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Social issues and exploitations in Select short stories of K. A. Abass

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Abstract: Khawaja Ahmad Abbas is a well known Urdu writer and a journalist. He is famous not only in India but also in abroad. He is author of more than seventy books of fiction and non-fiction in three languages Urdu, English and Hindi. His works reflect his deep-rooted of not being pessimism but his promise to social revolution and change. He is firm believer for the values of democratic system, secularism and socialism and proved himself to be a representative for the working class of the world. This paper will focus on the much talked issues and exploitations occurred during partition in works of K. A. Abass.

Key Notes: social, exploitation, revolution, secular, Ideology

Introduction: K. A. Abass was very much influenced by Gandhian and Marxist philosophy. Their philosophy and ideology is seen in the main novels of Abass. Being a true representative and good observer of humanity, his stories focus on real life situations i.e poverty, hunger, mistreatment and dispute, separation and hope, patriarchy and the rise of the common voice. He has seen the time of common man with lots of wishes that is why most of his protagonists of many novels are from every profession representing different classes of society. We never find that his characters are merely the mouth piece of his own.

There are very social attitudes present in many novels of Abass. His novels are shown as the single hope for social and exploitations and many other justices. His belief is not affected as a communistic ideologist when we compare him as a writer. He has always shown his sympathy and love for the underprivileged and exploited society. This kind of social vision is clearly visible in his novel *Boy Meets Girl*, in which he suggests protests as a universal remedy of not only social justice but also economic justice. Sometimes it looks that his social vision is based on his own ideology. *Sparrows* is a beautifully woven short story by Khwaja Ahmad Abbas which captures the genuine nature of people in the society without any exaggeration. The story reveals a man's frustration and disappointment which makes him to drift away and isolate himself from the society.

We find the protest is main cause of conflict between the love of Indra and Kundan in *Boy Meets Girl*. The strike becomes the demand of Kundan and he continued his efforts but his efforts are vain because of Indra. Rajoo, who is extreme poor, has a life of love feelings. He finds the way to hide his frustrations and sorrows in guise of joker.

Abass has shown great concern for the underprivileged and underdog people. He has shown his love and affection for prostitutes, workers, labourers, coolies, fisherman, the destitute women and every exploited profession. He has provided ample space for the characters who have such kind of professions in his novels. The dominant class of the society either upper or exploiters have devil faces. They always treat others as lowers as untouchables. Abass has shown great sympathy towards these thin classes. His heroes are true representatives of this class. His works create a strong sense of humour for this class and also produce a medium for the exploited society.

Even in cinemas the workers are being exploited as they are paid low remunerations. The producers and the owners made huge profits but the workers are paying not a single penny which is possible only through their sweated labour. They will get nothing by these film owners if they die or met any consequences. There is no love and affection towards workers. Workers are in a condition that they cannot be lodged any complaint instead they are asked to go and get some other job, "If you don't like these conditions of works, better look for some other job".

There are number of reasons for protests like protest for equal wages, breaks, equal economic shares and much more. These protests are encouraged time to time wherever need arises. Sometimes they proved fruitful to get justices from these exploiters. They also provide a sense of self discipline and a lesson of self reliance.

Boy Meets Girl shows an ironic tragedy of the lives of Kundan and Indra and also shows the bad days of those young folk who wish to settle in Mumbai for work as heroes. It also presents the cruelties of owners towards down trodden workers. Labours are being humiliated and exploited as their owners are Sethji's. Nirmal who has dire need of money to cure his wife but instead of it he is prostituted. His job as a artist is violated. So finally to sells his integrity as literary artist.

In most of the works of Abbas, it is clearly seen the actual working of the underprivileged system is rendered with immense loyalty by the author. There are clear existence of the upper and lower class which may assign as the under-strippers, who work for the upper class. Hence this class may be the mediator of the upper class as Basu and Dada Ganja in the novel.

Abbas's social attitude is not limited only to economic class but it is spread to the diverse social and political ills from which the every person is suffering. He has produced the evidences of Muslim, Christian and Hindu Communalism, Lower class, exploitation on the bases of language, religion and others.

Another story *Defeat for Death, A Story without Names* in which he tells the story of an orphan kid who is nine years old with a full of sad life. He is so much resentful by his poor and unhappy life. He wants to die because he has no desire to live a life of destitute and poverty. He boldly discloses to doctor while treating him that the police fired on the students who took part in Quit India Movement. "No, no I do not want to live. There is no happiness for me in this world".

It was colonialism, feudalism, illiteracy, blind religious beliefs and rigidity of casteism in the pre-Independence period that worsened the social conditions. Likewise it is industrialism, capitalism, poverty and unemployment that have ramshackled life in the post-Independence period. So a creative writer, like K.A. Abbas, who considered himself socially committed, took upon himself the responsibility of changing the society. Other contributory factors of Abbas's commitment to the social realities are – the spirit of nationalism, the growing popularity of Marxism and newly established Progressive Writers Association.

Thus the contemporary social-political conflicts, cultural and economic imbalance, intellectual and emotional impatience and the longing for liberty and equality, play a significant role in forming the literary credo of Abbas as a progressive writer.

K. A. Abbas's short stories address various issues and concerns of feminism by depicting life like women characters in his writings realistically. He raises voice against the exploitation of any human being no matter, be it a women or men. His writings champion the cause of poor, helpless children and women through his writings. They advocate equal rights for all irrespective of sex, caste and gender. He highlights the issue of exploitation wherever he finds its roots in existence. He even represents such injustice in his films and novels. In one of his short stories, *The Sparrow*, Abbas elaborately projects as to how the wish of Radha has been crushed by her father, Ram Charan who is the symbol of patriarchal system. She has been in love with Rahim Khan but her romance with him fails to get materialized into marriage on religious accounts and androgenic thinking. Her father, Ram Charan, has snatched her individual choice and voice. He doesn't ask her for her choice of marriage. He gets her married to an old man, Ram Lal. She becomes mother of six children in a row. This procreating potential of women deludes man to mistake her for a child producing machine. If woman fails to deliver this essential function of child birth, she is thought as incomplete woman and sterile. This labelling makes her more vulnerable to various domestic and social taunting.

To conclude, we can say that most of the short stories of Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, written in Urdu and published in English translation a few years back, allow the present generation to appreciate the depth and diversity of his talent as a story writer. They are reflective of his social awareness. A reviewer has observed that reading them is a sobering exercise and remind one of another India "when idealism of nation-building was more in evidence though often found bleeding on the jagged edges of poverty and deprivation, resistant feudalism, inequalities and the divides of caste and religion."

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