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## **Socio-Cultural and Political Concerns in Urdu Novels**

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**Abstract:** Urdu novel has played a vital role in the socio-cultural and political issues of India during and after the Independence. The Urdu novelists not only have critiqued but also provided with an alternative to the artistic and creative tradition of India. The paper offers a concise description of Urdu novel delineating its subject matter and aesthetic concerns in the larger spectrum of the progressive movements of 1936. Some of the important novelists in this regard are Sajjad Zaheer, Ismat Chughtai and Aziz Ahmad who standardized the Urdu novels. Most of the novels written in the fifth decade of the twentieth century deal with the carnage of partition of the country, and portray the pain of migration, riots, development of the industries, expansion of education, lack of security, razing down of values and the like issues.

**Keywords:** Urdu Novel, Progressive Movement, Partition, Political situation

The novel is a kind of genre that has a comparatively deeper relationship with society. It has a mutual connection with social changes. On one hand, where it gets the impression of the social whereabouts; on the other, it affects the social movements as well. All works of fictions concomitantly participate in social changes, but the influence that the genre of novel asserts has more influence because of it having the *modus operandi* of the narrative genre. Secondly, it is a developed version of traditional storytelling. These two reasons are important to understand what makes the novel a society-representative genre. That is why this genre proved helpful in representing different movements of the situations of its time and period. The art of novel writing is, in fact, the art of imitating real life. In Urdu, fiction novel has

the key status because life may be covered in this genre more successfully in comparison to the other genres. Initially, it developed along with different social and literary movements and played a vital role in the reconstruction of human lives. The founder of Urdu Novel Nazir Ahmad and his follower novelists has not only showed the mirror image of the society but also made efforts to reform the same. The writers of those years were still figuring out the nuances of novel writing. Consequently, they were not error-free. The effects of the traditional old epics could be found in them like romanticism, and full of emotions were the qualities of that time novels.

In 1936 the progressive movements showed new ways in terms of artistic and content level and also introduced the different view of life-based on communist theory. This was the time when the novel had reached the heights where any corner of life and society could be encompassed in this genre astutely and artistically. The progressive movement brought the literature and society and life closer, so in the novels written in this period were more social than romantic and had a more realistic approach than the fictitious and supernatural elements. Premchand, Krishnachandra, Sajjad Zaheer, Ismat Chughtai and Aziz Ahmad standardised the Urdu novel and played a vital role to make this genre spread-out its reach. Most of the novels written in the fifth decade of the twentieth century were based on the carnage of partition of the country and its related matters. The pain of migration, riots, development of the industries, expansion of education, lack of security, political pressure, razing down of values and the issues like that affected the human-thought so much that the views of seeing the world changed completely and these gory events led the humans to view life from external actions to internal forces. Modernism became popular in this time in which the existential and internal problems were focused a lot. In the novels of this era, many experiments were made in terms of art and mind both. The different contradictions and human tendencies and situations were presented in the novels. With the passing of time, new theories and points-of-views, and the modern art experiments widened the canvas of novels.

In the last decade of the twentieth century, a new literary term came into existence. This was called "Postmodernism." It got reckoned not just as a movement, but as a 'state'. The present era is an era of bankruptcy. The fast-changing situation, the thought pattern of the modern society, issues, the way of thinking, the social and cultural milieu, new technological inventions, electronic media, full of

materialism, political power, business and approaches to seeking education and unemployment like issues are affecting the entire life severely.

In the present period the changing cultural, social, economic and the dilemma of religious pattern, instability and the human basic weaknesses selfishness, and the national and international political gimmick of reforms and the schemes of dominating the society and the powers strengthening these schemes are the stimulating topic of creativity for today's literati. The new novelists have found new horizons of topics which were not possible before today. No doubt, it has the essence of the past as well, but besides this, there are also a few things that can be called contemporary reality.

The world has been globalized, and with the revolution of the electronic media, it is changing. On one hand, the new technological inventions have opened up the doors to new developments, while on the other, fresher problems are being born with them and the solutions for them do not seem easy. The life looks luxurious and full of lavishness, but inside it is hollow and broken. Quick result, voracity, dishonesty, and corruptions these are the values covering us. Nowadays, life is under the 'Information High Way'. This new trend is affecting our lifestyle like buying and selling habits, business, seeking education and communication everything. In this scenario, where the entire life, social system, humans and cultural preferences are changing, in this situation, it is evident that the language and literature, which represents these very things, will undoubtedly change. Present contemporary problems like The Kashmir issue, the Babri Masjid demolition, terrorist activities, corruption, and unemployment etc. are those issues which affect life very badly.

The present novelists are presenting whatever they are experiencing in society. The canvas of life is so multihued that its shades and its surprises have so much stimulation, waiting for such kinds of trends that provide opportunities to share Universal joy and sorrow. Life and time strengthen our power of experiences, demands and collection of incidents, our bolts from the blue, fear to contradict, comfort and console, hopes and faiths, and wait and confidence. And also creates the chain of questions and answers about connections and relationships between the meaningfulness of life and the Universe. In every period, Urdu Novel has established its name and fame with the new names and faces. The changes which came into existence around 1980 in the political, social and cultural level that revolutionized the structure of life

up to a certain extent. New social, political, religious and economic challenges appeared which needed to be faced by the new generation. In this period a whole new lot of new generation novelists emerged. For example Husainul Haque, Shamoil Ahmad, Musharraf Alam Zauqi, Ghazanfar, Paigham Afaqi, Abdus Samad, Ilyas Ahmad Gaddi, Yoginder Paul, S.M. Ashraf, Iqbal Majeed, Shafaq, Ali Imam Naqvi and Yaqoob Yawar etc.

The novelists after 1980 summed up the contents and topics like cultural structure, the demolition of values, feelings of loneliness, an unknown restlessness, exploring the meaningfulness of the existence, and the effects of different social and political situations on the internal or psychological life of individuals. These novelists have signs of right, artistic approach and information friendliness. The shadow of the contradiction between traditional and modern values can be found in today's novels.

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