

Urdu Short Story: Technique and History

Qamar Abbas^{1,a}, Farooq Ahmad², Mujahid Abbas³, Dua Qamar⁴, Ghazala Zia⁵, Zafar Abbas⁶

^{1,4} Department of Urdu, Govt. Postgraduate College, Bhakkar, Pakistan,

² Punjab Higher Education Department, GICCL, Lahore, Pakistan,

^{3,5} Department of Urdu, Qurtuba University of Science and Technology, D.I. Khan, Pakistan,

⁶ Department of Urdu, The Grace College, Bhakkar, Pakistan.

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ABSTRACT

The short story is the most important form of the Urdu Literature. This is such a tale that is short and expresses and event or an aspect of life of a character. The Short story found its place in Urdu Literature under the influence of western Literature. The regular beginning of the short story began with the beginning of the twentieth century. Sajad Haider Yaldrum is acknowledged the first short story writer of the Urdu. After him Prem Chand is the most important short story writer of Urdu. Most of the writers of Urdu language have made the social problems the topic of their short stories and thought this medium sought the reformation of the social evils.

KEYWORDS: Urdu short story, Urdu fiction, Urdu short story technique, Urdu short story history, Urdu Novel

1. INTRODUCTION

Story writing exists in all languages of the world from the very past ages, however, its shapes changed with the passage of time. It had always attracted human interest. That is why the practice of telling the story is from the beginning of human life. Its existing shape which is called short story is production of modern age. Story changed its form as dastan, novel, drama etc with time. But the technique of short story is different from all these forms.

2. DEFINITION

Critics have defined short story in different ways. Short story is the description of one aspect of the life of a single man or a group. According to its characteristics, it is a short length story. It does not consist of large spam of Events, persons or places. It is also defined as a story which could be read in a single sitting. Impression is the main thing which holds the sentiments of reader. It is a form of prose writing which is short and has a strong impression and describes human life and it has an attractive style of narration (Fatima, 1980).

Before 19th century short story had no particular shape. But with the beginning of 20th century it got a great importance in the literature of the whole world and the writers began to take interest in it. In this period in America, Germany and France, the short story writing began. The standard short story writing started in America in 19th century. The famous American writer Irving Washington joined Adgar Allan Poe and Anthorn in 1832, but Adgar Allan Poe because of his peculiar technique is considered the founder of the modern short story writing. He considered the aim of short story entertainment instead of reformation.

3. TECHNIQUE

After it this form of literature established its importance in the whole world and it got a great appreciation. Till 20th century short story writing had reached its peak. It had got vigor. From the technical point of view it had got a standard. In the beginning for the short story basic elements, unity of time and place and unity of effect were considered compulsory but with the passage of time contrary to it the short stories began to come in existence. Some such short stories were Witten which had great difference with reference to time and place. They had the combination of happiness and sadness. The characters also had a great expansion. However, the central character was the same in most of the short stories. Unity of effect has been the basic characteristic of the short story of every age (Rehana, 1990).

In the elements of short story the topic has a great importance. Specialty of good short story is that it consists of fact and reality. The short story is not limited to a particular topic. Any event, emotion, feeling and

^aCorresponding Author: Dr. Qamar Abbas, Department of Urdu, Government Postgraduate College Bhakkar, Pakistan. +923336842811, Email: itinformations@gmail.com.

experience of life can be its topic. As much the life vast, the topics of short stories are so much vast, because a true and natural picture of life is presented in it. The realities of Life are explained and individual and collected life is presented.

The plot has the basic importance in short story, who arranges the events of the short story according to a technical order. In plot the beginning of the story, its middle and its end are integrated. The short story plots are of various kinds but their basic aim is to integrate different events and to maintain unity of effect. Most of the short stories have a single plot. But sometimes secondary plots are also included. They make a relation with the central plot and add to its effects.

Because the short story presents the human life so its characters also have a great importance. The characters are a compulsory element of the short story. The short story relates the mutual relation and conflicts of the characters.

These characters of the short story are taken from the real life. In the atmosphere of the short story they pass from the different ups and downs of life. Changes occur in them. In short story complete life of a character is not presented but some aspects or some events of his life are depicted.

In short story, style of the story writer has also a great importance. He uses different techniques of narration and language while presenting different characters and events. His language is not only a source of communication for him but also it has the elements of interest and sweetness. An attractive language attracts the reader to itself and maintains its interest. But it is very essential to use simple and easy language so that the writer may convey his aim to the reader. Along with it the situation of the language must be accordingly. The language of the short story must reflect the personality of the characters and their mentality forcefully.

With reference to Objectivity or the superiority of art, two points of view exist. The people who are convinced of objectivity think that the short story must be written for the reformation of society or individuals, whereas the other group is of the opinion that the object of art is only and only entertainment. So the short story must be free from the fetters of objectivity and the delicacy of art must be kept in mind. According to the both schools of thought, short stories were written throughout the world and they achieved a high status in fiction. The short story writer keeps the freedom of thought using which he studies the life in a free atmosphere and makes it a part of his story according to his own school of thought.

The short story is the most important form of Urdu literature. This form of literature made its position in 20th century and got a great popularity in a very short time. Prior to it the tradition of novel and dastan was present in Urdu literature. Against the ideal atmosphere of dastan, a factual kind of view is kept in novel. In Urdu this form of literature has come under the western effects. Moreover, the prevailing circumstances also demanded that the realism of novel must be adopted. Due to adverse political circumstances the India was in a state helplessness. More over from the social point of view the people here were under the exploitation. Poverty and ignorance were common. The people were running from the realities of life. It was the need of time that they must be talked to face the realities and the facts. The evils which had rooted deep in the society, they must be brought forward and reformed. For the accomplishment of all these facts the novel could have been used, which has a power to narrate the social life in a better way. This form had made its place successfully in the west. In India due to particular circumstances western knowledge had reached. Because of this the writers here had acquainted with the form of novel, and again finding this form favourable to the local circumstances, included in Urdu literature. The novel came in Urdu literature from English literature. Contrary to ancient stories real life was made the topic in them. Instead of supernatural elements the characters and events from the real life were included in it. The novel of Deputy Nazir Ahmed "Mirrat ul Uroos" is considered the first Urdu novel which was written in 1869. Then Rattan Nath Sarshar, Abdul Haleem Sharar, Munshi Prem Chand and Munshi Sajjad's novels were written. The English rule and superiority of English language provided a chance to the educated people of India to be benefitted from the western language and literature and familiarize the local literature with the modern ideas and ideology. So, achieving guidance from the western literature new style was adopted.

After novel the literary form which got importance was short story writing. From the very beginning the short story has established its strong position in Urdu literature. And from the very beginning it has reached the heights of the standard. The most powerful glimpse of western literature is present in Urdu short story. Moreover, Urdu short story found a surrounding which was very helpful for its establishment and advancement. Fortunately, it got such writers who had the talent to take it in the heights of standards. The story of the beginning and growth of Urdu short story has a narrow relation with the literary understanding and mental uplifting of 20th century. It is the expression of a new understanding and discovery of a new knowledge which seems the reflection of the form of that story which had many sided characteristics and whose progress came to light in the Europe and American 19th century, as far as Urdu is concerned, the beginning of short story had no sign before the writings of Prem Chand and Syed Sajjad Haider Yaldrum (Hussain, 1970).

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

The start of short story took place in such an age when there was a mentionable political, social and ethical panic in Indian society (Azeem, 1982). The beginning of the 20th century can rightly be said the beginning of Urdu short story writing. In 1900 the first short story of Sajjad Haider was published in magazine 'Maarif' which is said the first short story in Urdu. (Fatehpuri, 1982) Many objections can be raised on this short story from the technical point of view so Yaldrum can be considered the first Urdu short story writer but Prem Chand is the inventor of modern short story. He granted a large advancement to Urdu short story with reference to his topics and techniques.

4.1 SAJJAD HAIDER YALDRUM

Sajjad Haider Yaldrum is called the first story writer of Urdu language. He started his short story writing in 1900. Before him the elements of story writing were found in the stories of Rashid ul Kheri. But technically they cannot be titled as short story. In the short stories of Yaldrum in addition to realism and objectivity, romantic and ideal atmosphere is also present. He wrote the short stories in compliance with art for the sake of art. That period was the period of disappointment, anxiety, and financial disorder. In such circumstances Yaldrum wrote the short stories to promote the sentiments of love, sympathy and romance. The first collection of his short stories 'Khyalistan' is replete with romantic style. In his short stories along with the good technical standard a literary lightness is also present. With the beauty of language and narration, he has beauty of thought also. He has filled the depth of life in his short stories. He has the depth of observation and diversity of experiences in his short stories. In his short stories along with the modern scientific ideology the ancient traditions are also found.

Sajjad Haider Yaldrum is the founder of Urdu short story. Moreover he is a successful translator. He translated many Turkish short stories. The romantic aspect in his short stories has found place due to the effects of Turkish short story. Through the translations of English, Arabic and Turkish novels he has not only introduced international story writing literature to Urdu literature but also added new styles and ideas to Urdu short stories. He has technical modernity, so he adopted a new way in Urdu literature. Neglecting the prevailing short story writing, he founded a new and modern way and introduced a new style with reference to technique and topic to Urdu technical literature. He granted a new light style to Urdu prose. He made nature and beauty a part of his short stories. He creates a admirable harmony between the beauty of nature and human emotions which creates a peculiar romantic atmosphere. He had a modern thinking. He wanted to eradicate the ancient traditions from the society and to give an honorable status to man and woman. He took love for a free sentiment and wanted to finish all the social hurdles coming in its way. Especially he was so motivated in connection the woman's character in the society and he wanted to free her from the social fetters. This thing has been narrated especially in his short stories. The woman has got the central position in his short stories (Moen, 1971). He does not take the women for a lifeless and aimless thing. But according to him she has an active role in construction of society. She has a responsible status. So she has a right to breathe in a free atmosphere, to get modern education, to be benefitted with modern civilization and to construct her personality.

The romanticism dominates his short stories which creates a fair atmosphere. Along with all this he wants to change his environment and wants to see prettiness in it. The feeling of changing the society is also present in his short stories. He has a wish of a profound and reformed society in his short stories. In this way there is a beautiful blend of reality and romanticism in the short story writing of Sajjad Haider Yaldrum. He has the emotions of love for homeland. He includes human friendship also in his short stories and dreams for human freedom. He has made beauty and love the greatest topic of his beautiful short stories. Particularly the knowledge of Turkish language and literature created a newness and freshness in his style. This is why; his prose has a style of poetry. Since he is the first short storywriter of Urdu, so there are many short comings in technique of his short stories but his romantic style and the beauty of thoughts has made his short stories very attractive. His characters are also very touching and with beauty of script there is a ethical lesson also in them.

4.2 MUNSHI PREM CHAND

Although Sajad Haider Yaldrum is called the founder of Urdu short story but in view the technique and standard of short story Munshi Prem Chand is the first person who at first wrote Urdu short story. If he is not considered the first Urdu story writer, he is indeed the first most important story writer of Urdu. Due to him Urdu short story from its very beginning reached the place where every form of literature takes a long time to reach. He provided such a base to Urdu short story on which it is maintained even know. In the very beginning he set a standard of Urdu short story which has not been equalized after such a long event today. The first collection of his

short stories was published in 1908 by the name of 'Soz e Watan'. The age of Prem Chand had so many problems; there were many ups and downs. The same thing is noticed in the short stories of Prem Chand also.

In the short stories of Prem Chand, realism is exposed strongly. He watched his surroundings with a deep eye and its reflection is present in his short stories. In his short stories instead of the beauty of sentences, the depiction of the facts of life is more vivid. His first collection 'Soz e Watan' has a political background. So he has a political colour in his short stories. Along with patriotism is also there in its full strength. He has got no conservative thought but he always opposed the old traditions. He opposed the blind by following the modern civilization. But he was of the view to be benefitted with the modern knowledge. Prem Chand observed the life deeply. He experienced the life of city and observed the rural life also. Although urban life is also the topic of his short stories but he has a deep love for the rural simple life. He saw the heaps of problems in the rural life of that time. Because of this he has made the rural life the topic of his short stories, more frequently than that of urban. Prior to it the villagers had got no mentionable place in literature of short stories. No one gave importance to village life and the feelings and the emotions of its inhabitants. Prem Chand is the first artist who paid heed to the life of the villagers. Prem Chand felt the griefs of the society and wanted their remedy. Poverty, superstitiousness and inactivity had spread in the whole society. Prem Chand wanted to rid the society of evils. In view of this reformatory objective, he advanced his story writing and created memorable Urdu short stories.

The characters of Prem Chand show the real pictures of the society. He is very successful in characterization. He keeps in view all aspects of characterization. Although his characters belong to every walk of the society yet most of characters represent the lower class. In his characters there is a representation of good and evil. He can reform society through his characters. He wants to create justice in the society. He wants that his characters should raise their voice against cruelty instead of bearing it. He has not only human characters but there are also the characters of animals e.g. Do Bail. These are symbolic characters that keep on walking lowering their heads and do nothing. In this way Prem Chand has presented the realities of the life in a very effective manner of his own. Before Prem Chand Urdu short stories and novels had relation with the very common things which had a relation with bitter realities of life except imaginative things (Bralvi, 1969).

The problems of the short stories of Prem Chand were political, social and cultural. It is the miracle of his writing that he has presented colourless and spiritless realities in the shape of living and attractive literature. Prem Chand is such a story writer of Urdu who has set an example for the coming story writers and in this way has provided a strong base to Urdu story writing. His social realism and depiction of rural environment has been advanced by the following story writers of Urdu literature. Sadarshan, Azam Karavi, Ali Abbas Hussaini, Haider Josh, Opindar Nath Ashk, Azim Baig Chughtai, Hayat Ullah Ansari, Rajindar Singh Baidi, Ismat Chughtai, Karishan Chandar, Saadat Hassan Manto, Akhtar Ansari, Akhtar Orianvi, Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi, Balvant Singh, Ghulam Abbas, Hajira Masror, Qazi Abdul Ghafar, Abdullah Hussain, Anwar Azim, Jamila Hashmi.

4.3 RASHID UL KHARI

Rashid ul Khari is such a short story writer who has presented human emotions and feelings with a great mastery in his short stories. Particularly he was an expert in depicting the emotions of the women. He devoted his short stories for the achievements of the rights of the women. There is an attraction and beauty in his writings. In this way these stories, under objectivity along with emotional writings, make him superior to others. Understanding human psychology he has narrated the human grieves in such a way that the reader is really moved. For this he is called "Mosaver e Gham".

4.4 KARISHAN CHANDAR

Karishan Chandar is the short story writer of Urdu who has the blend of romanticism and realism. He has also made the social realities a part of his short stories (Manzar, 1982). It is the specialty of the short stories of Karishan Chandar that there is the revolutionary realism. He wants to break the chains of slavery with the help of his short stories. He wants to provide the people a level of equality. He has a wave of satire hidden in his novels. Another quality of his short stories is the comic style. But this is in some of his short stories. Karishan Chandar has created interest through his characters. There is a great diversity in his characters. His characters belong to every walk of society which has been presented with a great mastery by him.

4.5 SADAT HASSAN MANTO

If a list of great story writers is prepared, Sadat Hassan Manto's name will be at the top. His bitter realism has granted him an important place in Urdu short story writing. He saw the bitter realities of his society with his own

eyes and also felt them with a sensitive heart. His observations and experience were very deep. There were so many objections on his short stories. He faced the legal trials but he challenged that he will write whatever is being done in the society so that the ugly face of the society is exposed. He wanted to reform the social disorder by exposing it. The topic of most of his short stories is, the neglected and driven away groups of the society (Hassan, 1982). He is sympathetic towards them and wants to solve their problems. So through his short stories he wants to bring these problems to light and to be solved. But he does not propose the solution of those problems clearly. He shows the picture of those problems to the readers and compels them to think. The style of his short story is simple and fluent by which he tried to get his objectives and also succeeded fully. He wrote many short stories which can be divided in many periods but the basic topic of them is to expose the problems of the society.

4.6 GHULAM ABBAS

Ghulam Abbas is also one of the important storywriters of Urdu language. He has a particular style which is very low and very soft (Azeem, 1982). Although he has written short stories in a less number but most of his short stories are a master piece in Urdu literature. Ghulam Abbas has made the double standards of the society the topic of his short stories. He can tell through his short stories that the society keeps veil on the face but the face of the society is something other from the inside. We see the outer side of its face which seems very beautiful but its real face is very ugly. From this point of view he has written some very important short stories. Out of which, *Over Coat*, *Katba*, *Aanandi*, are very important in these short stories. He has not only exposed double standards of the individuals but also has showed a picture of social hypocrisy. He tells that to maintain their honours the people adopt artificiality. In this connection they never see their real place and then fall victims to so many problems due to it. In fact Ghulam Abbas wants to snatch down that artificial mask of the society. He wants to see the society, real and true. But he does not deny the human psychology and reflects human psychology in different social surrounding very effectively. The style of his short stories is very effective. He is fully aware of the secrets of language along with the simplicity. These characteristics make him the trusted short story writer of Urdu language.

4.7 MANSHA YAD

Mansha Yad is considered one of the modern short story writers of the Urdu language. In his short stories the topic is also, the crushed people of the society. Particularly the problems of rural culture and the life of villagers have been presented very beautifully in his short stories. He himself had an experience of living in a village so he observed the village life very closely. He saw the exploitation of the farmers with his own eyes. He draws the horrible picture of the cruelty of landlords and then saw the grieved farmers and labourers falling on the ground and crying with pain. All this was made a part of his stories which enabled the reader to see the real face of the society. He loves the poor and there is a glimpse of that love in his short stories also.

4.8 INTAZAR HUSSAIN

In modern story writing Intazar Hussain introduced his own style. He used the symbols with great beauty. He takes these symbols from history and historic stories and used them for the modern society (Azeem, 1982). Intazar Hussain in his short stories is seen searching for human being. He thinks that in the recent times man has forgotten his manly characteristics. He wants to remind him the place of man. For which he has sought the examples from the past and used them for the solution of the problems of modern times.

4.9 AHMED NADEEM QASMI

Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi has a mentionable place in Urdu language and literature because he has not only written for the various forms of Urdu literature but also he had been encouraging through his magazine 'Fanoon' the other writers. He was a short story writer of the present age. He has written for the middle group of society. He has made the common events of the life the topics of his short stories. He has also presented the life of middle class living in the streets very beautifully. Special topic of his short stories is the rural life (Akhtar, 1980). He loves the villages and presents the culture and the life of the people living there beautifully in his short stories.

SUMMARY

As the short story has been the most important form of the literature of its age so it got a great number of the writers. Every one of them had his own style but the thing which is found in Urdu short story in abundance, is the narration of the social problems. Therefore middle class or the lower class has been made the topic of the short stories. Most of the population lives in the villages. There are so many problems due to poverty. So there is great tendency to express the village life and its problems. Urdu story writing for its technique and expression has obtained its important palace but still new experiments' are being done for the advancement.

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