

Eternal value of female thinking in Jainendra's literature

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Abstract

To give personality to a woman, Jainendra changed her nature from politics, society, Family etc. have been seen in different forms in different perspectives. They do not have the consciousness of Indian culture and dignity, but the truth is that Jainendra's characters live in the present even while touching the past. They never ignore their culture. In the era of materialism, woman is ready to move ahead of man. Women compete with men, but according to Jainendra, women compete with men. Competition is not fair. The ideal of life expressed in 'Resignation', 'Parakh' etc. The nutrients of social dignity are the values. The place of Jainendra Kumar, the originator of the psychoanalytical tradition in Hindi novels, is very important among novelists after Premchand. Jainendraji's fiction has been the conductor of Indian cultural values. He has identified the Indian mind from the perspective of its culture and tradition. He has raised many important questions in his novels and stories such as- God, theism-atheism, intelligence-feeling, intuition-logic, violence-non-violence, love and lust, husband and wife, chastity, purity of the body, sin-virtue, dedication Etcetera.

Key words-Jainendra Kumar, Woman, Love, Psychology, Novel, Frustration

Introduction

Jainendra Kumar was an influential Hindi writer of 20th century. He was born in a small village Kauriganj, Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh in 1905. Since his father passed away when he was just two years old, he was reared mainly by mother and her brother. He completed his higher education from Kashi University and then joined Non-cooperation movement in the year 1921. Since his school days he was inclined towards writing. In other words, he wanted to be a writer.

His first story collection was titled Phaansi (Noose). From there, young Jainendra never turned back and went on to become one of the most celebrated writers of Hindi literature, after Premchand. He gave new directions to the storytelling styles of Hindi literature. He was a known close associate of Munshi Premchand, another well-known Hindi writer. But Jainendra's writings never reflected Premchand's influence in any way. He was known for his unique storytelling style. His writings were incomplete in the sense that they gave ample space to the readers to venture in the dark field to surmise the following plot. Not everything was served to his readers. He preferred to use symbols than to recount everything to his readers. He explored the human psyche in novels such as Sunita and Tyagapatra. In his work he explored the tensions implicit in the human relationships and showed deep understanding and sympathy for human motivational values, psyche and ethics. His characters spoke volumes just by the subtle language which he used to weave around them.

During his period, Jainendra Kumar, Bhagwati Charan Verma, Ajneya were viewed as prominent Hindi individualistic writers. That is the reason Kumar's works obviously were

tinted with psychological philosophies and autobiographical elements. It is widely accepted that Jainendra Kumar was the one who gave birth to the psychological novels in Hindi.

Jainendra Kumar at first broke Premchand's tendency of narrative form. In his novels, the story line is limited, he seeks only to draw the character's mental state. He can be christened as the first writer who brought a link to literary pieces and human being's psychological depths and understanding. In today's world, only a few people go into the depth of the mind. Jainendra is more interested in minuteness in place of bulkiness. In Jainendra's novels picturisation of place, time and the environment is not generally found. The environment is picturised only in the form of symbol. Symbols are made use of in most of the time. The individualistic philosophy is there in the novels of Jainendra Kumar, Ilachandra Joshi and other psychological novelists. Their philosophy is born out of mixing of the western and Indian philosophies.

Women in Jainendra's novels

Women are at the center of Jainendra's early three works Parakh (1929), Tyagapatra (1937) and Sunita (1935). Mostly loving women. These women in love are thoughtful and hardworking. Performing their family and social responsibilities, these are the women who broke the hypocritical picture of family dignity, tradition, rules and came out of the traditional woman's body to win, lose and struggle. Jainendra's literary consciousness is at its climax in 'Resignation'. Mrinal's character, struggle and tragedy have given her personality an amazing height. In 'Resignation', only women can do strong female discussion of modern Hindi prose literature, if there is no such compulsion, then some works of Premchand and Jainendra stand at par with modern female discussion. The way these women analyzed morality and dignity while performing their duties, the way they broke the hypocrisy in the social structure, it paves the way for empowered women of the future. These women of Jainendra have not voluntarily chosen their lives.

As we have read earlier, the time when Jainendra began writing, people were swayed by the Premchand and his literary masterpieces. Premchand's works focused on the society and evils lurking in the former. On the other hand, Jainendra's works focused on an individual's psyche and his/her nature with his/her surroundings. Jainendra's female protagonists have been under critical eyes as they were given quite an independence by their writer. But this never discouraged Jainendra from backing down and alternating anything previously mentioned Human nature comprises of societal intricacies and his/her own mental nature. They both have to coexist and cannot be viewed independent of each other. From this point of view, the literary pieces of Jainendra Kumar complete the literary pieces of Premchand. There has been a sense of void in Premchand's literary works which has been filled by Jainendra Kumar.

Among the best novels of Jainendra Kumar include Sunita, Tyaagpatra and Kalyanee. These works gave the readers a perspective which was freshly set by the writer. These works gave a new path to ponder upon to the adult readers. The names of Jaywardhan, Parakh may be mentioned among his other important and famous novels. Let us look at three of his famous novels one by one.

Sunita

The story of Sunita is brief — Shreekant lives with his wife Sunita. Sunita is talented and beautiful. One day Shreekant brings home his revolutionary friend Hariprasanna. Shreekant asks his wife to please Hariprasanna. On that day after telling Sunita to concentrate on Hariprasanna, Shreekant goes out. Without any interest of her own Sunita comes close to him. Hariprasanna wants to enjoy her. When Sunita goes naked after removing her clothes one after another Hariprasanna detaches and stands up. Later leaving her at home by any means he

goes away. The depression of Hariprasanna is shown in the novel. Hariprasanna is a revolutionary, but he is much depressed inside, weak and broken. There is vast difference between his external and internal. The writer enters into his unconscious mind and finds that there is need of treatment for his depression. Shreekant makes arrangement of his depression. In order to remove the sexual depression inside Hari, he directs his own wife.

Tyagpatra

“The Resignation” or Tyagpatra is one of his most popular books published in 1937, and re-published in English (an amazing translation by Rohini Chowdhury) by Penguin India (God Bless them for that) very recently. The book though written in a time when every person was searching for an independent voice and way of life is still very relevant in our democratic society. The Resignation is a story of Mrinal, a young woman whose idealism is so strong that her family and the society around her rejects her completely and she is living on her own, facing situations as they come along.

That is the basic plot. On the other hand, Jainendra weaves the narration from the point of view of Mrinal’s nephew Pramod, who has adored and loved his aunt with deep passion. The themes of independence and family run deep in this book. Also hailed as a novel of psychological sensibility, The Resignation is an insight into life in those times and for a woman nonetheless as someone who is trying to live life on her terms.

What I found most interesting is that the novel is that Jainendra has taken many chances with its structure – from the plot to the way it has been narrated, which is quite refreshing. It almost reminded me of Tagore’s books and rightly so, considering that the themes of feminism (then I am sure not known as that) and individualism are clearly reflected in both their works. After receiving the information about her miseries her nephew Judge Pramod arrives to take her. But she refuses to go with Pramod and accepts the sorrowful life. The common readers can easily support Mrinal’s decision. It seems that Mrinal herself has chosen the life of sufferings. If she had wanted she could fight with the situations. But the writer did not expect it. He has presented his view and philosophy through the medium of Mrinal’s character. Suffering was not the fate of Mrinal because if she had wanted perhaps she could get relief from these situations. There was also possibility to make the character of Mrinal memorable by producing her as a brave and powerful woman character. However, through the medium of Mrinal the writer discloses the social discrepancies.

Kalyanee

The third significant novel by Jainendra Kumar is ‘Kalyanee’. ‘Kalyanee’ is a novel written in autobiographical form. Vachak, an advocate, is a character of this novel. The leading characters of this novel are Kalyanee and Dr. Asranee. Besides, there are lesser important characters like Dr. Bhatnagar, advocate Sahab, Shreedhar, Premiyar Ray Sahab, Devlalidhar. Kalyanee is an educated and well-cultured woman. She has done her physician’s course in Britain. She had affairs with a youth in Britain but it did not end in marriage.

When she arrives in India Dr. Asranee brings allegation against her that she was characterless, but married her at the end. Their married life was not successful. Kalyanee does not accept the bondage of conservative life, but Asranee is traditionalistic and suspicious. He accepts Kalyanee only as a means of producing money. As a result, Kalyanee has to endure both physical and mental sufferings in the whole life. Finally, she passes away one day. Jainendra Kumar has explained the character of Kalyanee in a psychological way. In the life of a woman love is an essential part. When Kalyanee is deprived of love from her husband she

tries to find the same in other men. But after being frustrated she loses interest in life. She makes herself responsible for all that.

Kalyanee becomes victim of mental dispute, tension and baseless delusion. All these are signs of the disease called 'neuroses. Kalyanee also suffers from sensitivity of death. The image of death is always there in her mind. The tendency of Thanatos established by Freud is fully applicable in Kalyanee's character. She neither could become an ideal, wife nor an ideal doctor in her life.

'Sukhada'

Jainendra Kumar's fifth novel is 'Sukhada' (1953 AD), which was initially published serially in Dharmayuga. Its plot is encumbered by the diverse burden of events. As it is clear from the title of this novel, its main character is Sukhda. His life has become a burden to him. She is the daughter of a wealthy family and married. Her relation with her husband is not satisfactory due to ideological differences. This situation of the novel is clear, but the fabric of the story which has been woven on the basis of this, seems strange to the reader. The purpose of the story remains undisclosed till the end. The tension of the plot does not end even when Sukhda is attracted to Lal. After several offbeat reactions and dramatic turns, Sukhda leaves her husband and gets admitted to the hospital. The story is weakened by many unnecessary, irrelevant details and miraculous elements.

'Parakh'

Jainendra Kumar's first novel 'Parakh' was published in the year 1929. This psychological tale based on the characters of characters named Satyadhan, Katto, Bihari and Garima indirectly deals with the problem of widow remarriage, which is an Indian-era novel trend. Compared to Jainendra's upcoming novels, the characterization in 'Parakh' seems weak. Mainly for this reason, 'Parakh' could not get that importance, which was achieved by Jainendra's other novels, especially 'Sunita' (1935) and 'Tyaagpatra' (1937). One reason for this is also the incredible story of this novel. Its main characters, while keeping their independent personality, mostly behave theatrically. Idealistic narrative elements have emerged here and there, in which the spirit of self-sacrifice has gained prominence.

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This novel was also published in the year 1953. This is not a novel focused on the suffering of women like Jainendra's earlier novels. It has two main characters - Jiten and Bhuvanmohini. Both love each other. Both want to get married. There is a social, economic problem in this. Jiten is poor and Bhuvanmohini is rich. It is natural to worry about how the marriage of both will go on. Bhuvanmohini's father is a reputed judge. He is open minded. Bhuvanmohini doesn't mind marrying whomever she wants. To clear his doubts, she takes Jiten in the car and proposes marriage. Here again the knot of rich and poor comes and the relationship breaks down. Now Bhuvanmohini gets married in a happy contented family. Here Jiten gets confused as to why Bhuvanmohini is living happily. He wants to take revenge on her.

Vyateet'

'Vyateet' was also published in the year 1953 itself. The story of this novel revolves around Jayant. Like the male characters in Jainendra Kumar's other novels, Jayant is also frustrated. He is in love with his distant cousin Anita. Now Anita cannot marry him according to social norms. Jainendra Kumar protects this social dignity in his novels, Even though his characters keep thinking against this limit or something different from it. Anita gets married and is happy in her married life. Anita's husband tries his best to keep Anita happy. Jayant is

saddened by his loneliness. Anita also maintains her relations with him. Jayant's life is being spent in poverty.

Jayvardhan

This novel was published in the year 1965. This novel has been written by Jainendra Kumar in diary style. The main character of the novel is Jayavardhana, who is the head of the nation. Jayavardhan lives in the same palace with Ila. There is great love in both but there is not even an iota of physicality in their love. This love is of a divine and sublime kind. Jainendra Kumar has been supporting this type of love affair in other novels as well. Jayavardhan is a just king. They follow the subjects in a lawful manner. His ethics and thoughts are pure. Acharya Swami Chidanand appears in the novel. They fix the date of marriage of Jayavardhan and Ila. Everyone was waiting for this. Everyone wishes to get married. The invitation cards for their marriage have been distributed. All the relatives have been called. The marriage of both takes place in the presence of the Acharya and the ashram residents. Everything happens in an orderly manner. All the action takes place in a total of ten minutes.

Muktibodh

This novel was published in the year 1965. Jainendra Kumar was awarded 'Sahitya Akademi' award for this novel. Its main characters are Sahay, his wife Rajshree and Sahay's lover Neelima. Rajshree is a woman of open thoughts. She doesn't get annoyed with Sahay's girlfriend. Rather, she is happy with him. Sahay, the hero of the novel, is being given a ministerial post which he does not want to accept. With this decision of Sahay, all his relatives and relatives get angry because everyone's selfishness will be fulfilled by becoming a minister. His son-in-law is an industrialist. He has many mills. A new mill is also going to be established. Investigation is going on against him. Jamata will get all the government facilities on becoming a minister. Sahay knows and to avoid this stigma he declines for the post. They don't listen to anyone. He does not even listen to the requests of wife Rajshree and girlfriend Neelima.

Anantar

This novel was published in the year 1968. The novel tells the story of the conflict and tension between love and family in a middle-class family. Aditya is his wife Charu and girlfriend Aparajit in the novel. Aparajita tells his wife that she has been in love with Aditya. She has been with him and has also taken care of his physical needs. But his wife is Charu and will remain the same.

Anamaswamy

This novel was published in the year 1974. In this, the story ahead of 'resignation' has gone somewhere. Some parts of it were written by Jainendra Kumar in 1942. He completed and published it in 1974. Despite such a gap in time, it is difficult to know which is the old part and which is the new. In this novel too, there are lovers and lovers who are in love, but cannot get married. This is how a frustration is born. But Vasundhara gets married to Kumar instead of him. The pain of not being able to marry Vasundhara intensifies and takes a destructive form. Shankar Upadhyay keeps thinking about this, Vasundhara should also suffer the same way as they are suffering because of not getting married.

Dashark

This is the last novel of Jainendra Kumar. It was published in the year 1985. Its heroine is a girl named Saraswati. She gets married, but her relationship with her husband becomes strained. She leaves him and becomes a prostitute. Now her name is not Saraswati, but Ranjana. She does not sell her body like common prostitutes but she forms an institution. Through this organization, she keeps burning the fire of jealousy, hatred and revenge in the minds of men

and gives affection, affection and love to extinguish it. Jainendra feels that with her soulful behavior and spontaneous affection, she can take away the pain of men.

Conclusion

In *Sunita*, Jainendra Kumar focused more on the plot than the development of the character. As Theo Damsteegt remarks:

In most of these stories the narrator is clearly present, and there is an emphasis on actions, plot and climax that is lacking from the psychonarration stories, while character-bound focalization is found in scattered, individual passages only.

But he changes his style in his next novel, *Tyaagpatra*. He integrates the plot and its effect on the characters skillfully. The novel depicts the required impossibility and confusion of moral judgment in its highly compressed narrative of a beloved aunt of Judge Pradeep who slips down the moral and social scale by leaving the household to live with a low-caste man. In Jainendra Kumar's works, importance was always given to the psychological state of the characters. He portrayed that state so skillfully. The Hindi novel writing witnessed a shift from the presentation of the external world and its conflict to the psychoanalysis and stream of consciousness that was pioneered by Jainendra Kumar. His characters do not seek to adjust within the societal norms but challenge the existing norms of the society. It is mainly the female protagonists of Jainendra Kumar's works (as we have seen earlier) which challenge such pre-existing norms.

Jainendra Kumar has contributed immensely yet it seems that people have forgotten his contribution in the recent times. Challenging an institution of marriage in an Indian society was a revolution of its own kind which has been pioneered by Jainendra Kumar and his works.

It is quite visible that these protagonists desire to maintain their independence even while they are bound to someone through the institution of marriage. Such conceptualization which have happened through Jainendra's work is impossible to conceive some sixty seventy years ago. Moreover, such conceptualization was a rare form of display in literary works at that time.

Jainendra's works often do not give us any clear resolution towards the end. The characters raise questions and try to get answers. But unlike Premchand, where the audience are given all the answers in the end, Jainendra's works lack this quality. Ultimately, we see that the protagonists of his works have to bow down to the traditional views of the society and its selfishness. But they also possess the satisfaction of having an independent mindset which is also put forward with the sadness of the inability to change the society. The critics believe that Jainendra uplifts his characters from being a mere participant in an 'incident' and takes us into a journey to their psychological understanding and their existence as an individual human being. Here Bhuvanmohini trusts Jiten till the end and like other heroines of Jainendra Kumar keeps on giving him all the comforts and facilities.

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