



Research Paper

Role of Literature and Technology in Reflecting Society

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Every part of literature whether it is prose, poetry, play, novel, short story and others, reflects the society more or less. In Beowulf quotes, the words of Plato, “An intelligent man will prize those studies which result in his soul getting soberness, righteousness, and wisdom, and will less value the others”

Post independence literature reveals that there has been women quest for the identity and self which provides the society a better outlook. Western Civilization development, Indian Freedom Struggle, and Indian constitutional Rights for Women tend the women poets to write freely and openly over the bold issues like realistic attitude to life, sex, lust, and autobiographical expressions. Different approaches adopted by these Indian Women poets are- philosophical, religious, and spiritual traditional, Vedic, Upanishadic, devotional etc. In their creative writings, the women writers like Kamala Markandaya, Kamla Das, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, and others started discussing openly the sexual problems and questioning of the genders – role expression. But Prof. Landow quickly admits that ‘Plato’s world was quite different from ours’. In Plato’s time, there was no such large industrial community. Discoveries and inventions were also few and far.

In the intensely modern world, we need education which includes, ‘sound, extensive practical, scientific knowledge. And if the aim of education is to Know ourselves and the world’; then why should we not get to know the best which has been thought, imagined, created and said (orally or in writing) in the world.

Poets, playwrights like Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, T. S. Elliot, Edith Sitwell, and W.H. Auden also gave the society a mirror with their wide range to the Literary work. Professor Huxley had pointed out that education would be incomplete without a knowledge of the rapidly growing horizons of the physical sciences. The debate in the nineteenth century was a choice between literary education and scientific education. It is literature that can do a lot to refine the society. Many literary figures have been making efforts with different angles to make the people aware of various social evils.

Untouchable (1935) is Mulk Raj Anand’s first novel. It tells the story of a sweeper boy in a town-Bulandshahar. In this novel, there is the portrayal of the predicament of Dalits’ life in contemporary society.

No one can deny that in today’s world, along with scientific knowledge we need a sense of civilized conduct and an appreciation of beauty. The whole truth and its appreciation would be lop-sided if we totally dedicate our time and attention to the study of sciences which deal only with the physical world. Human relationships and conditions -love, joy, pain, unfulfilled desires, separation from a dear one-and socio-political situations including war and peace and even God can not be wiped out from the human psyche. We fight and then we hug each other. The human relationships, man’s sensibility, his imagination and his creativity provide the raw material for great literature, which makes us better human beings: plays, poetry and fiction written by Leo Tolstoy, Tagore, Emily Dickson, Robert Frost, T.S. Elliot, just to mention a few, appeal to us, move and inspire us. Oral and written literature produced by our saints and rishis is enjoyed by millions of people across the globe. Their works provide us with the Mantra' for a highly civilized & morally sound living. They delight us, guide us and inspire us.

T.S. Elliot's words highlight the problems faced by us all today when comes to life and living. He wrote: Where is life?

We have lost it in living. Where is wisdom?

We have lost it in knowledge.

Where is knowledge? We have lost it in information.

The seeds of Indian Writing in English were sown during the British Rule in India. Gardeners like Tagore, R. K. Narayan, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Mulk Raj Anand, Sarojini Naidu etc. looked after the tender plants day and night. In modern times, it is guarded by a number of writers who are getting recognition all over the world.

We are yet to discover our authentic voice, the voice which could lead us from darkness to light. Isn't the very aim of higher education rather misplaced? Should we not aim at creating a beautiful mind and a lovely heart that throbs and feels empathy for our fellow human beings? As Emily Dickinson says:

"If I can stop one heart-breaking I shall not live in vain."

Someone has rightly said that Poets are engineers of the human soul, and that poetry begins in delight and I ends in wisdom. If this was not true then why the colleges of management studies have now made it obligatory that the future leaders in marketing and management should be introduced to the tragedies of William Shakespeare, like Macbeth, Hamlet, King Lear and Othello (Times of India, Jan 7, 2012). Leadership Development Programmes of several highly esteemed universities of technical education are now realizing their mistake of giving too much importance to technical / scientific knowledge without giving room for producing good human beings. To lead a civilized life as human beings and not like robots we need to study literature. Literature provides us with a criticism of life, through its appreciation of beauty and good conduct. It holds a mirror to life. As Spinoza aptly remarked "Man's happiness consists in his being able to preserve his own essence'. And by 'preserving his own essence' is meant for realizing that although he is an animal, he is basically human, and literature is a force which humanizes us. Reading of poetry is highly desirable by the students of science. Robert Frost has said, Poetry begins in delight and ends in Wisdom. It Means that reading of good poetry humanizes us.

William Blake defines poetry as, Beauty seen with transcendental eyes. The treasure called creative literature. Is the repository of our values and rich human culture which has evolved in the last thousands of years.

In India, Marriage of Love is divided in three categories, "Love marriage, Love Cum Arrange Marriage, and Arrange Marriage" (Manohar, 180).

In certain developing countries creative writers have an important function. Indian English Literature has achieved an independent status in the realm of world literature. Wide range of themes are dealt within Indian Writing in English. The Literature continues to reflect Indian Culture, tradition, social values and Indian History through the depiction of life in India and Indians who are living anywhere else.

"Feminism as a mode of existence in which the woman is free of dependence syndrome. There is dependence syndrome, whether it is the husband or the father of the community or whether it is religious group. When women free themselves of the dependence syndrome and lead a normal life, my idea off feminism materializes," (Nahal, 30).

Lovers of literature should change their attitude toward literature as literature plays a very positive role in human life.

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