



PARADIGM SHIFT IN HINDI STORY WRITING FROM PURANI KAHANI TO NAI KAHANI

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Abstract :

In Hindi literature the main proponents of Purani Kahani are Munshi Premchand and Jai Shankar Prasad. In old stories the narrative would follow a definite story line. The writer would go on telling and many events happen one after another. On the other hand in Nai Kahani nothing much would happen and if something happens the focus was more on its impact on the mind of the characters. New Story came into being during the first two decades after Indian independence. The period from 1955-1963 is considered to be the time span of Nai Kahani. The narrative of these stories is broken. There is symbolism in these stories like in the stories Malve ka Malik, Khoyi Hui Dishayen and Iceberg. Namvar Singh declares the story Parinde by Nirmal Verma as the representative story of Nai Kahani. Parinde is symbolic of destiny, in Mohan Rakesh's story Ek Thehra Hua Chaku, chaku is the symbol of hooliganism and injustice. Images, which are another characteristic of Nai Kahani, provide accurate and crystalline meaning to Nai Kahani. Instead of the conversation style, consciousness flow style and preview style of the old story, the new story follows diary style and fantasy style.

Key words: *Purani Kahani, Nai Kahani, Symbolism, Style, Disillusionment.*

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Introduction :

In Hindi literature *Nai Kahani* (New Story) movement is known to start from 1956. The proponents of *Nai Kahani* are Mohan Rakesh, Kamleshwar and Rajendra Yadav. It is generally considered that *Nai Kahani* got its name from Bhairav Parsad Gupta's edited magazine *Nai Kahani Visheshank*. *Nai Kahani* protests the construction of the story from ideological point of view. *Nai Kahani* Movement tells the story of Indian youths' disillusionment, exasperation, anguish, capitalism, displacement of human emotions due to growing marketism, joblessness and less career opportunities after independence. Industrialization and escapade in the cities in search of jobs after independence were responsible for the situation of the youth. As a result the youth suffered from isolation and alienation. In old stories the characters were shown as part of society, the society had some impact on the individual, the characters did not have any individuality of their own and village was in the forefront. On the other hand in New Story the characters were from middle class city background. Old story dealt with the theme of villages, feudalism, caste



system and debt. While the new story had shifted its focus to suffering and troubles of middle class city youth. Retreat to the city shattered joint family system. In cities the people found themselves alone and alienated. This forlornness impelled them to think about their identity and individuality. This displacement and loneliness brought dejection along with it. They were forced to meet new people and establish new relations. That is why new stories were written on the texture and precision of relations. Sometimes the loneliness of a character overshadows so much that it itself becomes a character. Sartre's Existentialism which explores issues related to meaning, purpose and value of human existence is considered to be one of the causes of the rise of New Story.

One of the proponents of *Nai Kahani*, Kamleshwar, started writing when he was pursuing M.A. Whatever Kamleshwar and his contemporaries wrote about the literary conditions of that time came to be known as *Nai Kahani*. When Kamleshwar started writing, the social and political conditions of India were changing fast on the one hand, and on the other hand Hindi literature had taken a new turn. There were traditional story lines before Kamleshwar. First in this line was Prem Chand's story tradition which was firmly rooted in social realities inspite of all ideologies. Kamleshwar's works are the reflection of the life he lived. He has written the stories about sorrows and sufferings of characters emerging out of real life. As an individual he suffered much in life. But truth of real experience is always lovable to him. Therefore, these stories which show tortures and troubles are expressions of his attachment to his surroundings. In the preface to *Meri Priya Kahaniyan* (1972) he has written:

Whenever and whatever I have tried to write about the problems that tortured me, appear right to me. And what is right is lovable also. To call these episodes of trouble and torture, 'lovable', is heart rending.

Kamleshwar explores the theme of displacement in *Khoyi Hui Dishayen (Lost Directions)*. It highlights the terrible state of a youth. He does not know by walking on which path, by choosing which philosophy, can he achieve his destination. In modern society a person has lost all contacts. He is disillusioned. He feels lonely. He fears from his loneliness. He is on the verge of becoming a neurotic. A fear always lingers on his mind whether anyone knows him. Everyone is busy with one's own work. No one has enough time to ask about the welfare of others or to provide any solution. One has no peace of mind even in one's own home.

The post independence India has witnessed urbanization and growth at the cost of rural or small town community life. This transition from established community life to metros like Delhi is full of challenges for individuals. Chander as the protagonist of the story faces this new reality. He lives in Delhi which is a metro city. He is returning home after spoiling his whole day in search of a job. He is standing on the road by the side of a railing. People are flowing like river. He does not want to go to his home. He sees women passing by. All look alike to his tired eyes. He is too much exhausted. He does not know whether he is hungry or not. Leaves are falling from the trees. Each and everything shows a sign of detachment. Buses are moving eating persons from one side and ejecting from another. Several persons are moving but no one recognizes him. It appears as if each is trying to ignore the other or is filled with false pride. He feels nostalgic. He starts thinking about his town. In his town even unknown people would show some intimacy. In big cities even known persons try to escape from their known ones:



And then he recalls his city, from where he had come three years before-if any unknown would meet even at the uninhibited shore of Ganga then a glimpse of recognition would fill the eye. And this capital! Where everything is our own, of our country...but nothing is our own, of our country. (40)

The lifestyle in Delhi is a shock to Chander. There are several houses along the roadside but he cannot go to any house. Nirmala his wife, would be waiting for him. But there also he would have to wait like a guest because Mrs. Gupta would have been sitting with his wife. In big cities one does not know even one's neighbours. For last two years Chander has seen only the name plate of his neighbour Bishan Singh. Bishan Singh is a journalist. Chander has an idea that when the smoke of cigarette comes out of the window it means means Bishan Singh is inside the house. In the morning when there are wrappers of bread and shells of egg below his window it means that Bishan Singh has gone. Chander has never met this person. He has a diary in his hand. He recollects that he has not talked even to himself for a long time. He then notes in his diary that he would meet to himself every Friday from 7 P.M. to 9 P.M. Chander sees his friend Anand. Kamleshwar has beautifully sketched Chander's state of mind at this moment:

Just then Anand seems coming from the other side. He does not want to meet even him. Anand has a dreaded disease. He wants to remain untouched by this contamination. Anand remains in search of those friends who do not get too close to his life but can remain with him and talk to him for only a little time. There is a queer superficiality in his talk, that superficiality which a person learns from books. And he feels that he himself has that artificiality... which he has learnt in college and university by reading the dead descriptions of life.(43-44)

Kamleshwar seems to suggest that building relationships after migration and displacement is not easy. To escape from Anand, Chander asks some money from him. Anand assures him that he would return with money. But Chander knows that he would never return. As Chander walks further, yellow leaves come under his feet. It reminds him of his past. One day he had been walking on this very path along with Indra. She was his beloved. She had told him that he could do everything. He feels that he should meet Indra. From her he can get some affection. But Indra is a married woman now. She does not show any intimacy towards him. Chander is hopeless once again. He returns to his home. He tries to find his identity in Nirmala. But here also he feels himself deserted. He feels as if he is a stranger for Nirmala also. This story carries the imprints of Kamleshwar's personal experience in Delhi. The authenticity, with which he narrates the dilemmas of Chander, has a personal colouring. Kamleshwar has written this story during the second phase of his life when he came to Delhi from Allahabad. He had been suffering from immense creative pressure at that time. This story reflects his own state of mind. The language, images all seem to express author's mental landscape indirectly.

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