

Social Dominance and Class Struggle in Premchand's the Gift of a Cow



Social Sciences

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Abstract

The objective of this research paper is to prominence the concealed reality of Indian social system and the suppression of low class people in India. The caste system has spread its roots deep in Indian society. The constitution of Indian society, with its hierarchy is an ideal place to better realize the practice of oppression. Lower class throughout the longest conventional Indian hierarchy and members of the lower castes and classes have usually born to force the repression generated by the Indian communal structure. Premchand is generally considers the greatest Hindi writer. Premchand was also a social reformer. The remarkable characteristic of his writing was the reality that he depicted as exploitation of poor people. He gave the message on social evils like dowry, poverty, communalism and corruption. He was the first writer of twenty century to reflect reality in the literature.

Premchand is the most prominent Hindi novelist, and *Godaan* is Premchand's renowned novel. The economic and social struggle in a north village are deeply depicted the condition of the pre-independence of a countryside. That was the era of poverty, ignorance and exploitation of the illiterate peasants at the hands of rich landlords. But the situation has not changed as greatly as it had been expected and the subaltern condition cannot change completely life and survival of Hori's family and self respect. Hori does everything to achieve his life to buy a cow. According to Hindu's mythology of that time, he has a conviction that making the gift of a cow to a Brahman before he dies will help him attain salvation. An engaging introduction to India before Independent, *Godaan* is at once village ethnography, moving human document and perceptive of colonial history.

Premchand's *Godaan* as one of the first Hindi novels to be translated in English and published in the west. The novel represents the economic and social hindrance in Indian progress.

When Hori says, "God has made them Masters and we are their Slaves. These lines can hardly demonstration the indication of the subaltern subjugation and manipulation. Subaltern have detached and crushed by the brutal economic and political repression. On one hand there are the people like Hori who work in field to produce a meal for their family and on other hand there are people who live a prosperous and luxury life. *Godaan* imitates the socio- culture condition of rural India.

Data Din represents the Brahmin caste and belong to non Dalit. He oppressed the lower caste villager by his power of religious authorizations. Hori, and Bhola belonged to subordinate segment of the society. Premchand portrays the representative picture of the lower caste people subjugated by landlord. The peasants could not give the debts on time and it gets increased with dual down payment. The author gave an endeavour to end the feudal system which occurred in India. The foremost problems in the village that every farmer was sinking in debt. Premchand efforts to evacuate the money offering system from society. This novel also exposes a political system of village. He juxtaposed the village life from city life.

Hori's is the representative categorisation in his work. It is aboriginal to the Indian soil. Hori is not simply an individual; he is the illustrative of a class, whose qualities and flaws he shares. For him spirits and nature are the only real things. Realism is the support of his life.

He does not believe in Gobar's cognitive, which may all be very sound, but cannot be put into preparation, because Hori's descendants did not act that way. Gobar says that God has made every one of us the same. He believes that all those who are born poor would not have earned good by their actions in their previous life while those who were born rich.

The Past is Hori's only disagreement; it is his only sheet-anchor. He believes in things, he acts, he acts accurately in the same way as his ancestor and does so because they were also subjugated so. He does not have the lot of money, not even a rupee, to offer at the altar of the idol at the annual "Katha" and feels regretful, not because he is unfortunate but because he could not offer anything in katha, his mite at the altar of God, whom he truly fears.

The main character Hori is willing to tolerate any poverty or suffer or any justice to maintain standing of his caste. He says the village council is the speech of God, whatsoever they think must be recognized happily. Hori gives away his food, his own oxen and finally his house so that he can continue to preserve his stand-up in the village. His son ultimately leaves him unable to tolerate the humiliation of his low caste status and his father incapacity to stand up for himself. Hori's wife also protests but Hori disregards her advices. To him there is no life outside the caste. There are some royal's people who enforced to follow the prearranged paths. Hori knows living outside the caste means no more loans, no community help, no mirage celebration and no cremation rites. Hori's son Gobar, who left the village and the caste is the only issue in *The Gift of Cow* to achieve victory.

The caste system shows so powerful that only an individual who makes a complete break from the system cannot get genuine independence. The strength of the caste system is its self-enforcing nature. Average Indian peasants cannot rebel against the upper caste because the system reaches down and rebellion would cut off all social support.

Hori could not rebel at all. Even though he has spent his life trying to maintain his dignity and social standing he dies without any conflict anyone. Gobar was the foremost bond between the two worlds. He went to the city and learned about the city life. He came back to the village and raised his voice against landlords. He also made the villagers conscious about the political system.

Hori is shown as a typical poor peasant who is the victim of circumstance and possess all the deficiencies of common man but despite all this, he stands by his goodness, responsibilities and verdict when time needs. Gobar gets exposure in the city Lucknow and learns to be practical and worldly. Premchand has drawn a realistic picture of poor peasants exploited by the village Zamindar and the materialistic moneylenders. The Zamindars composed the revenue and forced fine. Rai Saheb fined Hori for the death of the cow though he did not kill it. The peasants all unable to pay the debts in time it gets increased with the time.

Gobar would grow as a socialist leader and would organise people for a struggle against moneylenders and the system which grinds down the peasant into a paste. Gobar becomes a part of the system which victimises the peasants and against Gobar was to nurture his voice. Instead, he now hates the village and prefers to be a poor obedient labourer in the town where, in the first example, he slices out a place for himself. He earns some money and lends it to other at excessive rate which if the moneylender charged from Hori, nervous Gobar. Hori's is the most realistic mouthpiece in Premchand's works. He accepted by hard circumstances to vend away his daughter, Rupa to an old widower. His house is already pledged Data Din demands his money back, while Hori has nothing. His land which is more than peasant's life is in danger of being taken away. Although Gobar says there is no thing basically wrong so long as the money taken from the son-in-law is returned, Hori feels regretful and this event hurries his end.

The novel of Premchand shows the position of women in a family and society is attracted the attention and the central theme of a novel. Miss Malati, an England returned doctor and a social reformer. She is enthusiastic and demands equality with man in regard to votes and equal status in society. She comes in contact with Professor Mehta, who maybe said to the mouthpiece of Premchand and to prompt the author's interpretations. She loves with him and finally forgets all about her standards. Women like Dhaniya and Jhunia were exploited by male dominated society. They did not get even freedom of speech. They are brutally subjugated in the society. Premchand is considered as modern writer of India. Where love and inter caste marriage would thrive. The inter caste marriage of Gobar and Jhunia, Mehta and Miss Malathi have serious thought provoking discussion on the issue of love and sympathy. They present the voice of modern India and mutually decide to live as friends serving society in their respective society.

Gobar raised his eyebrows. Whose saying we should lose integrity? No one's suggesting that we swindle money from Brahmans. All I'm saying is we won't pay all that interest. The banks charge twelve annas interest. You will be letting him have one rupee interest. How much more does he want to rob us? (*The Gift of a Cow*, P 271)

Gobar went to city and learned about the city life. He come back to village and enlightened the villagers. He also made the villagers conscious about corruption and caste system. Hori shares the vices of lower people. He fights his wife when he feels like it. But he is faithful to her. Hira is the real cause of all Hori's

difficulties. When, he comes back, a day before Hori's demise, there is unconditionally no change in Hori's love for Hira. Hori does not see him as a distress. Premchand depicts the suffering of the peasants that was a common in those days. In the last days he lost his confidence in the presence of God, for to trust in God also suggests the confidence in His Kindness.

Premchand wrote novels, short stories, essays and children's fictions. When his first work published he got the highest award of his time. He is at present one of the noticeable writers of India. His prominent novels are *Godan*, *Nirmala*, and *Ghaban*. His works are translated in many languages. His works are being taught in academics in most of the India Universities where Hindi and Urdu are taught. He wrote on social issues and put the elements of evoking the feelings of social consciences and responsibility. He made a realistic picture of life and the various problems faced by common men. He gave the main focus on rural India and exploitation by the hands of land lords and loan sharks. Premchand brought realism in Hindi literature and which was revolutionary change in literature at that time.

Before Premchand, the literature was full of fantastical and imagination. He was a social reformer and visionary who used to write about social evils that existed in Indian society. His stories are setup in a rural India which is full of human emotion. Aside from a novelist and author, Prem Chand was also a social reformer. The remarkable characteristic of his writing was the reality that he depicted as exploitation of poor people. He gave the message on social evils like dowry, poverty, communalism and corruption. He was the first writer of twenty century to reflect reality in the literature.

Conclusion

Munshi Premchand has raised the voice of an oppressed community and gave it writing form. He was a social reformer and creative thinker. He used to write about social tribulations that existed in the social order. His stories are setup in a rural India which is full human emotion. Beside from a novelist and author, Premchand was also a social reformer. The noteworthy attribute of his writing was the authenticity through he depicted the exploitation of poor people. He gave the message on social evils like dowry, scarcity, communalism and bribery. He was the first novelist of twenty century to bring veracity in the literature. He started to write about social issues and evoking the feelings of social consciences and liability. He prepared a pragmatic depiction of life and the various inconveniences faced by common men. He gave the foremost focus on pastoral India and mistreatment by the hands of landlords and loan sharks.

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