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Negative Characters in Ghulam Hussain Rahi Gabol's Novels

^a Muhammad Nawaz Sajid, ^b Muhammad Mumtaz Khan, ^c Ayaz Ahmed Rind

^a Ph.D Scholar, Saraiki Department, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan

^b Assistant Professor, Saraiki Department, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan

Email: mumtaz.khan@iub.edu.pk

^c Ph.D Scholar, Saraiki Department, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Ghulam Hussain Rahi Gabol is a well-known novelist in Saraiki prose literature who is true lover of Saraiki linguistics and literature. His creations revolve around the society. He particularly seems to describe the problems of the people of Saraiki Wasaib and their solutions. His novels show Saraiki Wasaib's helplessness, deprivation and resistance to capitalism and feudalism. Through his negative characters, he honestly portrayed the problems, shortcomings and issues of both rural and urban societies. We see that negative characters of Rahi's novels seem to portray a realistic picture of human life with all its oddities and complexities.

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Corresponding author's email address: mumtaz.khan@iub.edu.pk

1. Introduction

Ghulam Hussain Rahi Gabol occupies a prominent place among Saraiki novelists. He has played a significant role in the evolution and development of Saraiki novel. A great deal of variety can be seen in the subject matter of his novels. Reformation of society and glimpses of Saraiki customs and traditions are important aspects in this connection. In his novels, Rahi Gabol has not only discussed social rights and problems of human life but also he has touched upon inner self of man. His novels create feelings of social, reformatory and sympathetic attitude of love for mankind.

Whatever Rahi felt and observed reflected truly in his writings without any artificiality. Rustic life is more close to nature. Rahi Gabol has tried to portray this picture in literary works. Not only atmosphere of village life has been depicted in his novels but also a conducive atmosphere of human relationships has also been shown. Besides that Rahi has established a tremendous comparison of

village and city life in a beautiful and realistic manner.

Basically, Rahi Gabol has established himself as son of the soil and he has spent his childhood by listening stories from his grandparents. This old custom has left indelible impression on his mind and heart from his very infancy. A glimpse of these unforgettable imprints can be seen in his novels. Rahi Gabol has not only been able to establish comparison of variety of issues of village and city life but also he has expressed bitter realities of human life through his lifelike characters. He has presented the actual reality in a Frank and realistic manner without any alterations and artificiality. Muhammad Arif writes about the subject matter of his novels that :

“...Unhaan day naavlaan da vada mauzoo muaashray di islaah hay. Maqsdiat da unsar unhaan day naavlaan utaty chaaya hoye hay. Diahaati zindagi naal lagao unhaan diaan kahaanian vich saaf jhalakday. Jaageerdaana nizaam, eendian kharaabian, khaandani dushmanian, zameenaan jhagray atay nikay laa dian shaadian Ghulam Hussain Rahi Gabol day naavlaan day ahm tareen mauzooat hin...” (1)

Novel is basically depiction of human life and a novelist presents this depiction through a proper method and skills suitable for the job. The most important aspect in this connection is characterization. Characterization occupies a central place in any story. The novelist presents his characters consciously or unconsciously in such a manner that the reader easily goes to the point where the writer intends his reader to be. Character is the soul of a story and no story can exist without character. As a body is nothing without soul same is the case with characters---story is nothing without characters. Characters are in fact those individuals who represent incidents and situations and enable story move forward. Atia Sultana writes in her thesis that :

“... kisi bhe adabi sinf ke kaamiabi ka daaramadaar aksar o baishatir kirdaaron ke behtareen peshkash par he munhasir hota hai. Waqiaat kirdaaron he kay zariay aagay barhtay hain aur isee liay aaj kirdaarnigaari aik fun ka darja haasil kar chuki hai.” (2)

The novel shows different faces of human life. In human life different characters appear in different forms and these forms may be both either positive or negative ones and atmosphereical element plays a pivotal role here. Through these positive or negative characters, the writer shows some specific segment of society. The importance of negative characters can't be denied as they represent imbalanced attitudes of society in a well defined manner. Not only that negative characters provide movement to the story. The social values of society and negative elements brought out in a conflicted form provide a logical conclusion to the novel.

When it comes to the characterization of Rahi Gabol's novels, his novels present a realistic picture of life. Besides portraying positive characters he has also sketched negative characters in such a manner that they seem too close to real life and away from any kind of artificiality reflecting different aspects of not only human psychology but also reflect mysteries of human life, man's power, their weaknesses, selfishness and exploitation.

Rahi Gabol has served Saraiki language and literature greatly .He has used Saraiki language as a mean of his narration. Happen to see a regular commencement of Saraiki novels from 1971 and

the prominent writers we come to know are ; Zafar Lashari, Ismail Ahmadani, Dr. Muneer Ahmad Alvi, Fiaz Hussain Qasir Faridi, Dilshad Kalanchvi and Ghulam Hussain Rahi Gabol. These novelists have given a unique distinction to Saraiki novel in the world of literature. The most distinctive writings have come from the might pen of Rahi Gabol. He has contributed 5 novels to Saraiki literature so far, which include; Bhaag Suhaag, Koonj, Sajan Dushman, Pardais na Wanj and Dildar Sadqay. The most important subject matter of all these novels consists of human welfare and prosperity and development. In his novel Bhaag Suhaag, three important negative characters namely Nawab Shehryar Khan, Landlord Sher Zaman Khan and Sikandar Hayyat have been delineated with dexterity and artistic excellence. In an another novel "Koonj" by him we meet also some negative characters namely Shahbaz, Mehwish, Malik Zaman and Zareena Begum. In yet in an another novel Sajan Dushman Malik Qadir Bakhsh and Qasim are depicted as negative characters. Not only these but also in his novel, Pardais na Wanj, Miss Salma, Maula Faqeer and Mai Kundan are seen in negative roles. Now his negative characters are discussed and analyzed one by one.

2. Nawab Shehryar Khan

This character of Bhaag Suhaag is ruler of Rohistaan state who is cruel like traditional rulers. He wants to suppress every voice rising against him as we see that he wants to suppress the resistant voice of hero Faisal by summoning him in his court. Let's here see the dialogue in this connection:

*“Nawab : Asaaday kol tediaan shikaayataan pauhchin, toon saaday
khilaaf gaaleenh wada karaindain.*

*Faisal : Hazoor da bakht iqbaal buland rahay, lokain hazoor
de*

khidmat ich ghalat khabran pujaain.

*Nawab : Kia toon lokain ich maqbool neen theenda wainda? Kia lokain
koon asaaday khilaaf neen bharkainda?*

*Faisal : Aay gaalh neen sarkaar! Maikoon sirf unhaan naal
hamdardi aay.*

*Faisal : Toon kaun theendain hamdardi karan aala? Kerha khazaana
hay tain kanay jiheen naal toon lokain de madad karaindain?*

*Hik Darbaari : Hazoor e wala da shaan buland howay. Aay
chokra*

Bahoon gustaakh lagday.

*Doojha Darbaari : Sarkaar da bakht iqbaal buland theway. Aay riasat
da baaghi aay.*

Nawab : Asaan hunrain eenda bandobast karaindoon.

*A aakh tay Nawab aaprna hath uchaa keeta. Oon mahal chaar jawan
bandooqain naal agee tay aaiy tay Faisal koon sogha kar gay.” (3)*

3. Jageerdar Sher Zaman

This character is from novel Bhaag Suhaag. This cruel and proud Landlord lives near the foot of the mountain. Many poor people work on his lands. He doesn't pay them according to their work. If some worker demands wages and record of proper calculations of his work, the Landlord treats them high handedly. He doesn't even hesitate to inflict physical torture on them through his hired men. Once it so happened that Mumtaz a son of his worker of fields named Salih Muhammad demanded wages and proper calculations of his work. Landlord Sher Zaman because so enraged that he got Mumtaz beaten by his hired men. According to Rahi Gabol's novel :

“Acha! Main eenda hisaab doojhay tareeqay naal chukka daindaan. Aay aakh tay oon aaprnain mushtandian koon ishaara keeta. O saaray maikoon wairh gay. Maikoon pakir dahaa tay utoon charh gay. Latain, mukeen tay morain naal meda bharta banraawan lagay. Chamaatain naal meda buthaar sujaa rakhionay. Sir vich dhak laq gia tay rut waaharn pai gae. Kapray leer kateer the gay, main vee hath pain daadhay maariom. Kaheen koon lut, kaheen koon muk tay kaheen koon chaq phabaayom. Aakhir maikoon chor dita gia.” (4)

4. Sikandar Hayyat

Sikandar Hayyat is also a negative character from the same novel “Bhaag Suhaag”, who is the owner of a textile mill in Ahmadabad. He is an influential person of the city. Like typical investors he is arrogant, selfish and exploiter who never hesitates to usurp rights of workers on his lands and if they raise voice through labour union against this exploitation, he files cases against them using unfair means. A character of this novel Muhammad Nawaz represents the rights of the labor community and he is president of union. As a punishment to protect the rights of his co workers a fake FIR is launched against him and he is got arrested by Sikandar Hayyat. Let’s see a quotation in this connection :

“... Union aprnay mutaalbay pesh kar ditay jo mazoorain de tankha wadhao, unhaan day ilaaj tay rihaaish da intazaam karo, haadsay de soorat ich imdaad daio. Par mil maalik tay intazaamia thajoon inkaar kar dita, balkeh mazoorain koon daraaya gia. Dhamkian ditian gian tay kae mazoorain koon kadh dita gia. Ithoon hangaamay shuroo the gay. Intazaamia mazoorain tay mil the bhun taror da koora parchaa kataa dita. Police aee, mazoorain day jaloos tay dadhi lath baazi keetee...” (5)

5. Shahbaz

From Second novel of Rahi Gabol named "Koonj", we meet a negative character whose name is Shehbaz. He is engaged to heroine named "Noreen" of the novel in his childhood but he becomes arrogant and selfish after establishing his connection with city life. This element of his personality is increased after he gets higher education. That’s why he breaks his childhood's engagement by saying that she is less educated and villager. He sets aside his own customs and traditions for glitters of city life. According to Rahi Gabol:

“... aay choohir unparh, jaahil tay diahaatinr hay. Meda eenday naal guzaara neen the sagda. Main een naal shaadi na karaisaan.” (6)

A woman has a weak and sensitive heart as compared with a man and after a little incident her dreams are broken like a glass is broken into pieces. It certainly happens when she is rejected being considered inferior. After suffering from inferiority complex of being rejected Noreen decides to commit suicide.

6. Malik Zaman

Sometimes for the sake of money and status man lowers himself to the level that he does not feel reluctant to disconnect from his blood relations. Same is the case with Malik Zaman in novel "Koonj" by Rahi Gabol where Malik Zaman refuses to accept his niece Noreen as his daughter in law

owing to hatred against village life and love for high standard city life. In the following extract he seems to reject the marriage proposal of his brother for his son :

“...Putr Shahbaz een rishtay tay raazi naeen. O akhainday jeewain main ucha parha likhia haan, eewain e uchi society the parhi likhi zaal ghinsaan. Oon aakh ditay main hik jaahil tay dihaatirn naal shaadi na karaisaan. (7)

Mrs. Nasreen Mukhtar writes about this character in her thesis in this regard :

“Malik Zaman shahir jaa kay bahot badal jaanda aay. Aos da putar Shahbaz vee uchi society day taor tareeqay apna lainda aay. O sagay rishtian toon moonh phair lainday nain...” (8)

7. Mehwish

There is yet another negative character from novel "Koonj" whose name is Mehwish. She belongs to a Liberal and rich family and under the spell of youth, beauty and wealth detests her eastern values. She is indulged in all the frivolities of life like drinking, self centeredness and sexual perversions. She adores western civilization. Contrary to the Eastern women who value honor, chastity, faithfulness, respect for elders and obedience to her husband are too away from her thinking. She likes to spend her time in mixed colorful gatherings. After her marriage these reasons result in her divorce from her husband. Mrs. Nasreen Mukhtar expresses her view points about Mehwish in following manner :

“...Mehvish ik ameer gharaanay de kuri se. Oh Shahbaz naal nibhaa naeen kardee. Ohnaan vich ikhtalaaf peda ho jaanday nain tay gal talaaq tikar apar jaandi aay...” (9)

She considers eastern values like an imprisonment. She is disrespectful to her husband and she considers her mother-in-law & father-in-law are her servants. She is self-centered and even never hesitates to go to hotel to enjoy the company of men and dancing with them which is a serious violation of eastern culture and family life. Zahida Zahoor says about her in the following way:

“Eh zaroori neen jo her tareemat utay taaleem da musbat asar theway. Mehvish nay shehr vich parvarish paati atay uchi taaleem haasil keeti. Apnri taaleem koon manfi sargarmian vich laa dita tay oonda ghar wasanr de bajaay ujir gia.” (10)

These kind of women of negative bent of mind not only violate the sanctity of their honor but also drag their parents to such a state of affairs that they have to face shame from the society. So these kinds of women are never able to live a good marital life with its happiness and bounties. When her husband requests her to perform her family responsibilities, she responds in the careless manner discussed below :

“...Ameer lokain day rahanr sahanr eevain hondin. Bas aish karo, turo phiro, acha khao tay acha handao tay society ich apnra ucha naan banrao...” (11)

8. Zareena Begum

Another negative character from the same novel is Zareena Begum who is wife of Malik Zaman and mother of Shahbaz. She is also arrogant and selfish woman who gives more importance to wealthy status, pomp and show and luxuries of life rather than maintaining true relationships. She seems least concerned even if human relationships are broken into pieces. Even though she is a villager but she adores to be called or become a person of city. After moving to city for the purpose of education of her son, she becomes more egoist, artificial and vain and considers herself among high class women of the city. She seems to do her best through her attitude and practice a person of elite society. Not only that she becomes one of the main reasons to make her son to hate his fiancée Noreen so that she may be able to wed her son from a rich family of the city. See this quotation in this regard :

“...Shahbaz de maa zareena begum da dimaagh taan bia ucha the gia ha. Kith gia oh dihaati tay haveli aala uthanr bhahanr tay alaa galha. Hunr oh aapnray aap koon shehr de uchi begmaat ich shumaar karaindi haee. Oonda rakh rakhao haar singhaar tay aa vanj bia thee gia haa. O vee Shahbaz the tarha naa chanhdi haee jo oonda putr Noreen naal shaadi karay. O shehr ich kaheen uchay tay ameer khaandaan de parhi likhi dheer naal aapnray putr de shaadi karanr chahndi haee tay eh ihsaas o putr koon vee diwaee rahndi haee...” (12)

Mrs. Nasreen Mukhtar expresses her view point about Zareena Begum :

“... Malik Zaman tay ohdi vohti Zareena, Noreen da rishta ais kar kay tor dainday nain keh o jaahil tay unparh aay. Apnay baitay Shahbaz de shaadi Mehvish naal kar dainday nain...” (13)

9. Malik Qadir Bakhsh

Malik Qadir Bakhsh is an extremely greedy character of the novel "Sajan Dushman". Due to this greedy nature he keeps his real nieces under his control to usurp their land. He keeps on exploiting them. His greed for wealth is increased so much that he doesn't hesitate to kill them. As a result of this exploitive attitude of him one of his nieces, Bilawal goes on to leave the house in his childhood. And another one namely Sajawal is beaten by him on demanding his rights. He even tries to kill him but luckily he is saved by God and disappears taking his sister Zulekha along with him. In order to find them and get them killed Malik Qadir Bakhsh sends his sons after them but not succeeding in finding them. He becomes furious to his sons and address's them in the following manner:

“Tusaan unhaan koon bach kay vanjanr kion dita...tusaan bholay o. O wal aosin tay hoon mahal takray hosin. Tusaan ghaafil naan the baho...Hunr tusaan eevain karo, Sajaawal tay Bilaawal day naanvain zameenaan taror tay apnray naan karao. Ithaan unhaan da koi naan nishaan naan rahay...” (14)

10. Qasim

Qasim is also a negative character from novel "Sajan Dushman" who is son of Malik Qadir Bakhsh. Like his father he is also a cruel, greedy and arrogant person. He is not bothered about blood

relations for the sake of financial gains. He considers it as his inherited right to usurp land and property, vindication, deception and killing and playing with sentiments of others. His father Malik Qadir Bakhsh can be held responsible for all this who has brought him up like that his conscience becomes dead that he tries to kill his cousins for the sake of occupying their land as we see in these lines :

“...Sajaawal apnray kum ich rujhia hoye ha. Gaard aapnri duty tay khara ha. Itnay ich baghlee darwaazay kanay hik shakhs (Qasim) moonh tay mundaasa maari tikhay andir varia tay Sajaawal day nairay aa tay oonday utay fire kar ditus, val bia vee. Hik goli oonday mondhay utay lagi tay doojhi goli oondi pasli kanay lagi...” (15)

11. Miss Salma

Prostitution is such a negative business of our society what violates moral values if a society very badly. Not only poor are indulged in bet for the sake of earning bread and butter for their family but also rich people indulge in it for the sake of enjoyment and fulfilling their lust .Miss Salma belongs to a high society in novel "Pardais Na Wanj" who goes to Karachi from Islamabad for the purpose of education and in order to fulfill her sexual urge indulges herself in detestable act of prostitution. She remains in touch with different hotels to make her nights colorful and traps the wealthy and beautiful men of high society, not only to fulfill her sexual lust but also to make huge amount of money. To quench her sexual thirst, she seems inviting hero of novel Sikandar to an act of sin like that :

“Sikandar aj main sirf teday wastay aee aan. Meda badan jalda pay, rooh beqaraar aay. Mekoon sakoon day...Sikandar jadaan main tekoon pichli waari ditha hum. Toon meday dil koon bhaa gia haawain. Aj main sik lahaawanr tay tain naal gaalheen karanr aee haan...” (16)

12. Mai Kundan

In our society the role of a step mother has never been positive. Its example can easily be found from novel "Pardais Na Wanj" who marries Sikandar 's father after his mother's death and takes control of the entire home. Not only she creates hurdles for education and bringing up of Sikandar but also she gives birth to a stressful atmosphere in the home and resultantly Sikandar becomes compelled to leave the home.

13. Maula Faqeer

"Bhopa" is such a negative character of Saraiki culture who cashes the religious beliefs, lack of education, poverty and simplicity of the people for his personal gains. Maula Faqeer from the novel "Pardais Na Wanj" is a character of the same type who makes people indulge in immoralities. Not only he violates the sanctity of religious beliefs of the people but also plunders money from them.

In this novel, after Sikandar leaves home his fiancée Mehnaz becomes ill because of separation. Parents of Mehnaz considering that their daughter is haunted call for Bhopa to cast his magic spells or mantra to cure her of disease. These kind of people already collect information about the patients as Maula Faqeer already gathered information about Mehnaz and so he makes Mehnaz happy to find Sikandar and get her love back to her. In that ways he succeeds in winning trust

and getting huge amount of money from parents of Mehnaz easily.

From the above mentioned negative characters this becomes obvious that Rahi Gabol has been successful in his endeavor to unmask the negative characters who are responsible for issues and social disparities.

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