

Impact of Renaissance on Indian literature and society

*Dr. Suman, Ph.D. English,
Madhav University, Pindwara (Sirohi), Rajasthan
Email : sumanpkr2016@gmail.com*

Renaissance is the biggest and most fundamental revolution of ideas and values, which snatched away the moral basis of the feudal system and paved the way for the socio-political revolutions of the later powers. There have been many cultural renaissances in the long Indian history, but the word Renaissance basically refers to the transition between the Middle Ages and the Modern Age of Europe. It was first used by the famous French history philosopher 'Michesant' in the first half of the 19th century, but the first credit for popularizing it goes to the Italian historian Verkhart. The Renaissance era was actually an era of revival and revival of Greco-Roman classical learning. In the 14th century, when the chaos caused by the destruction of the ancient Roman Empire calmed down in Europe, a new life stream emerged in the culture of Europe, which continued to flow till the 16th century. In this era, 'religion and philosophy' were defined in a new way, innovation started in the field of art and science and parallel to this, revolutionary changes started appearing in politics and social system.

During this period mainly the decline of empire and feudalism and the rise of modern national state tradition took place. This was the time of freedom from medieval constraints and development of individual consciousness, under which individual freedom and worldly values began to be replaced by the influence of the Church, secular humanism was established with the neglect of God. The saints were replaced by philosophers and intellectuals, who neglected the control of mind and nature and started discussing its development. This new revolutionary consciousness broke the medieval orthodoxy and established new ideals of life.

The Gupta era in India can be called the Renaissance era, because in this era, political, religious and social constraints were first opposed by attacking the tyrannical ruler, but mainly the form of revival in India is visible only in the British era. .

The British came to India during the time of Jahangir and as soon as they established their trade roots in Mumbai, Madras and Calcutta, they took advantage of the mutual disunity among the Indian rulers and started taking part in politics. 1757 AD Bengal by fighting in the field of Plassey against Siraj-ud-Daula and in 1764 AD. By defeating Shah Alam in the battle of Buxar, the British also gained control of Bihar and Awadh, but to establish dominance over the whole of India, it was necessary for them to defeat two powerful forces – Marathas and Sikhs. Due to mutual disunity and lack of unity, the Marathas were also defeated in the battles of Athasi and Laswari. After defeating the Sikhs in 1849, the British established their empire over the whole of India, but with the continuous successes, the British atrocities on Indians also started increasing. Dissatisfied with the policies of Lord Dalhousie, the native rulers united and protested on a large scale in 1857 AD, as a result of which the East India Company was abolished and India was made a colony of the British Empire.

To establish a strong hold on India, the British made fundamental changes in their educational, economic and administrative policies, due to which Indians got connected to new contexts. Coming under the influence of western civilization, turmoil started taking place in Indian society and culture. Western civilization had a deep impact on English educated Indians. The combination of European and Indian culture led to the emergence of a new consciousness in the Indian society, which inspired a new human interpretation of religion and society. Dr . Megh has considered the modern era as the fourth greatest renaissance of India. Due to this innovation, many social, political and cultural movements brought about many changes in Indian public life, society and literature.

Raja Rammohan Roy's Brahmo Samaj laid the first foundation stone of modern Indian innovation. After this, Keshav Chandra Sen's Prarthana Sabha, Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Vivekananda's Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Dayanand's Arya Samaj, Annie Besant's Theosophical Society developed the Indian national political and social renaissance. The aim of all these was to oppose the ancient religious customs and rituals and to give a new interpretation of religion according to the new circumstances. These societies protested

against the lack of scientific education system and laid emphasis on adopting law, medicine, natural sciences, Western languages and philosophy.

The spread of modern cultural renaissance reached Hindi literature through Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi and Telugu. Modern renaissance got literary expression in Hindi under the leadership of Bharatendu. The litterateurs of this era wanted to germinate the seeds of reverence for the noble cultural traditions of the country among Indians and free them from economic exploitation, inflation and untouchability etc. Dissatisfaction regarding social inertia was expressed in his literature. In his writings, on the one hand, the youth absorbed in foreign civilization were satirized and on the other hand, conservatives were also ridiculed. National sentiment and collective consciousness developed in this era. The greatest achievement of this era is the creation of Khari Boli, which was an essential demand of national life. The diverse literature of this era played an important role in the Renaissance.

Renaissance consciousness was expressed more extensively in the works of the Dwivedi era. In these works with national sentiment, voice was given to cultural innovation and reform movements through reformist, public servant, polite and hard-working characters. Through the works of Saket, Yashodhara, Vishnupriya, Priyapravas etc., feelings like self-restraint, humanitarian consciousness and self-liberation have been expressed as per the new age. The poets of this era laid emphasis on women's awakening and consciousness by portraying the characters of historical women's sacrifice and salvation related to love. Laid the foundation of national renaissance through translations of poems like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Shakuntala etc.

There is a deep influence of renaissance consciousness on Chhayavadi poetry. Various expressions of cultural renaissance had an important contribution in the background of this movement. Under the influence of Brahmo Samaj movement, these poets supported women's liberation, humanism and widow remarriage and also adopted the innovations of Europe. The Vedic philosophy of Arya Samaj also had an impact on the philosophical mindset of this era. Chhayavad was not just a poetic rise of individualism or an imitation

of English romantic literature and Rabindranath Tagore, but Chhayavad was deeply related to the Hindu revivalism whose leaders were led by Raja Rammohan Roy, Keshavchandra Sen, Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj and Dayanand etc. was did. All these reformers faced critics only because of the fragmented and modified form of their religion and history. He expressed the glory of Hindutva on the basis of Hindutva and reminded Indians of their history and inspired them to walk with their heads held high even in changing circumstances. This renaissance consciousness was not an accidental consciousness, rather it had the unique support of the renaissance which linked religion, culture and literature with new life values.

It was only because of modern renaissance that progressive and experimental literature was able to connect with public life. In this era, along with literature, society also witnessed multifaceted progress. Due to which the process of modernization of modern India started. In this era, along with the prestige of human vision based on material thinking which evaluates the entire life of the world, various traditions were also analyzed in the context of the understanding of the era. Dev worship was replaced by folk worship. With the breakdown of the feudal system, the democratic system was born. The economic, social and political interpretation of this era took place in the context of spiritual values. Gandhiji's political concept related to religious consciousness is proof of this.

Now literature freed itself from the medieval sense and moved towards renaissance. Due to which Indian modernity became city centered. This modernity struggled against religious rituals and superstitions. Along with many social reforms, steps were taken towards industrialization. Along with liberation from caste system, women's equality, national generosity and political rights, humane emancipatory literature written in national languages is the contribution of Indian Renaissance.

Indian society became oriented towards western philosophy and knowledge science. As a result, the manpower was determined to adopt new tools, new technology, new industries etc. After independence, many five-year plans were implemented for the modernization of Indian society, through which the foundation of modern society was laid through

democracy, adult education, world peace, non-alignment, poverty alleviation, self-reliance, national-cultural unity and many humanitarian traditions. The literary figures of that era have made an important and active contribution in all this.

Modern literature and knowledge-science provided new concepts to man in place of old values. As a result, modern literature freed itself from medieval intellectualism and got connected to the modern environment. The litterateurs of this era showed the society new hopes and a new dream of a happy future. In modern literature, new interpretations of country, religion, nation and God etc. began to be expressed, which contributed significantly to the upliftment of the society by giving a new form to both Indian culture and literature. Although there have been big innovations in Indian culture before, but the present innovation is the best and most powerful, which has given both Indian literature and society the best place in the world.

References

1. History of Modern Indian by S.P. Sabharwal.
2. <https://ijrcs.org/wp-content/uploads/IJRCS201911015.pdf>
3. https://www.indianetzone.com/13/renaissance_indian_literature.htm
4. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23336450>
5. <https://unacademy.com/content/upsc/study-material/modern-indian-history/idea-of-indian-renaissance/>
6. <https://www.ijrte.org/wp-content/uploads/papers/v8i2S11/B13620982S1119.pdf>