi:

In his novel Intezar Hussain has fallen back on the evolutionary process of the human origin and through the study of Anthropology has referred to the human conscious as a weapon to strike an understanding between the divine and the human. In the beginning the scenes of nature used to stir human beings and leave a kind of mysterious impact on them.

Bi Amma, elephant used to fly.

Are you losing your sanity?

Bhagatji was talking about it.

That Bhagat has lost his senses completely. How such a huge animal can fly?

The stable faith was up against the rational and objective human mind that paved the way to the rise of the sceptical tendency. But so far there has been a limitation of human wisdom that could have chided Bhagatji. What about Abbajan? He used to talk with reference to Qoran and Hadith. After the phase of tremors, Supernatural tales and destructions, the human mind is pitted against such a revolution which is not natural, the human wisdom has scaled the boundaries of intelligence which is both surprising and dangerous. Now the upheaval is not confined to the level of doubt alone rather the realities strike the mind. This is a world of political processions and propaganda. Now the problems are not to be solved by a visit to the clerics. There are serious political complications that call for political wisdom and to resolve such complications there is no revelation from the invisible agencies. The Electric pole in Roopnagar is so apparent that it becomes a symbol of change. *Teen Novel Nigar*, PP 94-95

It is very important to suggest here that Intezar Hussain necessarily draws the materials of novel from the culture and he has a deep understanding of traditions that help him to combine the present and the future. There have been questions with regard to certain points and it is not important to answer them. The upheaval that the partition created and the mass exodus from the either side of the border strikes a special rapport and is the particular point of reference in his novels whether it is Chandgahan or Din or Tazkeera.

In the evaluation of these novels a feeling pre-eminently encountered, is a family saga, narrotology and romance. In the context of family traditions, the issue that occupies the mind space of the novelist foremost is house. The chosen house, the light, the palace, abandoned houses, rented houses and construction of the houses have some connectivity to writer's

milieu and the longing for the house is the most distinguished motif of Tazkeera .In a way it also deals with the most complicated question pertaining to the idea of Pakistan. I can suggest to an extent the fact that culture emerges as the redeeming aspect of the postmodernist criticism and from this standpoint it could be dubbed as post-modernist behaviour. Intezar Hussain was not writing a postmodernist novel of his choice but given the fact that culture is at the root of the postmodernist imagination, he can be seen in the same light.

Razi Abidi also traces the elements of culture that form the basis of Intezar Hussain's novels and seems inclined to believe that the text leaves the gaps which in the terminology of Derrida is *differance* and *simulacra* finds expression as the cultural roots are traced and its impact reflected on the subconscious mind of the artist. Simulacra is at work as the object referred to is the imitation of the attempted representation that is to say that Intezar Hussain has these elements in his subconscious mind and they are manifested through a vague recollections of facts.

PAIGHAM AFAQI'S *MAKAN*

Acceptability is one of the ruling impulses of Post Modernism and I make no bones about confessing to the fact that the novel of Paigham Afaqi, *Makan* conforms to the postmodernist postulates. The representation of the central character of the novel, Neera, who is a portrait in grit and determination, Afaqi reveals the inner strength of a woman whose love for house drives her towards a mad scrambling for it. She negotiates the troubles with convenient ease and keeps inching forward that paves the way for her though the governmental and non-governmental organizations put some spanners in her wheel but she remains undaunted and quells them all. She is finally through. Against this backdrop the novel seems based on the resolution of a committed woman who is in conflict with the phallic structure of the society. In the whole exercise of her

struggle against the blatantly lopsided society one finds the approach of Neera who is a hapless, self-reliant and fighting woman even while the chips were down projects not only the intent to fight rather the expression of a will to take on the mighty and powerful itself speak volumes about the aggression of a confident woman committed to a self-espoused cause. This can also be seen in terms of a serious argument in favour of feminism. Neera ceases to be a character as she attains metaphorical dimensions. The obsession with house represents the duality, the right to belong and the peace to be in one's own house and she achieves the target surviving all hiccups.

Derrida stresses the importance of origin but it remains an ambiguous process as the absence is connected to any situation or object that lends a new dimension to the meaning though the process is considered redundant because the origin remains ambiguous. Paigham Afaqi continues the same argument for he believes that the outside agencies of the world disappear into the unseen alleys and the final end remains elusive. Derrida endorses this stance that the desires which override all and the quest for the same remain elusive. Here the success of Neera is a cinematic representation of a fictional world whose infatuation with her own house drives her hard and to wrestle the same goes on to become the rationale of her life. The basis to bill it as a postmodernist novel is rooted into the realization that Neera recovers with the house the cultural history of her family, the memories and the passage to history. Here we can find the postmodernist angle since we have to identify the specifics before it is termed postmodernist. One of the arguments in favour of the thesis is the sense of life Neera oozes, the urge to live on, the conviction to turn the dream into reality, the association with the roots and the image of house which is her purgatory. In the recovery of the house Neera finds her happiness and the same happiness is the thrill of life, an aspects post modernism values to the ultimate. Another dimension that pushes it close to the postmodernist perception is the spirit of her struggle and the zeal to persist with it. If it

were to be a modern novel she would have caved in and ended up in chaos.

In these efforts the vision of the man gets blurred as it time and again gets mired in foggy perceptions like a mirage and this mirage keeps appearing in some form or the other. Like a mirage that rotates about its orbit and the emergence of the new faces leave things behind as they become powerless. New things take place and the emergence of such strange things lead to the formation of new images and their forms are very different to the extent that even words lose their meanings and at times a particular word creeps into another and therefore the words clad in dress tend to create new and strange images around us which add complexity and fog to our perceptions. The changing meaning of those things and the changing faces of the people keep a direct tab on the views and their ideas remain unaffected. *Makan*

The point being made here that the words tend to lose their meanings and the indeterminacy about the meaning of the words is what strikes the attention most as it is one of the fundamental ideas of the post modernism that there is no fixed meaning of anything and the element of indeterminacy remains the central idea. This is not to suggest that the conditions do not remain stable nor does the meaning remain so. The point being stressed here is the interpretation of words in a particular context can change and the meanings being fixed will have to be discarded as the text itself is not stable and one has to identify where the text breaks free. Paigham Afaqi does not determine the meaning of the words nor the scenes. Also it is seen in his art that the words leave their traditional meanings and find a new perspective to divert the attention of the mind. These are basically the concepts given by Derrida who has extended Saussure's theory of binary opposition by adding some new dimensions to it. We can also examine *Differance* to determine further the instability of the text.

All, the past, present and future become faces of the individuality and finally it gets out of the suffocating environs which is considered to be his destiny, the creation does not stop there only rather goes far beyond the visibility or where it starts dangling or goes even deeper beyond the aura of fog and reaches the ultimate point and he himself is scattered to the extent that the other end of his existence is lost in the maze of his own eyes.

Wahab Ashrafi writes.

Destiny therefore has no role, the man has himself allowed to be governed by it but even if the ways are self-created, he can only hold a slight edge over others though the boundary never ends but given the expanded self he gets suffused and lost into the murky perception. Here too we can discern that the artist remains enveloped in the fog.

Now it is more than clear that *Makan* is out and out a postmodernist novel as it corresponds to the established principles of the postmodernist theory and therefore from whatever references we have seen to determine the nature of *Makan*, should suffice to identify it as a novel that justifies the conditions of post modernism.

There have been writers engaged in a tirade against the authority of law and exploitation as this idea was basically fostered by Michel Foucault. He denounces the advocates of the repressive forces. Authority is always based on power and the same power is a license to exploitation. We find umpteen such references in Urdu fiction.

JEELANI BANO'S BARISH E SANG

Jeelani Bano is one of the novelists who in her novel *Barish-e-Sang* attacks the institution of democracy, ridicules communism and exposes the hollow political structure of the country. She keeps reminding that the post independent India is not independent of the erstwhile oppressors in the form of capitalists, business barons and conditions are even worse.

All the owners of Lorries, factories, fields use the best quality of seeds and their crops flourish. If one is crushed the other one rises up.. They are to be completely uprooted. We did not get anything sticking to the right path. The walls of gap would have to be broken. If you ask for assistance they would pay a pittance and turn you into beggars. When anybody will sympathize with us? When the pity would be there? I question, what the government has given us so far? Do you have anything? It's been a decade for the independence of the country and you are still pulling Rickshaw. *Barish-e-Sang*. P 13

The above passage expresses the ire of the artist against the exploitative power structure of the post independent India. Jeelani Bano is particularly concerned about the utopia the independence of the country generally entailed. She lashes out at the continued legacy of the colonial dictates and the predicament of the common man who thought freedom would hold a magic wand to ameliorate the lot of the suffering mass who all waited for the freedom with high hopes in their eyes only to be shocked by the kind of transition that has been though a decade of the independence having descended has elapsed. The passage is representative of a temper, the Post Modernist temper that is the acceptability of the given situation and the possibilities of change. The passage is imbued with a sense of rebellion as the hopes are dashed and the loot committed by the power hijackers will have to be taught a lesson. There is a sense of threat issued by the exploited and the sceptical temper colludes with the resolution.

HUSSAINUL HAQUE'S *BOLO MAT CHUP RAHO*

Bolo Mat Chup Raho is a very popular novel of Hussainul Haque. He has been writing fiction for quite some time and has written on a host of issues ranging from the traditional values to the changing socio-political scenario. One of the recurring themes in his fiction is the clash between the old and new

values, the rift induced by the imperial powers and the way it has affected the oriental cultural ethos as he laments the shift from tradition to modernity, the collapsed institutions of faith, the democratic limitations even though democracy has been in vogue for a huge number of years. His concern is to question the power structure, the impact of colonialism that interfered with the purity of Indian culture, the disturbing legacy of education with misplaced priorities, and the entire value system that was badly dented by the erstwhile Colonial masters who in trying to build the future of country imposed an everlasting sense of enslavement. In *Bolo Mat Chup Raho*, Haque questions the end or objective of education, the very structure of education which has only managed to dismantle the last remains of the oriental wisdom to be replaced by the occidental philosophy that has a scant respect for the values so hoary to the mother land. We can examine a passage from his novel *Bolo Mat Chup Raho*.

Well this is the issue. The master held himself together after a bit of dilemma. Why does a man study, just to expand his knowledge, why the collection of knowledge is important? This is because he might know things better than the most and to develop a sense of discrimination between right and wrong. What is this discrimination? In fact this is an attempt to equip the mind with a better sensibility and this mind demands from us that unlike the illiterate and the uncultured which tries to leave as a better individual. Then what would be the difference between yours and his thoughts which considers a man superior or inferior because his life style is better than the ones who are not exposed to education. The man who was walking ahead again raised a question that infuriated the master.

Why do you talk nonsense? The master was enraged. To live like a gentleman does not entail the lifestyle. All I want to suggest is that a man should be gentle, religious and brave or else they may live like dogs and wolfs or like insects. The man who addressed the question went silent but the master himself was a bit unnerved.

Does the kind of education being imparted by convents and model schools is preparing the above quoted features? Somebody wore a wry smile and the master went into the shell. *Bolo Mat Chup Raho*

On the one hand Husainul Haq does not accept the discrimination between the elite and the non-elite which is a modernist behaviour but the kind of importance convent education has been given generally separates the so called cultured from the ill cultured segments. The impact of colonialism has crept into our psyche to the extent that it leaves no space for any thought that can even acknowledge the education given in public schools. The view of the neo colonialism discards this rather lop-sided perception and this is what Husain ul Haq also does.

QUASIM KHURSHEED'S MORE

More is a short story by Quasim Khursheed, perhaps is another example where the post-Modernist values have been asserted to the painful extent as this also deals with the rise of the subaltern. Chotu was the domestic help in a family of the elite but the family falls apart as the financial crisis grips it. The third daughter Ana remains unmarried given the financial duress. Chotu directly or indirectly wishes to help the family which for them is nothing short of humiliation. Chotu knows it and the people of the colony find him making some forays into the same family. Ana is the one who dislikes the visits of Chotu and her father though remains conscious of the fact does little precious to stop Chotu directly from visiting them. Things gradually come to such a pass that a marriage proposal comes from him through some of the members of the Colony and that is the final straw on the lost glory of the suffering family. The girl remains silent; her father decides to shift to the native village to escape the agony inflicted by the hated Chotu who wields some financial muscle. As they roll up their goods, Ana

picks up a dust ridden novel and waits for the night bus. Let us see some passages from the story to suggest the fall of the gentle and the rise of the wicked.

He kept on asserting his economic stability for some time. Sometimes the smoke of his tear pierced into my eyes that made them watery. Though I wanted to say him that you have become so big a man that you could not stop yourself from smoking before me but I was held back by some unseen fears and silence was my best protection. At times he used some tattered English, at times smiled and at times feigned ignorance too. *More*

See the times have changed and changed so much that eyes don't believe them. We old people are losing the old tendencies. Our generation is conducting itself to its doom driven by its own obduracy. I have been watching Ana right through her childhood and I know your family very well but people are maligning your family that is unbearable for me.

What are you saying all these? Ana can't dent my confidence, I can't even think of it. My tone was sombre.

You have not mingled with the people of the colony and therefore you could not understand it in time. Personally I would never say any ordinary thing about Ana but everybody of this colony is having it on its tip of the tongue that Chotu is supporting your family financially and he is to marry Ana.

That night there was a lot of furore going about the colony. The small groups of people were moving about . I could not understand what the issue had been? Though it was somehow brought to my knowledge that chotu in an inebriated state was staggering and a sharp dagger was pierced through his chest by Ana. Later on she surrendered to the police and confessed to her crime.

Tears enveloped my eyes. I thought, Ana did eventually what my old eyes could not even visualize. *More*

The passages reveal the helplessness of the narrator and the kind of trauma Chotu inflicted on Ana. Ana is a postmodernist character who nurses a broken and battered sense of glory and the rise of Chotu and his sinister advances leave no choice for her other than to kill him to escape the ignominy and the bizarre impact it would have left on her fallen father. The story restores the culture of the elite and the unacceptable emergence of a character that uses the financial power to tame the pride of a family who had the best of power, prestige and importance. Ana is a feminist on the one hand and opposed to the rise of an ill bred character on the other. Postmodernism does identify the acceptability of the given status but the desire to escape the manufactured humiliation conforms to the standard cultural assertion of the elite. Qasim Khursheed may not have written it as a postmodernist story but the elements it has does push it to the doctrine of Post Modernism as the assertion of the self in a state of crisis has much to do with the kind of society one lives in.

CONCLUSION

It has been a long discussion to trace the impact or elements of Post Modernism in Urdu fiction and we indeed have examined with references and passages to suggest the elements, the critical postulates and the principles the theory of Post Modernism rests on and the degree of impact it has left on Urdu fiction. This cannot be deemed as the article that has duly covered Urdu Fiction since it is an impossibility to cover the history of Urdu fiction in a single essay and therefore I make no such claims that it is complete in all respects as much more is to be said on the changing face of Urdu fiction but here just a select ones have been reviewed.

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