Literature as an Expression of Society

Ms.Vrinda Sawhney

Assistant Professor, Department of English,
IIMT University, Meerut
Uttar Pradesh, India. Pin Code- 250004
Email: vrindasawhney001@gmail.com

Abstract

Literature is the art of expressing emotions, thoughts in a society. It is the reflection of opportunities and obstacles, pain and gain, and assets and liabilities prevailing in the society. Literature can be said as the mirror through which we can see the whole society. With the help of literature, one can share his/her joy, sorrow, pain, and even the inner turmoil building in their heart and mind. Society can be best understood by reading historical fiction or contemporary fictional books. The author usually either expresses the events happening in their surroundings or the inner torments in their writings. Literature also revolves around the society as many authors try to depict the uplift and backlogs of society in their piece of art. If literature prospers then society also grows. In literature, we find stories designed to portray human life and action through some characters that, by their words, action and reaction convey certain messages for the purpose of education, information, and entertainment. It is impossible to find a literature without connecting it to the society. We cannot separate society and literature as it is the part and parcel of life. Therefore, Literature and society can be accepted as the two faces of the same coin that cannot be separated. Literature is the way of expression towards society. Hence, Literature cannot sustain without society, and on the other hand, the society too cannot be unnoticed in literary piece in one way or another. Literature is created by human beings and human beings create a society.

If we look towards today's scenario this pandemic had occurred earlier also and this could be read in the literature of the 20th century.

Keywords: *literature, society, history, author*

Introduction

What is society? What is literature? Why literature is called as the mirror of society? There are multiple questions that arise in the mind and heart of human entities. To begin with, this first let's understand what is society?

Literature is the most agreeable way of ignoring life- Fernando Pessoa

A Society is a group of folks involved in relentless social interaction with similar or varied approaches toward culture, political, and social matter. Society influences literature in many ways. Society is real but on the other side, literature is unreal, imaginative. Literature is an effort to write any imaginative work. Literature being the result of society, we feel connected to the world and even feel escaped from the society with the help of novels, drama, and poems. Author always tries to pin down the relevant topic or theme recurring the present era and even the mind-set of the reader, so that reader can connect with his work.

Literature has a major impact on the development of society. It has shaped civilizations. Literature gives us a detailed preview of human experiences. Literature confirms the reality of human experience. Literature is the way of expressing your emotion. Any changes in society it will affect the writing of the author or in the origin of literature, this can be best referred to by William Wordsworth, Preface to Lyrical Ballad(1802) he says: "poetry is spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions, it takes its origin from emotions recollected in tranquility". (1) The author plays a major role in the development of the society.

The literal meaning of literature is the art of written work in different forms such as poetry, prose, fiction, stories, etc. Literature can be said as the creator of society. Literature is an expression of the society. It makes you evolve. Literature makes you think more and more to go into the depth and you can find the happiness of myth. Literature as an imitation of human action, often presents a picture of what people think, say, and do in the society. Like literature Cinema too is an art form that not only reflects the society it is set in but also acts as a reflector to that society.

Literature indeed reflects the society its good values and its ills. Literature mirrors the cons of the society with a view to make the society realize its mistakes and make amends. It also projects the virtues or good values in the society for people to imitate. Stories are designed to mimic human life and action through some characters who by their words, action, and reaction. It even conveys a certain message for the purpose of education, information, and entertainment. Thus, it is not only a reflection of the society but also serves as a corrective mirror in which members of the society can look at themselves and find the need for positive changes. So naturally,

if we have the power of language to express the feelings, we are well on the way to create literature. It could be said the subject matter of literature is society in some form or the other. (2)

Literature gives you an approach to think differently and even enlarge the opinion towards the world. Various theories are derived in literature through the help of society. For example, archetypal theory it is based on people's outlook toward various things like we always connect white color with peace or we can say number 3 as not lucky, so this theory is connecting again with the perception of society which is depicted through this theory. Another great work can be psychoanalytic criticism given by Sigmund Freud. In this, he depicted human psychology and given the concept of Oedipus-Complex, Id, Ego, and Superego. The literature will go into layer of reality which is hidden from the view. It penetrates into the depth of the society. (3) In society, many things are hidden but in literature, one can be outspoken through his writings. Author can expose all the flaws of society or things rejected in society. It gives life, meaning in real. Literature gives an image but the image is not necessarily a true image. This image can be distorted in reality or perceived as distorted by society as a whole. What happens in society is reflected in literary work. Literature imitate human life and action through some characters and those characters by their words and actions communicate certain messages for the purpose of education, information, and entertainment

It is important in everyday life also as it connects individuals with larger truths and ideas in a society. It creates a way for people to record their thoughts and experiences in a way that is accessible to others through fictionalized account of the experience. Literature depends on the trends of the society. Classical literature influenced the society in terms of gender biasedness to gender equality which has been carried forward to date. Many women writers wrote about women, their problems, and the situations they face in their lives. In the 19th century or till now we can see the violence against women or the rights they are deprived of is written in various works for example: Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte, Pride, and Prejudice by Jane Austen. There were waves of feminism and even till now women are struggling to get out of this undue burden they have to carry with them. So, this again connects society and literature. (4)

Two dramatic pieces focusing on African- American history and struggle are "A Raisin in the Sun" 1959 and "Roots" 1976 were written during a period of great civil strife in American society. Most literature portrays people engaging in social interactions. Literature is the medium to know about the happiness, sorrow,

and pain in the society. Literature helps to analyze the character and even helps in portraying various characters through which we can connect. For example, if youngsters read novels of early 20th century or novels that belong to World War time they can make a perception that this will depict the era where there was a lot blood-shed and there was depression all around. People lost their shelter and become a refugee or there was a lot of hustle-bustle all around. If you go into detail, we will find a lot of great and amazing books which can make you feel to know more about of the society and even raises a lot of question in your mind. There are many books or dairy of World War time or partition novels. But there is one important point to think that through this novel only we could know what was there in past, how people spend their time? What were the sources of entertainment? It is literature or the author's idea through which we depict society. The Diary of Anna Frank and Samuel Pepys makes us aware of the most important event of history.

Sometimes it is noticed that many charges are labeled against literature as well as society. A literary writing is banned because an opposite section of society finds it mirroring beliefs and norms against that society. The examples of Salman Rushdie's The Satanic Verses and Taslima Nasrin's Lazza. The paintings of MaqbulFida Hussain were banned and burnt by a section of Indian Hindu society with the charge of tarnishing their religious devotion. Even many films were banned as it is hurting the sentiments of religious people or create controversy. "Literature in a society is not only banned or attempted to be banned because of mirroring the norms and values, not found in conformity with that society, but it is also sometimes marginalized or vehemently opposed due to another form of language it is written by, and which is different from what people have been using." (5) Even the simple work which is rejected at that point of time becomes a history for future year. It changes according to the society.

The literature of any age cannot escape the influence of society and it does revolve around it. Even the authors, poets, and dramatists always use the current scenario as their plot of the work. So that people do understand the motive behind the work. Even if reader doesn't know about the author or what style of work he writes still through his book's theme and plot, reader can relate to the Era author was writing and what can be the approach towards work. We get images in their composition. The reason behind this is that we could judge what could have happened at that point in time and can make comparison between the ancient time and the contemporary world.

If we talk about William Shakespeare he is known as the greatest dramatist

of the English language. He as an individual coined various word which is being used in our daily life. For example: ghosts, witches, courtier, unaware and fools in his plays which wereas per the liking of his audience. (6)

Charles Dickens shows the backside of industrialization. In his novel, he shows the sufferings of the poor and how they are being ignored. He even talks about capitalization, how rich are becoming rich and poor are getting poorer. One of the famous quotes of Dickens novel Hard Times by: Thomas Gradgrind, "Now, what I want is Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life." (7) Dickens,Charles(1854)

Conclusion

Thus, when you ask how literature is a mirror to society, it's important to consider that some types of literature are intended as mirrors, reflecting society as it is. Literature personifies society. Literature is not only connected with society but with the culture, politics, and psychology of people. To conclude, the literature is very important in even the practical world. We need to read the literature of any country to understand the needs and changes being prevailing in the society. In the Present Era also people are writing about this pandemic, so that in which when someone will read of 21st century they could understand what world face during this time.

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