CHAPTER - 2

SHORT STORY IN HINDI AND BENGALI LITERATURE:
A BACKGROUND
CHAPTER - II

Bengali and Hindi Short Story : Background (1860 - 1920)

In the matter of building a foundation of a literary creation or a desire to create a literary art, the importance of the background has immense importance. No literary creation can be indifferent to its age and time. The comment of a famous intellectual in this context is worth remembering that, any great literature was surely created against the background of its own age. In every age, in every time, a new culture was born from the ashes of the dead culture. As examples we may mention Shakespeare at the time of Elizabeth, in the middle ages, Tulsi, Kabir, Chaitanya and at the time of the first World War, Rabindranath and Premchand, to determine the true characteristics of the short story the role of its background is very important. It is because of this influence of the background that short story is inspired by its social awareness and these has been a remarkable change in its mood and attitude. So it is imperative to discuss the background of the short story before we enter into its discussion proper.

1. Political Background :

With the coming of the British and as a reaction to their imperialistic rule, there came a great wind of change all over India. Since the centre of this rule was in Bengal, the change in the province was more evident and intense. In the rest of India this change was taking place according to the potential and ability of the people of the region in social and cultural matters. This process of change was particularly different in the Hindi speaking regions.
When the dominance of the British Rule was firmly established in the country then a new wave of thinking swept over the life of the people. This influence of this was not only because of political change, on the contrary, we may say the influence of this was found in the social, cultural and economic life of the people. As a result of the contact of the Indian people with the Western Literature and Science and knowledge, a Political and national awareness was also visible. The people became aware of their weakness and made efforts to extricate themselves from the grip of blind beliefs and superstitious which made them inert and lifeless, and they also began to make attempts to liberate themselves from the coercive British Rule. The people of the country became a changed people, being inspired by a new awareness. As a result a quick change was visible both in life and literature. Life was influenced from many different sides. A relation was established between the Indian people and many Western ideas. A new economic change was also brought in the country. As a result of the coming of capitalism in place of feudalism many industries were established. Transport system also underwent a change. Development of the press and publication helped the dissemination of literature. In the new and changed environment mode of living underwent a change. Many changes came in the matters of dress, social practices, way of life, etc. So Vasudev Singh said, "anek samāj sudhānacak paidā hue jinke dwārā samāj kē jēṛhā śēṛhā kūprathāyuṁa paṁ prahān hue. ruṭhiā vicchinna hui, śikṣhā padhāti bādli." Protests were made against east system, untouchability, discrimination between men women, etc. there was growth and manifestation of the idea of equality, humanitarianism and independence. As a result of the coming of new knowledge and science, the life of the people began to
flow in a different course which was different from the old. A new way of thinking came in the mind of the people regarding God and religion. The thought of the worldly life got more prominence than the spiritual life. As the coming of the British inspired the Indian people with new thoughts and ideas, in the same way the exploitation and the coercive nature of their administration grieved and distressed them. The Indian people were seeking the key to open the door of the period of the British Administration to breath the air of freedom. Dr. Asit Kumar Bandyopadhya said in this regard, “IST INDIÉ KAMPANÉ RATHAGRIDHNU, ATYACÁN, ABICÁN, DESÁA BHÚŚWÁMÉ O SÁMANTADER SAMPATTI GRÁS BISÉSATÁ DÁLHAUSÉR NÍXBUDHITTÁ JANITA STHÁNÉA BHÚŚWÁMÉDER YÁBHÁTÉA PRÁDHÁNYA RHÁSER PHALE PRÁI EK BATSAÑ DHARE MÉRUT THEKE BIHÁN PARYANTA DESÁA SIPÁHÉDER BIDRAHER PHALE YE ÁGUN JALE OTHE EBAÑ YÁR MADHYAJUGÉA SIKHÁI ÁDHUNIK YURAPÉA SABHYATÉR DHÁRÁK O BÁHAK SWEETANGA SAMÁJÉR SAMASTHA MANUSYATTA SAMARPITA HAI SEI AGNIKÁNDA ITIHÁSE SIPÁHÉ BIDRAHA BALE PARICITA, KOPTHÁO KOTHÁO EI BIDRAHAKÉ BHÁNÁTER BIDESÉ BANDHAN CHINNA KARÁR PRÁTHAM SUCANÁ BALÁ HAI.”

From the point of view of political change, The Sepoy Mutiny was the first war of independence Shibnath Shastri wrote about this in his book, “1857 SÁLER JULÁI MÁSÉ KALIKÁTÁTE EKUP JANARAB UTHILA YE, BIDRAHÉ SIPÁHÉ GAN ÁSITECHE, TÁHÁRÁ KALIKÁTÁ SÁHAREÑ SAMUDÁÍ IMREJEKE HATYÁ KARÍBE EBAÑ KALIKÁTÁ SÁHÁN LUT KARÍBE. EI JANARABE KALIKÁTÁR ANEK IMRAJ KELLÁR MADHYE ÁSNAY LAILÉN; DESÁA BIBHÁGE O LAKE KI HAI, KI HAI BÁLÁ BHÁE BHÁE DINYÁPN KARÍTE LÁGILA.” This mutiny gave birth to a new political awareness and nationalism. Judging from this point of view it can be said that this was the time when the middle ages
made its exit and a new era, the modern era, was ushered in. In the opinion of some historians the mutiny of 1857 was the conflict between feudalism and capitalism in which feudalism was finally buried and over its grave rose the citadel of capitalism. But in fact, we should not look upon the mutiny as a conflict of two opposing forces. Of course, it should be admitted that the mutiny weakened the power and strength of feudalism and in its place capitalism made its appearance.

Be that as it may, the English quickly made end of the mutiny and when the time came for revenge they turned cruel and bloody. Shibnath Shastri wrote about this, "impräj sainyagan yatadur agrasan haita tāhādey gamanpānse ubhaipānse daṣē nirdāṣ hatāhata desē prajān mritadehe ākērṇha haite lāgila. ek elāhābāde ālsata desē prajāke phānsi deya haila."

This oppression of The East India Company fomented the discontent of the Indian people and they tried heart and soul to find the opportunity to escape from the British Rule. Prof. Vasudev Singh wrote about this, "aṃgrejna ke prabhutwa aur īst indīā kampāṅē ke ṣaṣk nēti ke kāran samāj ke har varg me asantaṣ baṭ rahā thā. sabhi varg aur samudāi ke lag cāhate the kē aṃgrej de' chaṭkar cale jāye."

There was sufficient reason on the part of the Sepoy to come to conflict with the rule of the Company and the English administrative servants. The native kings gradually became powerless and only remained as big landlords. In the mind of the Sepoy there were many causes of dissatisfaction and discontent which involved religious issues also. The oppressive rule of the British Administration and its savage behaviour became unbearable to the people of all sections of the society. Many Indian
periodicals, memoirs carried facts, truth and half-truth, false and exaggeration, racial malice, the hateful behaviour of the white workers upon the black people which are also found in the pages of history. In fact the Sepoy Mutiny played an important role in the freedom struggle of India. So the famous historian V. D. Maharajan wrote, “The revolt of 1857 did not leave India unaffected. It is continued that, “Perhaps a more fortunate occurrence than the Mutiny of 1857 never occurred in India. It swept the Indian Sky clear of many clouds. It disbanded a lazy pampered army which thought that in its hundred years of life, it had done a splendid service”.

From 1859 to 1860 a serious controversy arose between the European indigo planters and the farmers of Bengal and the situation gradually went from bad to worse. In some places the discontented farmers revolted against the indigo planters, and this revolt is mentioned as “nabya bange bāngālāzār ātmabadher pratham paricay.”

The Strom of Swadeshi movement which swept over the country between 1905 and 1911 in connection with the partition of Bengal made the unity between the urban Banglies and the rural Bunglees more intimate. The life of the Banglies, the minds of the Banglies, all the brothers and sisters in all the house holds of Bengal became united by an in separable bond. The Do or Die Struggle over the partition of Bengal bore good fruits. The settled fact of Curzon was forced to become unsettled, Partitioned Bengal was again joined. But after the successful end of the movement the fire was put out for lack of fuel. This increased the weariness of the middle class youth.

In the Varanasi session of the Indian National Congress of 1915, the President Gopal Krishna Gokhle seriously hoped that, perhaps the fire that
was kindled in Bengal would help the liberation of the country. The leaders of the people of Bengal and the volunteers of the rebellion, hoped in the same way. But when the partitioned Bengal joined again, it was seen that the heat had cooled down. Sri Bhudeb Chowdhury wrote in this regard, "sedinkän bāñilär nābhikun̄ḍer āguṇke rānya bhāraten yagyasūlāi pradjpta kare tulte pārta jātā kaṃgnes. kintu 1907 khrīṣṭābde sunāit kaṃgresher dakṣhajaggen par ātmastha hate ei pratiṣṭhāner samai legechila prāi dasbachan."

Besides this there was an urge in the mind of the people during the Swadeshi movement, the division between the towns and villages created by Colonial rule became weak and an eagerness for the possible union of the two became evident, and though the first excitement became a little dimmed, no faint effect still lingered to the last. But in December 1911 when the partition of Bengal was nullified by the one-sided declaration of the Delhi administration then all the efforts and enthusiasm of this side came to a stand still because there was no other way. A confused leadership of the elderly people became busy to find out others means only the enthusiastic young generation felt dissertate. Though the event happened comparatively at a later period, but the then 'Rastra Guru' Surendra Nath did not hesitate to accept the title of Knighthood and become 'Sir Surendra Nath'. This happened perhaps against the background of the above mentioned situation.

In the uncertain times of the first World War the congress could raise new hopes in the mind of the people as it stood in the battlefield with its newly acquired strength. Though Gandhi made a beginning of bringing the party closer to the people all over India between 1912-1922, but its movement
was still quite slow. His struggle was not that of a politician, it was that of a wise saint. He examined everything in the light of his own ideals and then he moved in the path of Satyagraha sedately. Hence, Bhudeb Chowdhury has said, "parināmer māhātmya sambandhe tīni prāt pratham thekei niścita cetan. rājnaśīikā sādhanā nai, tār ādaśa swarāj khāli deher nai, ātmān swarāṭatte yān sārthak udjāpan."

Though the heat of the Swadeshi movement got dampened at the end of the movement over Bengal Partition, the fire of rebellion was still burning in the heart of young Bengal. On the other side, in the context of the multification of Bengal partition, the capital of British India was moved from Calcutta to Delhi which reduced the scope of employment of the middle class youth. All these engulfed the educated Banglées youth in the gloom of endless despair and weariness in the context of an all-pervading emptiness, in the matter of material and mental development. Approximately, armed rebellion took a concrete shape in Bengal from the time of the Bengal Partition. In 1907 the magistrate of Dacca, Mr. Allen was shot in the back but the culprit could not be apprehended and fortunately Allen escaped death. The same fire became a blaze in the assassination at Muzaffarpur in 1908. Though the partition of Bengal was stopped, but the movement did not stop. The firebrand youth of Bengal could not forgive the exercise of power of a despite ruler. Tanking advantage of the first World War these young men brought arms from foreign countries and did the impossible to liberate their motherland with a surprising determination. But in 1915 when "Bagha Jatin" died at Balasore for the cause of his country, the lamps of hope began to go out one by one.

In the meanwhile the first World War started in 1914. Through the
war remained continued in Europe, but India and also Bengal had to feel its heat. Since India was a part of the British empire there was pressure on the Indian to join the war. Besides the economic condition of the country aggravated due to the war. A few industries came up to meet the war need which gave the people to earn a little more money honestly, but the man in the start began to suffer under the yoke of poverty. The end result of all this was a feeling of helplessness of the middle class.

But still the desire for independence of the people went on the increase. This independence was not only to liberate the country from the hands of the British, it also became the history of the women's liberation and the struggle of the downtrodden and the untouchables of the society to have their rights. The non-cooperation movement started in 1920. As there came a division in the Congress so the signs of communal disharmony raised its ugly head. This communal riot deeply grieved Gandhiji and he started a long fast for 21 days. Under the leadership of Gandhi the women and the girls of the country came out of four walls of their homes and took part in the freedom struggle for the first time. Translator Haridas Upadhyay wrote about this, “1917 īsvi kē kalkattā kāṅgṛēs ne bhē yē hīpāt kār diyā kē śikṣā tathā sthānē sārkār se sambandh nakhne wālē nīrvācit samsthāyīya me mat dene tathā ummēdwār ke rūp me khañe hane ke liye strīyī kē wālē sārt nakhī jāye ja purūṣī kē liye hei.”

So in 1911, by the concerted efforts of Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant and Srimati Hirrabhai, the right of women to give their opinion was admitted. The courage and bravery of women was a proven fact for their success in the Home Rule movement. Though these activities of women did not get the support of the men, yet, “in strīyī ke liye ājādi kē pukār hamesā
Besides all these many other important events took place within this wide time limit in the life of the Indian people, which affected them deeply. The Indian National Congress was established in 1885 initiated by the viceroy of India Lord Duffrin and represented by A.O. Hume. By the permission of the British government the Muslim League was established in 1906. In the Surate session of 1907 of the Congress, the party became divided between the extremists and the moderates. In the meanwhile the first World War started in 1914 and the October revolution of Russia began in 1917. Besides these certain other important events took place all over the World between 1914 and 1927. These events east deep influence on Indian Politics. The Russian revolution gave the Indian people the necessary strength and inspiration to free themselves from the slavery of the British Rule and stop their ceaseless exploitation. On 19th February, 1915, Gopal Krishna Gokhle passed away leaving the Congress headless. At this time Mahatma Gandhi returned to India passing many years abroad. But since he was out of the country for many years he had no understanding of Gokhle’s thoughts and ideas and so he thought that he should better study the internal condition of the country for the present. In 1914 Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was released from prison and the established the Home Rule League at Pune in 1915.

When Mahatma Gandhi joined active politics in the country in 1916 then the political sky of the country was illuminated with a new ray of hope. How the whole of India from the Himalayas in the North to Kanyakumari in
the South was strengthened when the “Bapu” of Rabindranath made his appearances in Indian Politics, has been briefly said by Premchand, 

"mahātmā gāndhī ke padārpan se bhārat ke rāṣṭrīya jīvān me ek vicitrā sphurti aur sajēvatā kā vikāś ha gayā hei."

At the time of the First World War the leaders of the friendly countries under an alliance, declared that, they are taking part in the war in order to safeguard the democratic rule and make the relatively weak countries self dependent. The Indian People fondly hoped that after the end of the war they would acquire the right to rule their own country. With this thought in the mind the Congress agreed to help the cause of War in all possible ways. Indra Mohan Sinha said about this, "gāndhījī ne tayuddh ke liye bhārtīya sainikā kē bharti karwāne me sakrī bhāg bhē liyā."

But when the war ended the Indian learn to their dismay that the assurance of the British was a big bluff and when there was consensus of opinion against this they crushed it with cruel hands. On 13th April, 1919, general Odyar resorted to indiscriminate firing on unarmed people who were attending a peaceful meeting in Jalianwalabag and massacred them. As a protest against this inhuman cruelty Rabindranath renounced the title of Knighthood. Besides this the imposition of martial law in Punjab appeared in a cruel form as a terrible means of oppression. To discuss the situation of the country a special session of the Congress was held in Calcutta in 1920 where the party declared that instead of an autonomous rule within the British empire the country should be given independence through constitutional means.

A wave of patriotic feeling swept the country from the year 1921. In this year the railways employees of Assam and Bengal started a movement,
the farmers of Midnapur started the “Lagan Bandi” movement, and the Mopala revolt started in Malabar. To stop this awakening of the people was tried to be crushed by the British but in vain. The Indian people raised a voice of protest when the Prince of Wales arrived in India in 1921. As a consequence the people had to suffer in the hands of the British.

Communal feeling raised its ugly head between the years 1922-27 when the Muslim League separated itself from the Congress. On the other side the Hindu Mahasabha began to exert a wide-spread influence. This was the time when the Rastriya Sayam Sevak Sangha was established and the Hindu Mahasabha was organised on an all India level.

When the non-cooperation movement was going on then the Mopala revolt took place. Some orthodox Muslims took advantage of this and converted a few Hindus to Islam. To counter this the Arya Samaj began the purification movement. In this way communal disharmony became more and more intense.

Before Mahatma Gandhi took an active part in politics, the leaders of the Congress did not seriously try for any social reformation. He told the political leaders that for a stable independence movement for social reformation was not less important than political movement. In this issue of 6th August of the “Young India” magazine in 1921, Gandhi wrote, “samāj sudhār kā meirā kārya rājnaītik samarthan se ghaṭkār yā uske adhān nahē ......... isliye mei yeh swākār kartā hau ki samāj sudhār aur ātmāsuddhi ke yeh kārya mujhe viśuddh rājnaītik kārya se saikthya gunā adhik pyārē hei.”

Mahatma Gandhi listed 18 social issues like, helping the downtrodden, prohibition of buying and selling intoxicating drinks, stoppage of the practice
and customs of untouchability uplift of the women, adult education, etc. and gave them priority in the process of social reformation. So, Indra Mohan Kumar Sinha truly said, "unke prāyas se bhārat me navīn sāmājik cetnā kā prādunbhāb huā."  

2. **Economic Background**

The British rule India continued for approximately 200 years. During this time the condition of the country was not at all good. So historian M.L. Darling wrote that Nature was bountiful in India, but her people were poor. There is truth in this comment for the Indian people were exploited by the British in many different ways. The wealth of India built the modern England.

The influence of the new British administration was seen on all sections of the Hindi speaking people and also the Bengali Society. The East India Company was started mainly in the interest for trade and commerce. The old Indian economy was centred in the village dependent chiefly on agriculture. During the reign of the Mughals, the Marathas and the Sikhs the chief centre of production was the village. The society was broadly divided into three section, the army, the rulers and the producer (farmer). The first two sections were chiefly engaged in administrative works and the third section looked after production. Approximately this system continued till the time of Aurangzeb. His sudden death brought political uncertainty and its influence was seen also on the economic matters. In this old system the village was never dependent on the towns. No individual owned land privately. All sections of the society worked together and whatever food items were produced in the land were shared by all villagers. The chief of the village bore the responsibility of the administration and welfare of the village. The barber, the potter, the washerman, the blacksmith, the priest,
the astrologer, etc. did their own particular work. So the villages were all self-sufficient and self-dependent. Political change did not have any influence on this system of the village administration.

The condition of the town was, of course, different. There was very little relation between the villages and the towns. A town or a city was the centre of activities of approximately three sections of people. At that time people with religious activities, political activities and those who were engaged in trade and commerce, lived in cities and towns. In the cities costly things were bought and sold. The chief trade centres were, Patna, Varanasi, Delhi, Farizabad, Lucknow, etc. But with the coming of British administration this economic system underwent a revolutionary change. Raw materials were sent from India to feed the factories of England in Lancashire, Manchester and other places and the finished products found a big and ready market in India. In this way the wealth of the country was drained out. As a result the old village economy underwent a radical change during the British rule. The influence of their educational and system of ruling naturally fell upon this economic system.

In the early decades of the 19th century, the middle class Bengalee had two means to make a living farming in the village and service in the cities. Gradually some other independent means opened up based on legal and medical profession etc. as the century advanced. The middle class people in the villages was infact landholder middle men who stood between the landlord and the farmer. It took some time for the joint family system to break up for some economic reasons. The earning of the family was shared by the service holder in the city and the one who looked after the land in the village. But in the second part of the 19th century cracks were visible in this
arrangement. The permanent settlement introduced in Bengal and Bihar. The British government not only strangled the traditional industries but imposed new taxes to meet the increasing running cost of administration. The introduction of the permanent settlement gradually increased the trouble of the landholder middlemen of the village. And at one time it was found, "biṃṣati śatake bāṅgāli madhyabitta biśes kare jamijamāḥēn."

The influence of the British economic system was the greatest on the field of production. The East India Company enjoyed monopoly rights in trade and commerce. The right of the British business houses was accepted in everything except salt, betelnut and tobacco. Raw materials were exported to foreign countries and finished products were imported from them at a much higher cost. Because of this illiberal business principle the local industries got sick. The process of gradual elimination of the artifact and engineering industries was started. Gradually India came to be recognized only as an agricultural country. As a result the charter of the company changed in 1873. The business which was only run by the company was now shared by business houses in England. In administrative matters also the Indian people began to lag behind. All the important and high posts went to the English. This also drained out the wealth of the country. As a result the economic condition of India began to deteriorate more and more. The fruits of new scientific thinking were also enjoyed by the English. The coming of the railways, ships and other modern transports put the palanquin bearers, cart drivers out of their jobs and they became unemployed. This economic poverty put the country among the poorest countries of the world. Though the English made roads, railways, introduced modern transport, established educational institutions, post office, police outpost, hospitals
etc., yet they did not much improve the economic condition of the people. The new rules and laws concerning agricultural fragmented the land. The middle men appeared between the government and the farmers. Drought, epidemics, famines took heavy toll of lives. Quarrels and legal suit among the people were settled by the village panchayats. Since justice was difficult to get in the British Courts. In this way the economic condition of the country was almost ruined by continuous exploitation.

The life of the Bengalee people in the 19th century was spread over a wide area. It may be said that the middle class Bengalee who were educated in English could enjoy the privilege of certain advantages. The comparatively wealth class who were conservative and were afraid of the influence of the west, and for them the reality of life was more attractive than the benefit of English education. The wealthy aristocratic class of those days were dynastically land lords. So they had a blind attraction to hold on to the citadel of the old system so that they could keep their capital intact. Fearing that English education may change the mindset of the young generation they avoided coming in contact with alien education system. On the other hand the uneducated people of rural Bengal found themselves in the grip of the traditional beaten track. Sri Bhudev Chowdhury said about this, "kalkātār banedi adhibāsiśder madhye jātāśnākar ṭhākurabāli sabhābājān o pāik pāṭār nājbālī bā anurup kichu byetikram thākle o matāmui sekāler renesānāser sainik eban phalbhagā dui-i pradhān bhāve chila samāsāmāyik madhyābitta sāhure bāṅgāli; britti hisābe yāra prāi chilen cākurijēbi."17

The pioneer of the 19th century renaissance Dewan Nabakrishna, Dewan Gangagovinda, Dwaraka Nath Tagore, etc. first made their
appearance in this profession. The permanent settlement of Lord Cornwallis introduced in 1793 gave birth to a new economy in Bengal and also brought a new awareness in the people. This awareness is ordinarily known as the Bengal Renaissance. Social issues may be brought under the perview of this renaissance. The extensive activities in the fields of religious, political, social and literary issues, got a new dimension in this renaissance.

As a result of the new social arrangement created by the British, a new social system came into existence. Following Dr. Ait Kumar Dutta it can be said. "tār phasal hala natun bhāvanā, cintā darśan, natun rājñēti, natun mulyabadh o swadesbhāvanā." 18

Behind this new awareness of the people lay the new social arrangement created by the British. By introducing the Permanent Settlement Lord Cornwallis created such a new class of Land Lords who had no respect for national prestige and tradition. They easily sidetracked the developmental process of agriculture in the interest of the British, i.e. they would create new means of exploitation but would not create any opportunity for the development of industries. As a result of this mutual cooperation of the landlords and the British a new social class was created following this a new class of middlemen, the lease-holder, the permanent sub-lessee of an estate, etc, came into existence. Between the years 1806-1807 an unprecedented social arrangement took place as a result of new land reform. This social stratum played an extraordinary role in the economic structure of Bengal. The significance of the new economic structure was very important. The influence of the division which was due to landlord system was far fetched. The lease-holder got the right to enjoy the fruits of the land from the landlord on condition that he would give him a fixed amount as
tax. But without doing it himself he handed over the land to the permanent 
sub-lessee on condition of getting a fixed amount as tax. In this way it went 
down to the fourth or even fifth person. They had no relation with the 
actual production. The chief objective of production in the landlord system 
was enjoyment inordinate greed for all sorts of material enjoyment of life. 
So it is seen that in the social hierarchy the wealthy class of the 19th century 
had only one objective in life, worldly enjoyment. But the materials of 
enjoyment were beyond the reach of the common man who actually 
produced them. On the foundation of this the edifice of the new century, its 
philosophy of life, thoughts of life sense of values, idea of nationalism, was 
built.

This new economic system established a new social relation. The 
poison fruit of this system was the loss of the sense of values and all round 
decadence Rabindranath has portrayed this picture which is true to life, "śata 
śata batsar cale gela itihāser puragāminī gati hala nistabda. 
bhāntbarṣer manalake cintār mahānādī gela śukīye. takhan dek hae 
pāṭla sthabir, āpanār madhye āpani saṃkḕṇa, tār sajēb citter tej 
ār bikēṅṇa hainā duire durāntare, śukna nadēte jakhan jal cale nā 
takhan talākār acal pāṭhar gula path āglė base, tārā asaṃlāṅga, 
tārā arthahēṅ, pathikder tārā bighna. temni durdin jakhan ela ei 
deśe takhan gyāner calamāṅ gati hala abaruddha, nirjib hala 
nabanabanmeṣṭālinī buddhi, uddhata hae dekhā dila niścal 
ācārfunja, ānuṣṭhānīk nirarthaṅkatā, mananheṅ lak byabahāner 
atyanta punarabṛtī. sanbajaner praṣasta rājpathhe tārā 
bādhōgraṅtha karle; khanda khanda saṃkēṅṇa sēmānār bāine 
bichinna karle mānuṣer saṅge mānuṣer saṃbandhake."19
Though Rabindranath did not point his finger directly at the contemporary society of Ram Mohan Roy to be the fruit of the new economic system, but he wished to point out that this was the time when the forward movement of history got obstructed. We get a faultless picture of the decadence of the contemporary society where the be all and end all of life was worldly pleasure and enjoyment which was the fruit of the new economic system, in the writing of Shibnath Shastri, “ei samay saharer sampanna madhyabitta bhadra grihastha diger grihe bābu nāme ek śrenīr mānus dekhā diāchila. tāhārā pārśē o’ swalpa iṃrājē ṣikṣār prabhāvē prācēn dharme āsthābihēn haiā bhag sukhei din kātāita ihāder bahirākṛiti ki kincit bārranā kariba? mukhe, bhūrapānše o netrakale nāisa atyācārer cinha swarup kālimā rekhā šīre tarangāita bāuri cul, dpāte miśē, paridhāne phīnphīne kālāpeṭe dhuti, aṅge utkṛṣṭā maslin bā kemriker beniān galadeśe uttam rupe cūnaṭ karā uṭānē o pāye puru baglas samanwita cine bāṭēr jutā. ei bābura dine ghumāia ghuri uṭāiā, bulbulir laṭāi dekkhiā, setār esnāj, bēn prabhṛīti bājāiā, kabi, hāp-ākhāī phāchāīl prabhṛīti śuniā rātṛe bārāṅgnādīgen ālæ ālæ gīt bādyā o āmad kanīā kāl kātāita, ebām khaṭdaher melā o māhēśer snān yāṭrā prabhṛītir samae kalikātā haite bārāṅgāṇādīgake laīā dale dale naukā yage āmad kanite yāīta.”

The above description is a true-to-life picture of the decadent society which rolled luxury as drawn by Shibnath Shastri.

3. Social and religious background

The study of the background of the Hindi and Bengali story in the context of social and religious issues is related to the establishment of the
colonial rule in India.

The moving force of the feudal system was the agrarian system. The significance of this is that, determination of its character was related to land. Before the arrival of the British there was feudal system in India. Taking over the administration of the country the British first of all undermine the industry, and trade and commerce of the country. They choked all natural developments of the society and wiped out all obstruction to their own profit and progress. In this way the Indian Society began to be exploited from two sides- Feudalism and Colonialism. The Indian people were in search of a new consciousness to escape from theis exploitation and also to fight against the British Rule. So, Dr. Ramkali Saraf said, “ek o n jnāhā navajāgāran kē cetāṇā jor pakartē hei dusri or sāṁskṛitik āndalan ke swarup grahan karte hei tākē samāj āpne sāṁskṛitik, samājik pichepan se mukt ha.” The role of the Brahma Samaj and the Arya Samaj was very important in this matter.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the great social reformer, transformed ritualistic religious practices, and a life of pleasure and luxury, into a great ideal by uniting the awareness of life with the new thoughts of the new age. Following this path the Brahma religion was established, In the new social order created by the British rulers these were certainly great destructive forces, but this were also new creative thoughts, and Ram Mohan brought the message of unification of these creative thoughts with the new ideal and culture. He brought a new, strong religious ideal which was free from all bigotry, practise ritualistic religion, narrowness of religious understanding, the superiority complex of the high cast people etc, “satādāha prathān binuddhe janamānaske saṁghabaddha karār āndalanke ekī sāṁjīk byādhīr
The social awareness that came in the life of the Bengalis in the 19th century did not keep itself away from the light scattered by the religious understanding of Ram Mohan and the religious movement that spread after it, on the contrary, it shown brighter in its glow. In that early part of the 19th century. The Bengalees society was stained by, selfishness, greed and love of luxury, corruption and profligacy it was disbalanced and devoid of any humanitarian values. The moral laxity of the religious practices of the shaivas the shaktas, the vaisnabas and the secular “sahajea”, pushed the people to a life of pleasure and luxury. Above all, disparily in the matter of production, disunity between the different castes, made the foundation of the economy of Bengal fragile. Quite naturally human values and understanding flowed in a narrow bed. The social life of Bengal stood before an imminent danger. So, Bengal show the renaissance feeling his way along the path of gradual awareness. But in that context we may say that certain revolutionary activities widened the road for the coming renaissance, but no image of this was visible at the time, of the awakening of awareness, and it could be expected, and certain it was not historic. Because the renaissance of the 19th century was founded on a particular socioeconomic base with an awareness of the socio-religious issues. The effort of Ram Mohan to do away with the cult of suttee, shows his renaissance thinking of the independent individuality of man. The main driving force behind the movement against the cult of suttee was the position of women in the society and to establish the independence of individual.
The coming of the English cast a strong influence on the socio-religious life of the Bengalee and the Hindi speaking people. Because they brought with them such a philosophy of life, culture and life style, which were totally different from the contemporary corresponding things prevailing in India, the Europeans tried to change the socio-religious life of the people according to their own culture and philosophy of life. So, the christian missionaries began to work in a planned way to spread their own religion. While discussing this issue Prof. Vasudev Singh said, "aṅgrejī sikṣhā aur carcā ke mādyam yeṣha kē jantā ka tarah-tarah ke pralabhan dekar ēsāi banāne ke prayās prānambh ha gaye. vigata kaē 'satābdnīya ke parādhnīyatā ke kāran bhārtīya samāj me jaṭatā ā gaē thē." 23

The Indian society was ordinarily plagued by superstitions, blind beliefs and evil customs. In the last part of the 18th century this sluggeshness went on this increase. The practice of the cult of sutlee the wearing of veil, slavery, child sacrifice, etc, were on the increase. In some places in north India and particularly among the Rajputs, girl children were killed as soon as they were born. The very undesirable practice of the wearing of veil began to increase. People began to be attracted to the profession of a priest and astrology. People who went on a voyage could be rehabilitated in the society only after a penance. Animal sacrific at the alter of Gods was done in the name of religion. In the rural area the worship of many popular gods and goddess began to the practised. To get the blessings of Gods people knocked their heads at the alter and burial places. The belief of the people in ghosts, aparitions, trees and stones went on increasing. At this time epidemics, like cholera, smal pox, etc. were looked upon as
manifestations of God’s anger, and instead of treating the people in a scientific way, they tried to pacify God in different ways. The number of so called yogis and monks increased.

They showed many tricks which were taken to be miraculous power by the ignorant, superstitious people who were confused and terrified. Describing this condition of the society Dr. Ram Kali Saraf said, “pandanto aur thagno se samaj petit thā, kahē krānti ke bhē atkuri hate the ta unhe nindayatā purbak kucal diyā jātā thā.”

As a result of two hundred years of political slavery the social life of India was enveloped in the gloom of evil customs and blind religious beliefs. At this time, in 1815, Raja Ram Mohan Roy made his appearance in Calcutta. He said, “natun yugē bāntā bahan kare ānlen – yār mule chila bāstab buddhi yuktibād, swades cintā, lak hitaiṣanā o samāskār mukta cetanār bicitna prakāś.”

The Brahma Samaj established by him opposed castism, the cult of suttee, worship of many gods, worship of idols, animal sacrifice, etc. Besides these he laid stress on widow marriage equal rights of women with men, etc. Influenced and inspired by the reformative works of Ram Mohan other social reformers began to take part in other reformative works. Of these men we may mention Govinda Ranade who established the “Prarthana Samaj”. But all these reformations remain confined to the educated class of the society. For the benefit and welfare of the common man Swami Dayananda Saraswati established the “Arya Samaj”. So in later period premheand wrote, “mei ta ārya samāj ka jituē dhānmik sāṁsthā samajtā hīv utnē tahajēbi (sāṁskritik) sāṁsthā bhē samajtā hīv


................. kaumē jindagē kē samasyāyaṇa ka hal karne me usne jis
From the above assertions of Premchand it seems to be clear that the contribution of the Arya Samaj in building a modern India was very great. In the works of the pioneer writer of Hindi literature, Premchand, we find the influence of the thoughts and ideals of the Arya Samaj.

As a result of the establishment of the British rule in India the old social order of the country almost became non-existent. Following the loss of continuity of the old Indian Social order, a natural tendency to have a new order for a better life was perceptible, but this was hamstrung by the capitalistic administrative system of the British. The new socio-economic structure created by the British which was the by product of a new technique of the Industrial Revolution, hampered the growth of Indian capital and obstructed the evolutionary process of development of the Indian society.
order. The British rulers brought before the Indian people a tempting but undesirable developed life-style and with it a new history was created.

So the renaissance was the fruit of an unwanted and yet an unexpected social revolution. The inert life of the Bengalee people which refused to be attracted by progress, became disturbed by the new materialistic philosophy of life. On the one side these was seen a strong desire in the Bengalee social life, and on the other, a despair for the present slavery, worn out form of a lost glory, was visible in Bengalee social life.

The 19th century India was enriched by the wealth of the new awakening but the irresistible wave of the European thoughts and ideals washed everything away. The bright form of the renaissance brightened life, society and every branch of literature, Ram Mohan Roy, Vidyasagar and other social reformers pointed their warning fingers at the conflicting character of the European society. They made serious efforts to express the necessity of human welfare, proper understanding of the values of life, the conflicting nature of the contemporary society. So, Dr. Bijit Ghose said, "ādhunik yug tathā unabiṃśa satābdī bāmlān itihāse nabajāgritik kāl. nabajāgaraṇek saṅge pratibādī cetanān ghanisthāya yog, pratibād praban bāṅgāli jātike e samaye bibhinna samāj saṃskān mulak kāje agranāh bhūmikā nite dekhā geche."27

Ram Mohan Roy raised his voice against the evil custom of the cult of suttee. Thought many thought the practice to be cruel but no body dared to revolt or protest against it. The cult of suttee has been practised by the royal families, the aristocrats and the brahmins from very olden times. Even in ancient Britain in many other places of Europe, Scandinavia, slav countries, Greece, Egypt, North America, China, Malaysia- this practice
prevailed. In Vedic literature in the Ramayan and the Mahabharata, there is description of the cult of suttee. In the age of the Hindus the cult of the suttee was practised in different parts of the country. History is witness to the fact that the mughal emperors Akbar and Jahangir wanted to stop this cruel and inhuman custom, but they failed. After his arrival in Calcutta Ram Mohan led the movement against the practice of the cult of suttee. If we wish to study the social history of Bengal against the background of the 19th century the name of Vidyasagar inevitably comes up.

Vidyasagar never believed in the practice of the ritual dominated religion, he only worshipped the religion of man. Humanism was the heart and soul of his life. From this point of view this Brahmin Sanskrit scholar was a disciple of Counte, Mille, Bentham, Jeremy Tayler in his thought process. Indifferent to the gods he considered man to be a god. He initialed the Bengalees into the love of man. So, Dr. Asit Kumar Bandopadhyay said, “premer sainge bērya, abeger sainge paurus, gyāner sainge karma – erāścaryā milan tārān madhye sārthak haiche.”

At the root of the influence of modernism which is found in the Social life of the 19th century, the contribution of Vidyasagar can never be ignored. It was because of his untiring efforts that women’s education could be introduced and widow marriage could be legalised.

In the early part of the 19th century women’s education was chiefly conducted by the missionaries. In the issues of 14th and 21st March of ‘Samachar Darpan’ of the year 1835, a few women of Sanitpur and Chinsura wrote of their troubled mind in their letters. They wanted to know why the Indian women did not get the light of education which the women of foreign countries could enjoy. They could not mixed with man according to there
wish or choice which the women of other countries could do, and why their parents got them married at the early age of 8/10. Because of this bad custom women of this country had to live their married life with worthless husbands and sometimes had to live with many co-wives. This social custom was very much in bad taste. Dr. Asit Kumar Bandopadhyay expressed his utter surprise at this, "bidyāsāgar bidhabā bibāha āndalaner pūrbei bidhabā bibāher jauktikatā sambandhe strīlakerā p.raśna karechilen e samābād bismaykar." 

The Christian missionaries and their wives opened several schools for the education of Bengalee girls. But the girls were not allowed to attend the school lest they were converted to Christianity.

Besides this many people in the society, stricken by bad customs, believed that educated girls would become widows at an early age. So in the first half of the 19th century education of women did not make much headway and was much below expectation. Though the students of the Hindu College were free from the influence of such bad customs and inspite of their progressive outlook they were not much enthusiastic to educate their own wives still women's education made some progress in Calcutta, but the women of the rest of India did not get any light of education of modern times. At last in May, 1849, the Hindu female school was established by the dedicated efforts of Mr. Bethum and when the responsibility of running the school was given to Vidyasagar, the middle class Hindus were assured a little and they began to send their daughters to the School. Vidyasagar knew without women's education the condition of the Bengale society will never improve. If half of the members of a society is kept confined within the four walls of the home, the society can never develop or improve.
its condition. So within 1848 he started 35 girls school at different places and seriously devoted himself deeply to the expansion of women’s education.

Vidyasagar disseminated the new values which were the fruits of the renaissance as a symbol of a new social awareness brightened by his individual personality. So, Dr. Asit Kumar Dutta said, “madhyayugā jēbaner ācār sārbakswatār dharmā anagrasararadā emanki sanātan jēbandhārār darśanke ruddha kare, tāke bhrānta bale ghaṣanā kare nabēnyuger mananṭiddha pathke śudhu prāṣastai kareṇī, samakta rakam ācār mukta, bigyān manasaka o yuktibādā jēbaner pathke sugam o saundryamandita karār saṃgrāme prabahamān rekhechilen, bāṇīā sāhityer sāṃskritir, jēban bhāvanār, mulyabadhen, dārśanik bišlešan ebanī tār susṭhur samādhān nār āge keu karte pārenni.”

So it can be said without any hesitation that the chief role of Vidyasagar in this regard was to remove the backwardness and stagnation of the society and to uproot dead religious customs and conservatism. By leading the movement in favour of widow marriage he desired to liberate the individualism of the women and free it from all prejudices and to instill in them a sense of freedom. Though perhaps he could not influence the life of the Bengalees as a whole it cannot be doubted that the society was immensely benefited by his reformations and a brighter and better society was created.

We get acquainted with the strage and varied aspects of humanism through the ideals of the philosophy of life of men like, Ram Mohan, Devendra Nath, Vidyasagar, Akshay Dutta, Keshab Sun Bijay Krishna Goswami, Govinda Ranade, Dayananda Saraswati, etc. this humanism helped
the poets and writers of the 20th century to be humanistic and realistic in their attitude to life. So it can be said without any doubt that these religious and social aspects built that background of the society which in the early years of the 20th century, gave the Hindi and Bengali short story some powerful and important materials as their themes.

4.1 Literary Background - Bengali

As the various rebellious movements (Santal revolt, Sepoy Mutiny, Indigo movement) created stirs in the country, so Dinabandhu Mitra, Madhusudan Dutta portrayed them in literature. Madhusudan gave this awareness of the age a poetic form without a total recognition of the traditional philosophy of life. But before the coming of Madhusudan, Ram Mohan and Vidyasagar portrayed this awareness of the age in literature. Along with their activities of social reforms, they made it more sharp and effective through the medium of literature. As a result Ram Mohan’s "sahamaran prathā biradhē pustikā gulite yuktir āścaryan nipunatā laśkya karā yāi. nāmmahan tīn tūn theke sahamarāna prathār biruddhe sabceye sānita bān nīkṣep kāren."31

Ten years before the coming of Lord William Bentinck, the first and Second booklet about this, “Sahamaran Bisayak prabartāk O Nibarataker Sambad,” of Ram Mohan were published. As soon as they were published a movement was started against the custom of voluntary burning of the widow in the same funeral pyre of her dead husband. This movement started in Calcutta and spread outside it. In his literary works he vehemently protested against this monstrous custom prevalent in the society. These booklets were his strongest weapon in his war against the evils of the society. As he fought against the barbarous custom of the cult of suttee. So, he spoke
about the misery and suffering of women with heartfelt sympathy.

In the literary works of Vidyasagar also we heard his angry voice against all the evil practices of the society. In his writings written under the pseudonym, “Kasyachit Upayukta Bhaiposya” he spoke against the evil practices of child marriage and polygamy. He revolted against the evil customs and practices prevalent in the society and enthusiastically started a movement for the remarriage of the widows. In his booklets, “Bidhaba Bibaha Chalita Hooa Uchit Ki Na Etadbisayak Prastab Ebong Bahu Bibaha Rahit hooa Uchit ki Na Etadbisayak Bichar, we find his irrefutable arguments, accumulation of facts, sharp analytical power and his protesting nature. The kind of social atmosphere with which we get acquainted in the works of Ram Mohan and Vidyasagar, has been depicted by Madhusudan in his burlesques, “Ekei Ki Bale Sabhyata” and “Buro Shalikher Ghare Ron”, in a very pleasing and wonderful manner. The all-embracing decadence of the contemporary values of life has come alive in his works. The absence of the sense of values, the drinking habit of the members of the ‘Kalogyan Tarangini Sabha. The loud denial of the social evils, have been spoken by Nabakumar which has shown the weakened influence of feudalism. Madhusudan portrayed how in human could be the ugly form of life under feudalism. The cruelty of the zamindary system, its selfishness and heartlessness, its masterly behaviour, the profligacy all these evils have found their place in his second burlesque “Buro Shaliker Ghare Ron,”. Thought the uncontrolled lust for women of Bhaktaprasad has got prominence, yet the heartless character of the zamindary system and its ceaseless exploitation have not escaped the notice of the playwright. In the age of feudalism it was almost impossible to hear a voice of protest against the exploitation of
the people by the feudal lords but in the voice of Madhusudan we hear it loud and clear. It is not unimaginable that an awareness of one's own right can be seen, though in a small way, in the feudalistic structure of the society when capital makes its entrance into it. Madhusudan depicted the new age in his works quite successfully. The all round change that came in Bengal which was inevitable the result of the new social order is lively portrayed in the two burlesques of Madhusudan. In the literary works of Madhusudan we find the picture of the ideal of a new way of life, path of life and a sense of relation with the newly established philosophy of life. Sri Ashutosh Bhattacharya said about this, "prahasan duikhānike ādhunik bāmlā deśer bastutāntrik sahityer agradut baliā ullekh karite pānā yāi. rāmnārāyaner 'kulēnkulsarbaswa' ebat unescandra mitner 'bidhabā bibāha' nātaker mata bāstab jēbandharmā nātak bāmlā sahitye itipurbe o rocita haiāche ekathā satya, tathāpi madhusudaner prahasan duikhāni ye tāhā haite o ei pathe āro bahudur agrasār haiā giāche, tāhā aswēkār karite pānā yāinā."

In the works of Dinabandhu Mitra also we find a realistic approach to life. In his play 'Neel Darpan' the joy and sorrow of the contemporary life have been brightly portrayed. We get such characters in the play which have been taken from the real life of the Bengalee people and have been created with the materials of the realities of life. So Ashutosh Bhattacharya has said, "bāmlā sahitye ei śrenēr canitra stīśir prayās ihār purbe ān dekhā yāi nāi. bāngāli jēbaner madhye o ye ekta gurutara sukh-dukkha badher caitanya supta chila, dēnabandhu tñāhār nēldarpaner bhitar diā tāhāi pratham bistrita bhāve uddhān karilen. sahityer bhitar diā gabhār bhāve bāngālir bāstab jēbaner biṣay

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One of the great virtues of Dinabandhu is that, though he was born in the 19th century under the influence of the West, yet in his ideas and thought process he retained his pure Bengalee character and this guided all his literary ideas and works. It is true that Dinabandhu was born at the juncture of the 19th century renaissance, but it cannot be denied that the ideals he followed in his works helped him to retain the purity of his Bengalee character. The eternal joys and sorrows of man are reflected in literature but we have got enter into that eternal life through the feeling of joys and sorrows of an individual. The endless and the eternal cannot be reached ignoring the simple and the ordinary. The cry of agony of the human soul is echoed in literature through the city of agony of the individual soul, Dinabandhu has truly "uttered the eternal voice of life" through the life and character of the Bengali people. The Englishman of this play is not any particular individual nor is the farmer’s girl kshetramani. The oppression of the weak and the helpless by the powerful of the society which has been always going on, takes different forms in different ages. The tendency of the powerful to oppress the weak and attempts of the weak to defend themselves, is an eternal truth of life. In the oppressive middle age the form of the Kazi represented the Muslim imperial power, in the 19th century it appeared in the form of indigo planters, and in the 20th century it appeared in the form of zaminder tibananda chowdhury who tortured shorosi. In a particular age, in a particular condition of the society the one who appears in the form of the indigo planter, only changes the external form and appear in different ages in different forms. So, though this image expresses itself through a contemporary social condition, it is the image of an eternal truth.
The chief objective of the play of Dinabandhu is the search of this human values.

The sympathetic heart of Dinabandhu which was moved to pity seeing the suffering of these indigo farmers, the same was filled with loathing and contempt seeing an ugliness of the contemporary urban society which has found expression in “Sadhabar Ekadasi”. the attempt to reform the society through literature had already drawn the attention of all in this country. Following this line Dinabandhu made an attempt to draw the attention of the society to a contemptible form of corruption of the educated new Bengal of that time and its painful consequences.

The inertia of thought and the slavery of dead customs from which the Bengalee society of the 19th century tried to free itself has bot been expressed more distinctly and more widely through any other medium. Than through the medium of literature of that time, the new opportunity that came for the development of prose literature was fully utilised by the educated society and the social reformers of the time. On the one hand as they expressed their thoughts and actions through their essays so they also tried to express them through other forms of literature as well. The other form of literature which was the vehicle of expression of this subject was drama after the essay. so we see that as the awareness of the social issues took a new shape in the hands of Ram Mohan, Vidyasagar. So, on the other hand Ram Narayan Tarkaratna, Umesh Chandra Mitra, Dinabandhu Mitra, Madhusudan, all of them portrayed a life like image of the age through their literary works and tried to draw the attention of all who desired the welfare of the society.

In this condition of the society Girish Chandra Ghos acquainted us
with the awareness of the age in his own literary work which reflected his rare talent. In his social dramas as he has portrayed the contemporary external social problems like, drinking habit, dowry system, widows marriage etc, and condemned them. So, on the other hand he has described how the mind of the people was excited and enthused about the nationalistic thoughts. So, Dr. Sukumar Sen has said, “śwādhēnātān kśhuda bāṅgālikē pāiā basiāche. sāhitye tāhān pratiphalan haila swadesē gāne ebān deśāpnemātmak aitihāsik nātakē. ekhāne nātakē giriscandra agranē.”

A new social relation grew in Bengal as a result of the impact of the British imperial power in the 19th century, a new social awareness and sense of values were born and the foundation of the capitalistic society was laid at the time. The Indian people got acquainted with the social awareness of Vivekananda and his expression which were related to all the above issues.

The form of the new social order which came into existence in the 19th century does not contain anything about the old caste system which was introduced according to division of work, it contains the picture of a new social order, the picture of the birth of a new class, the result of the birth of capitalism. Though their importance is very great in this new social order, and though they played a pioneering role in the revolutionary activities of capitalism, their place must be at the very bottom, with the havenots, they are comparable with the nameless tunnel-diggers of “Rakta Karabi.” Vivekananda was not only thoroughly aware of the birth of the new working class, the industrial workers, he also saw their historic contribution against the background of the contemporary situation and that they were an inseparable part of the new social order, we hear the echo of this in the
Vivekananda’s thoughts about the society, his convictions, his vision, his clarion call for a realistic approach to life, are all closely connected with the political and social problems of the 19th century. The awareness of nationalism, the gradual warning of feudalistic relations, struggle against colonialism, etc. not only made his religious thinking quite distinct they were brightened by the brightness of his thought. The main political and social event of the 19th century enthused his nationalistic thoughts made his religious ideas, his ideals and his character and personality, acceptable to the world.

Vivekananda declared in a clear voice his understanding of the contemporary life, “...... sadarpe bala — āmi bhārathbāṣē, bhārathbāṣē āmār bhāi. bala mūrkha bhārathbāṣē, daridra bhārathbāṣē, brāhman bhārathbāṣē, candāl bhārathbāṣē āmār bhāi, tumi o kājimātra bastrā bhrīta haiā, sadarpe, ḍākiā bala bhārathbāṣē āmār bhāi, bhārathbāṣē āmār prān.”36 In this clarion call of Vivekananda the reflection of the manifestation of the contemporary life.

This background of the history of Bengali literature made a great contribution to the adoption of humanitarian outlook found in the fiction.
of the later period. The evil customs and traditions which poisoned the social life of Bengal in the 19th century were pointed out by the writers in their works which also contained the remedial measures to be taken to tackle them.

4.2 Literary Background - Hindi

The ceaseless exploitation of the Indian people by the European rulers slowly aroused in them a strong feeling against it. Though the intensity of this feeling was different in different places, yet on the whole the people were united in their feeling against the exploitation. Like the Bengali literature, Hindi literature also manifested the signs of this people's awareness. So, Dr. Tribhuvan Singh said about this, "yeh jāgarān hindī sāhitya me bhāv, bhāsā-sailī evaṁ sāhityanup sabhi kṣhetraṁ me dekhne ka miltā hei. jāgarān kē disā samāj evaṁ, rājnitī ke star par jis gati se bālī usē gati se sāhitya me bhē jāgarān āyā."37

Ignoring the traditional form of poetry and the 'Vraja' Language, Hindi prose and 'Khadi Boli' began to be written. The four beginners of prose writing in 'Khadi Boli' were, Sadasukh Lal, Sadal. Mishra, Insa Allah Khan, and Lallu Lal. The consequence of this is the literary movement of Bharatendu. From this movement a change was visible in a few strata of the Hindi language. In fact, against the background of this literary movement, the greatness of the contemporary social and religious movement can be understood.

A good number of changes were visible in this Bharatendu age. Following Dr. Vasudeb Singh we can say, "navēn sāmājik rājnjītik parishtithyaṁ ke dabāv me kavitā me nayā maţi āyā pratipādya viśay sailī, rup vidhān aur chand yajanā me parisharēnā hue."38
Many books were published by Nagari Pracharani Sabha, established in 1893. In the age of Dwibedi many changes came, both in language and theme in poetry. A man of respect Sri Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi had the outlook of a meriolist. In the matter of choice of subject his wide outlook deserves our respect. In the poem of this age a new outlook and approach were seen in regard to man, nature and god. That Hindi poems are not just for entertainment, that they can also meet the needs of life, is amply shown in the poems of the dwibedi age which marvel being us. The chief characteristics of the poems of this age were, awareness of nationalism, humanism, morality and idealism. The poets of this age remembered the glory of India’s past, expressed their deep sorrow for the country’s bondage, and at the same time expressed their fond hope for a bright future and gave directions in this regard. They also laid stress on the removal of all obstacles which stood in the way of the country’s development. We hear the melody of humanism in the poem of this age. The poets felt the realisation of such an image of god which was not limited by the limitations of country, nation or religion. "सांस्कृतिक पुनरुत्थान और समाज सुधार के भावनात्मक कारण हें इस युग के कविता में उपदेश, प्रवचन निर्देश आए और कविता अधिक आदर्शवादिय और नैतिकतावादिय हाँ गया है।"39

If we study the poems written between the Bharatendu period and the age of Dwibedi and look at their chief characteristic, some important points come to our notice. The poets paid more serious attention to man and man became the chief theme of their poems than devotion or God. A new humanism was born we hear a voice of protest against evil social customs religious superstitious and blind beliefs in the poems. The poems reflected the awakening of the people to a new dawn. To bring a change in the
outlook the poets tried to direct the attention of the readers to the welfare of man and universal brotherhood. Poems began to be written about the peasants, the industrial workers and women and told the tales of their misery and suffering. Joy Shankar Prasad in his anthology of poems ‘Kisan’ and Sanchiji in his anthology of poems ‘Krishak Krandam’, portrayed the heart-touching story of the peasants sticken by dire poverty. A women is not just a woman, a companion of a man, his bed mate, or his property, to be used according to his pleasure a women is a mother, a daughter and also a sister, she has also her personal wishes and desires, deserves equal economic rights and opportunities- such revolutionary ideas began to be propagated through the poems in this age.

The poems of this age came down from the ivory tower of fancy to the ground realities of life. Strengthened by a new self-confidence the poets laid more stress on work and labour them blind dependence on fate. Individual love gave way to love of the country, nation, the state which began to appear in the poems. A critical and analytical study of the hindi literature of this time shows that the most important event of this time was the chhayabadi movement which had a full flowering at a later period. This chhayabadi movement was influenced by many factors. Earlier the Indian people supported the Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj movement whole heartedly. On the other side freedom struggle was going on in the country in full swing. All these events gave birth to the chhayabad movement in Hindi literature.

With the coming of the 20th century, Indians, Particularly the young generation, began to be influenced by Western Culture and life style. It happened like that because the surprising progress of science readily
acquainted the Indian people with the European learning and philosophy. So, being enlightened by the Western Civilization, Science and learning, the Indian people shook off their old lethargy and began to change to adopt themselves to the new conditions of life. This social situation did not allow the poets and writers to keep quite and naturally they moved towards the change through literary movements.

The amalgamation of Fort William College, Calcutta Book society and agra School Book society, is an important event in the growth and development of Hindi prose literature. At a later period the establishment of the printing press the beginning of the services of the railways and Post and Telegraph reduced the distance between one part of the country and the other, and also between one nation and another. There was no more any barrier for free exchange of ideas. Mutual discussion and arguments develop with and intelligence and this also contributed greatly to the development of Hindi prose literature. When the British rule was firmly established the Indian people got acquainted with the English literature. The educated indian class become greatly worried about the country’s dependence on an alien power. English personalities like Annie Besant and charles Bredelar began to encourage this rebellious thought. The Indian National Congress established in 1885, promised to bring independance to the country. This political movement not only engaged itself in bringing the independence of country, but also did a yeoman’s service for the spread and propagation of Hindi prose literature. The national movement and movement for the development of Hindi literature became complementary. On this side of the hindi literary movement we come across the name of a tough and hardworking person named Bharatendu Harishchandra who left behind him his immense
contribution to the development of Hindi literature. In every field, subject, form and style, Hindi literature began to advance, and the history of Hindi literature up to its middle part was only the history of poetry, but it no longer remained only the history of poetry, but also the history of plays, biography, articles, stories and novels. Following Dr. Balaraj Pandey it may be said, "kavītā ke aitīrīkt gadya sāhitya me nāṭak, upanyās, nibandh, kahānī, samālakanā ādi kai vidhāyā kā vikās ādhunik yug me hē huā. bhārtendu yug me nibandh aur nāṭak par adhik jor diya gayā." 40

The advent of Bhartendu Harishchandra in the transition period is an important event in the Hindi literature. In the character of this many sided personality we find a wonderful harmonious union of respect for tradition and progressive outlook. Always sorrowful for his dependent country Bharatendu was very much careful of the contemporary situation and desired the removal of the evil customs of the society from the core of his heart. Along with his literary and endeavours, he propogated the message of national awareness and a new way of life.

The writers of the Bharatendu age did many things to bring Hindi literature closer to the common people of a ordinary event, a very ordinary character and subject matter found their places in their stories. While discussing about this Dr. Sabhapati Misra said about Bharatendu Harishchandra, "vilās kā utkaś gandh aur atriṣti kā ghar vyesan ke viruddh bhārtendu hariṣcandra ne mānav mulya se sandarbhīt prem aur bhakti kē bhāsūnē se vātāvaran ka ninādit kiyā." 41

After the Bharatendu period Hindu prose literature was properly organised and it followed grammatical rules by the efforts of Mahabir prasad
Dwibedi. Through the medium of this magazine ‘Saraswati’ he concentrated his efforts to finish the unfinished task of the Bharatendu period and during his time Hindi prose literature was put upon its own strong foundation and in different branch a tendency was seen to write matured literature.

Bharatendu was truly the Father of Hindi drama. The symbol of renaissance in Hindi literature Bharatendu was intimately acquainted with the tradition of India Sanskrit dramas. He absorbed in him the essence of the tendencies of Bengali and English drama and pioneered the modern Hindi drama. Through the plays, ‘Bharat Durdasha’, ‘Andher Nagari’, ‘Panchwen Paigambar’, ‘Vaidik hinsa hinsa Na Bhavati’, ‘Satya Harishchandra’, ‘Bharat Janani’, etc., he made his best efforts to create social awareness in the people. So, Balraj Pandey wrote about him, “bhäntendu háśicandra ne ghum ghumkar nāṭak khele, weh laga ka hindē sāhitya se parīcit kaāne ke sāth-sāth samāj sudhār ke bhē kām kante nahe.” The national awareness found in his plays has given him a historic dignity.

The ideal adopted by Bharatendu in the writing of his plays had a far reaching influence upon Hindi prose literature. Among his contemporary playwrights Srinibas Das, Radhakrishna Das, Kishori Lal Goswami, Rao Krishnadev, Sharan Singha, etc, were quite famous and they wrote original plays on different subjects. Stories of love, legends, Historical, Social Nationalistic themes, were this subjects matters. Besides these the central thought of the plays of this period was social and national awareness. Though some plays were written in the Dwibedi age, but echoing Prof. Vasudev Singh we may say, “is samay ke nāṭakkārṇo me yugēn nāṭakēya swaṇup pradān kanne kā aisā utsāha nahē dikhāi paṭtā hei, jeisā kē bhāṇatendu yug me thē. is yug me kavītā, samikṣhā, upanyās, nibandh
In the age of Dwibedi more plays were translated from Bengali, Sanskrit, English, Marathi than original plays in Hindi. The current of Hindi plays which was begun by Bharatendu flowed faintly in the age of Dwibedi, but during the time of Jayshankar Prasad it began to flow with renewed vigour and in different directions. In the field of Hindi Poetry ‘Chayabad’ movement made its appearance at this time and there came a change in the subject matter and a technique in the writing of the plays. Jayshankar Prasad was the pioneer of this new form of drama. His best plays are, ‘Vishakha’, ‘Ajatshatru’, ‘Kamana’, ‘Janmejoy ka Nagyagyaa’, ‘Skandhagupta’, ‘Ekghunt’, ‘Chandragupta’, ‘Dhruvaswamini’ etc. A reading of these plays makes it appear that in the matter of writing the plays the attention of Prasad was directed to sing the glory of Indian Culture on the one hand, and speak about national awareness in a clear voice, on the other. In the works of the contemporary playwrights of Jayshankar Prasad also, national and social awareness have been voiced in one way or the other.

In the age of Bharatendu a strong branch of Hindi prose literature made its appearance in the form of essays. Beside Bharatendu other writers of his time wrote essays of a high standard. The central thought of the essays of this age, was, national awareness, Social reformation, spread of Hindi Prose literature, Patriotism, along with entertainment.

As a matter of research and experiment a new branch of Hindi literature, the novel, made its appearance. The beginning of Hindi novel came through English and Bengali literature. In the early period (1882-1888), the Hindi novel moved in a narrow circle, eventful, entertaining, curiosity raising,
Ayaritilasmi and detective novels were written. The subject matters of the novels of this period were, what is Hinduism? The means to get independence, ideals of life, morality, the nobility of education etc., We find the ideals of Arya Samaj in the novels of this age.

In the early years of the Hindi novel, translations of novels of other languages were written along with original writing. The novels of Bankim Chandra, Ramesh Chandra Dutta, Tarak Nath Ganguly of Bengali language were translated into Hindi. Durga Prasad Khetri, Mahabir Prasad Poddar, Janardan Prasad Jha, etc. translated English novels into Hindi. Through the chief objective of the writers of this age was to entertain the reader, yet their important contribution to the development and progress of Hindi literature cannot be gainsaid. Through the literary persons of this age did not pay much attention to describe the ugly side of life, yet it is found that they were conscious of the Hindu Social order of the time and pointed their fingers at it. In these novels attempt was made to throw light on the position of women in the society.

The Bharatendu age also saw the advent of the Hindi literary criticism. In this age as some books were written following the footsteps of Sanskrit poetics on the one hand, so books were also written containing useful discussion according to English manur of writing, on the other. Badri Narayan Chowdhury Premdhan was the father of modern literature of criticism. In the age of Dwibedi Hindi critical literature got a polished language for prose literature and a new way of thinking and outlook gave Hindi critical literature a new form.

In this way in the long period between the Bharatendu age and the age of Dwibedi, almost all the branches made their appearance and also
began to develop. In all this literary works two parallel lines of thinking - fascination for the past and indomitable attraction for the new awareness-ran side by side. Against this literary background Hindi Short Story made its appearance. In the opinion of the researchers, Hindi Short Story appeared in the age of Dwibedi after 1905 related to English and Bengali Short Story. It was the fruit of a cultural movement social, political and economical situation, spread and propagation of Hindi prose literature and the coming of the new awareness. The coming of Hindi short story as an important branch of prose literature also happened in the Bharatendu age. But most of the stories of this age were only transformed forms of old stories. Besides this, the stories which were written with social themes, did not actually reflect the contemporary times. We find the absence of that social awareness which was the most important aspect of modern short story in the Dwibedi age.

The auspicious beginning of Hindi short story was made in 1900 with the publication of the magazine ‘Saraswati’. The stories, ‘Indumati’ (1900), ‘Gyarah Varsa ka Samay’ (1903) and ‘Dulai Wali’ (1911) published in this magazine are considered to be the opening door of Hindi short story, ‘Ek Tokri Bhar Mitti’ (1901) published in Chhattisgarh Mitra, ‘Gram’ (1911) published in the magazine ‘Indu’ and ‘Kano Me Kangana’(1913), ‘Rakshabandhan’ (1913), ‘Usne Kaha Tha’(1915), etc, are important modern stories of this experimental stage. Yet we may say without any hesitation that ‘Pancha Parameshwar’ written by Premchand made the beginning of a truly modern short story which created a tradition. So it is found that it took nearly ten years for the Hindi short story to take its modern form and take it to its extreme limit of development. All literary activities between the Bharatendu age and the age of Dwibedi, acted as an inspirational force to
build Hindi short story in its present modern form and to put it on a firm basis as an important branch of literature acceptable to all. Against this literary background the process of building and developing modern Hindi short story truly began.

5.1 The Tradition of Short Story In The Pre-Rabindranath Age

Against this literary background the budding of some short stories was found in the literary world of Bengal. We find some literary works which can be called tales or chronicles, in the beginning of modern Bengali literature. So, Narayan Gangopadhyay said about this, "unabinśa sātaker madhya bhāgei 'nvelle' panyāyer aitihāsik upanyāse bhudeb mukhapādhay eder sucanā kare den." 44

His 'Anguriya Binimoy' was not only quite novel in the matter of the skill of technique in those days, but in the matter of form also it was very advanced which has been admitted by all. The events of the story have been organised in such a compact manner that the reader will enjoy full satisfaction. So, respectable Sri Sisir Kr. Das says, "dillē madhyei ghaṭanāke ābarita karechen. swagaktir sāhajye canitrugulir antar yeman parisphuṭa haeche, temni ghaṭanā srat o pāthaker drīṣṭigacar haeche. inān sei preranāi anek galpai likhita hala." 45

'Indira' was published in the month of chaitra, 1872. The two editors of the Bankim Chandra's works, Sajani Kanta Das and Brajendra Nath Bandyopadhyay, said that 'Indira' was the first fruit of the experiment in short story writing in Bengali literature. After this Bankim Chandra wrote, 'Jugalanguriya' (1874) and 'Radharani' (1875), which were similar to 'Indira' in the matter of plot construction. These stories with lesser number of event and characters than the very eventful novels, are very significant.

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Sisir Kumar Das gave his thoughtful opinion about Bankim Chandra, "balai bāhulya ei dharaṇer choṭa choṭa kāhinī rācanār path bankimi unmuṅkta karlen pārpar tīnī galpa likhe." This enthusiasm of Bankimchandra seems to be very effective. So many numbers of his family got interested in writing short stories.

We know that since the inspiration of the age works at the root of writing short story, it cannot have a full flowing of its form in the hands of a single writer all on asudden. Very slowly and gradually its characteristics begin to show up long before its full development. So long before its full development of Bengali short story in the Rabindra age, the possibility of the coming of short story began to be seen. Looked at from this point of view, the story ‘Madhumati’ written by the brother of Bankim Chandra, Purnachandra Chattopadhyay, published in ‘Bangadarshan’ in 1874, may be called the first Bengali short story published in that age the story had some novelty in it. So, Dr. Indrani Chakraborty has said, "lekhak śrī puḥ yadia etike upanyāṣ bilechen; tabu, kāhinī r samkṣiptatā, ekmukhitā caritrer svaluṇatā, nāṭakṣyatā, prabhṛiti baiśiṣṭa madhumatē ke chaṭagalpanupei cinhita kāre." Perhaps in writing the short story purnachandra was deeply influenced by his brother. Bankim Chandra. So Dr. Sukumar Sen has said, "sanjēb bankimer kaniṣṭha purnaṇcandra caṭṭapādhyāer madhumatē galpatir parikalpanāi bankimer prabhāv suspaṣṭa."  

After Bankim Chandra the responsibility of editing ‘Bangadarshan’ developed on Sanjib Chandra. But before that he made his entrance into the areana of Bengali literature through the monthly magazine ‘Bhramar’. In the first two issues of ‘Bhramar’ two stories of Sanjib
Chandra, ‘Rameswarer Adrista’ and ‘Damini’ were published. These were the first literary activities of Sanjib Chandra. In all the three stories, ‘Madhumati’ by the younger brother Purna Chandra published one year earlier and ‘Rameswari Adrista’ and ‘Damini’ of Sanjib Chandra, we see the cruel mockery of fate. In his discussion on ‘Damini’ in his ‘Bangla Sahityer Itihas’ Dr. Sukumar Sen has said, “dāminē r parikalpanā eban rasanānēti, takhankār pakṣhe apratyāśita. byeīga miśrita laghu parīhās rasikatā sanjēbcandra an rasanā sāile ē kīta baṭa biśeṣatta. dāminē te eī pētīra purṇā abhīyekeī.” In his short stories Bankim Chandra did not leave any characteristic mark of his genius. Even his skill in plot construction is not very impressive. But the attractive nature of the story, particularly the cleverness of the dialogue of ‘Indira’ partially satisfied the Bengali mind of that time. But ‘Madhumati’, ‘Damini’ and ‘Bhikharini’ of Rabindranath written in 1284 BS, moved a step forward in the history of Bengali short story. The subject matter of ‘Bhikharini’ is, however, much inferior to ‘Madhumati’ and ‘Damini’. So, Sisir Kumar Das says, “rabēndranāther bālya bayasing rasanā hisebe galpātir aitihāsik mulya chōra ār bišeś kana mulya āche bale mane hainā.”

Short Stories began to appear in magazines and periodicals between the years 1872-1884/85. At that time Dinabandhu Mitra wrote two stories of them “Jamalaye Jibanta Manus’ shines with fun and pleasantries. In his stories we find a kind of newness which was not found in other stories of the time. Stories of this kind acquired more variety in the hands of Troilakya Nath at a later period. At the time of Dinabandhu Mitra, Girish Chandra wrote three stories, ‘Haba’, ‘Nasiram’ and ‘Nabadharma’. But no better artistic skill was found in the stories. a story ‘Chanchala’ by an unknown...
writer, published in 1878 (1286 BS) shows a much advanced outlook compared with that of the age. The theme of the story is the agony of a widow who did not enjoy the joy and pleasure of love in her life. 'Lalit and Soudamini' by Tarak Nath Gangopadhyay, was another good story of this time. The theme of the story is the independence of women. All the writers of this age showed their concern about the individuality of women.

The elder sister of Rabindranath, Swarna Kumari Devi, wrote several short stories. These stories, though mainly merely narration of events, have their own literary merit. In the world of Bengali Short Story the name of Swarna Kumari should be remembered with respect. She gave the name ‘Naba Kahini Ba Chi Choto Choto Galpa’ to her book of collected stories. This name is significant. That she is the first conscious artist as a writer in the pre-Rabindra age of short story has been asserted by Sisir Kumar Das. As a writer of Short Story the name of Nagendra Nath Gupta, who is now nearly forgotten, is wrothy of mention of the writers of the early period. Nagendra Nath was the best because in his stories there was variety of themes and also sincerity. Bankim Chandra himself loved the reading of the stories of Rabindranath. For nearly sixty years he dedicated himself to the cause of literature unceasingly yet his immense works could not give him immortality. The contemporary of Rabindranath, Nagendra Nath Gupta, received unstinted praise from the readers of his time. The variety, of the themes of his stories speaks of his power. He wrote on many subjects. From kings to maids, he selected his heroes and heroines. As the beauty of a fallen women received his praise, so the life of the Bengalee people of the past age drew his attention. The famous editor of literary magazines, Suresh Chandra Samajpati, also tried his hand in writing short stories.
But the special kind of social condition and the thought process in the minds of the writers which paved the way for the coming of short story in other countries was still to take shape in Bengali literature. The preparation of the ground for the expression of the agony of the mind and self-enquiry from the social point of view, was made in the rolling of political upheaval which made a beginning in the hands of Bankim Chandra in his ‘Kamalakanter Daftar’, and other satirical writings on social maladies. The epoch-making personality of Bengali short story, Rabindranath, was still writing ‘Prabhat sangil’, ‘Kari O Komol’, etc, but the call of the age reached his ears in time. Responding to the call. One of the greatest short story writers of the world, Rabindranath, entered the literary arena in the last decade of the 19th Century.

5.2 The Tradition of Short Story before Premchand

For its development and come to its present form, the Hindi Short Story is much indebted to English and Bengali Short Story. Being inspired by the modern Bengali Short Story, the Hindi short story absorbed in itself the modern trend of thought and technique and gradually began to gain momentum. The evolution of Hindi Story literature from the Bharatendru age to the age of dwibedi proves this point. The eagerness to make the storie. Conform to the demand of the age and to bring social awarness in it which found its expression from the early years of the history of the Bengali short story, gave the Bengali short story the advantage of staying ahead of others in the matter of its development. The father of Hindi prose literature Bharatendu Harichandra and the great writer Premchand in the early years of their writing career translated quite a number of Bengali short stories and being inspired by them began to write original stories.
The coming of Premchand in the field of fiction is the greatest event in the history of Hindi short story. It was because of his genius that literature began to deal with the realities of life and came down to the earth from the world of fancy. The chief objective of literature till now, was to entertain the readers or to instruct them in the moral virtues of life. This easy and tempting road was abandoned and literature began to show more interest in the social problems and the harsh realities of life. The role of Premchand in bringing about this change in the first decade of the 20th century is unforgettable. Premchand was deeply involved with the realities of the age and his mind and through were nourished by his sense of responsibility as a writer, but the influence of the writer who came before him was not little upon his immortal stories. Premchand was heir to a long tradition of stories. We can trace back the beginning of this stream of stories which came even before the Bharatendu age, i.e. about the year 1880.

According to our previous assertion the latest branch of prose literature, the short story made its appearance in the Bharatendu age. But we can name these unimportant stories which appeared before the Bharatendu age which played a historic role in giving the short story its present form. These stories are 'Prem sagar' by Lallu lal, 'Nachiketopakhyan' by Sadal Mishra, and 'Rani Ketaki Ki Kahani' by Insa Allah Khan. The thoughtful comment of Dr. Ramkali Saraf is, "bhārtendu hariścandra se pūrva hindē kahānē sāhitya kē ja pūrn pēthikā vidyamān hei usme lak kathāyīo aur paurāṇik vṛitti kē pradhānātā hei. lekhakā kē bhāv pradhān kalpanā kē pramukhtā unki racanāyē ka sarvatra ācchanna kiyē hue hei." Even it we accept this early fiction written in 'Khadi Boli' language to which can be included in the prose
In fact, the chief objective of these stories was to entertain, which excited the curiosity and were rather meant to be instructive. The story writers named their stories 'Kissa' and gave them such form which had but little relation with reality. But this is also an undeniable truth that the stories were very popular. So, we can echo the words of Dr. Indra Mohan Kumar Sinha, "in kahāniyā kā sambandh pratyakṣa jīvan se kam aur kalpanāmaya jīvan se adhik nahā. is kāl kē kahāniyā ke kahānē kā spāśṭ aux niṣchit nup ta nahē ban sakā kintu inse bhaviṣya ke kahānēkgāra kā mārg-pradaṇsān huā."53

Bharatendu left behind him his significant contribution in the matter of giving the Hindi story its future form. The writers of this age not only translated stories from Sanskrit, Bengali and English literature, they also wrote original stories of their own. The stories, 'Ek Adbhut Apurva Swapna', 'Pranantak Prasad', 'Mugdhamani' etc. by Bharatendu bear witness of his power of original writing and originality of thinking. 'Raja Bhoj Ka Sapna' of Shiv Prasad Singh, 'Taka Kamani' of Pundit Gouri Dutta Sharma, 'Kulin Kanya' of Munshi Shahi Lal, are all original stories and they have left a significant contribution in the development journey of Hindi short story.

The original stories which were published in the last part of the 19th century, had the religious and moral problems of the people who desired a Hindu state, as their main themes. It can be said following Victor Balin that stories, "spāśṭh śikṣāprada caṇitra vahan karte thē aur aise visay pradaṇsit karte thē, jeise ādāra mitra, ādāra vidyānthē, ādāra griḥastha ityādi kaise hane cāhiye."54 In this age, stress was laid to
follow Hindu customs, religious practices, etc. the problems of drinking habit, playing dice and their evil consequences. A kind of indifference to the disturbing problems of the time was visible which in the later period, that of the Dwibedi age and the age of Premchand, became the chief characteristic of literature. So, we can unhesitatingly support Victor Balin’s view, “us samaytak sāhitya me gambhēr sāmājik samasyānyo ne praveś naḥē kiyā thā.”

The first decade of the 20th century may be considered to be starting point of modern Hindi short story. The magazine, ‘Saraswati’, edited by Acharya Mahabir Prasad Dwibedi, played a pioneering role in the publication of the works of the budding writers which, in the later period, was recognised as the corner stone in the birth of modern Hindi short story. According to Dr. Tribhuvan Singh, “hindē kahānē kā vāstavik āraṃbh 1900 isvi me saraswati patrīkā ke prakāśan ke sāth huā.”

Dr. Indra Mohan Kumar Sinha said in support of this comment, “hindē kē ādhunik kahāniyān kā āraṃbh bisvi satābdē se hē huā.”

The analysis of Dr. Balraj Pandey also supports this view, “saśākt vidhā ke rup me kahānē dwivedē yug me hē vikasit huā.”

Dr. Indu Rashmi also admits the truth of this fact, “bisvi satābdē ke śuaṭātē vāṃṣ me hindē kahānēkārayā ke ek vāng ne jēvanke vividh pakṣh ka ādhār banākar ādhunik kahāniyā likhē.”

The first story of this new tradition was ‘Indumati’ by Kishori Lal Goswami. In the opinion of the majority of Scholars and researchers the three stories which laid the foundation of modern Hindi short story are, ‘Indumati’, by Kishori Lal Goswami, ‘Gyarah Varsha Ka Samay’ by Ram Chandra Shukla, and ‘Dulai Wali’ by Banga Mahila. Of course there is
difference of opinion among the literary historians that, which of the three stories was the first modern and original story, Acharya Ram Chandra Shukla wrote, “yadi mārmikatā kē dṛṣṭi se bhāv pradhān kahāniya ka cine ta tin milti hei - indumati, gyarha varṣ kā samay aur dulāi wâlē, yadi indumati kisē bāilā kahānē kē chāyā nahē ta hindē kē yehi pahlē maulik kahānē ṭhaharitī hei.” But the opinion of Dr. Krishna Lal Shukla is exactly the opposite of this, “yeh indumati purnataya maulik kriti nahē kahē jā sakati, kyunuki ispar sekspēar kē prasiddha nātak tempeṣṭ kē chāp bahut hē espaṣṭ hei.”

In 1901 the story ‘Ek Tokri Bhar Mitti’ by Madhav Rao Sapre was published in the magazine ‘Chhattisgarh Mitra’. The same story was published by a non-Hindi writer in the magazine ‘Sarika’ (February, 1968, Page-19) and according to the new information available in it, “yadi kahānē ke itihās ka prasād aur premcand se purv le janā hē hei ta ‘ek tokrē bhar mitti’ hindē kē pahlē kahānē aur mādhav rāo sapre hindē ke pratham kahānēkār hei.”

Within the limits of the period of our discussion the stories, ‘Pandit Aur Panditani’ by Girija Dutta Vajpayee, ‘Uma Bhavani,’ ‘Karam Lekh’, ‘Anokha Swayamvar’, etc. by Parvati Nandan (Girija Kumar Ghosh) ‘Swarga Ki Ek Jhalak’, ‘Sumeru Parvat,’ by Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi, ‘Rakhibandha Bhai’, ‘Sarpejit Ki Patni’, ‘Birata Ki Padmini’, ‘Ek Bir Rajput’ by Vrindavan Lal Varma, etc. were written. Prithwipal Singh, Surya Narayan Dikshit, Kundan Lal, etc. translated English stories into Hindi and brought almost all the characteristics of English stories in Hindi Story, Gadahar Singh, Jagannath Prasad Tripathi translated many Sanskrit stories in to Hindi at this time many Bengali story were also translated into Hindi.
In the Dwibedi age many stories were written on different aspects of human life. In the stories of Krishori Lal Goswami, Girija Dutta Vajpayee, Ram Chandra Shukla, Parvati Nandan etc. we find, imagination, emotion and feelings of the heart Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi, Vrindavan Lal Verma, etc. took the events which actually happened in real life, as the themes of their stories of the other writers of this age we may mention the names of Gopal Ram Gahamari, Nizam Shah, Keshav Prasad Singh, Kartik Prasad Khetri, Srilal Shaligram, etc. This intial stratum of the Hindi story may not seen to be very significant from the literary point of view, but the seed its future lay dormant in them.

In the second decade of the 20th century the Hindi short story gained more momentum. In 1911 the story ‘Gram’ by Jayshankar Prasad was published in the magazine ‘Indu’ and this gave the Hindi story its definite artistic form. Following Dr. Tribhuvan Singh it can be said, "jise nscriivād nup me hindē kē pratham sāhityik kahānē kā gaurav pradān kiyā jā sakta ā heī."63

In this magazine the story ‘Kano Me Kangana’ by Raja Radhika Raman Singh was published in 1913. The story ‘Rakhsa Bandhan’ by Viswambhar Nath Sharma was published in the magazine ‘Saraswati’ 1913 and ‘Usne Kaha Tha’ by Chandradhar Sharma Guleri was published in 1915. In fact, these powerful stories showed the way to the realities of life which laid the basis for Premchand to start on his long writing career. The historic significance of the story ‘Usne Kaha Tha’ can never be denied. According to many researchers this story is the first original story in Hindi. In originality, artistic skill, gravity of the events, love and sacrifice, the story can claim the first rank in the world of short stories. So, in the words of
Namvar Singh it can be said, “is kahānī ne hindī kahānī ka ekbhāngē kautuhalpūrna ghatanāyano ke kathanak se ubānkar mārmik jīvan kē or maṭ diyā.”

In fact this was a turning point in the history of Hindi short story when it turned towards realistic ideals and cultural reforms which bore the fruit, the story ‘Panch Parameswar’ by Premchand published in the magazine ‘Saraswati’ in 1916. In this way the two magazines ‘Saraswati’ and ‘Indu’ gave birth to two schools of Hindi short story whose true patrons were Premchand and Jayshankar Prasad respectively. We can support the opinion of Dr. Ramkali Saraf that, “is daut kē prem pradhān kahānīyāo kē paramparā vikasit kiyā prasād ne tathā yathārthavādi paramparā ke unnāyak ke rup me premcand sāmne āye.”

While describing the true nature of Hindi short story Sri Ajneya wrote in the second decade of the 20th century, “prasād aur premcand apne samay tak kē kahānī kē da mukhya pravṛttīyāo ke pratīk hei. dana kā anusaran bhē huā. yadyapi prasād kē bhāv mulak pramparā ka kam laga ne apnāyā aur yathārthavādi pramparā jaṭo se āge calī. ja viśeṣatnāye premchand me sundarānath athavā cāram rup me lākṣīt huē hē uskāl kē kahānīyāo kē viśeṣatnāe mān lē jā sakti hei.”

The portrayal of the realities of life and to explain them was taken by Premchand to be the objective of his stories and he could come very close to life and society. He brought the entire society in his stories and spoke with sympathy about the condition of Peasants, the working class, the women and the poor of the lower stratum of the society. The picture of the appression of the higher caste on the lower is seen in his stories against which he raised his loud voice of protest. He attacked the blind beliefs in
religion and social customs with intense satire and describing the problems of the common people he brought the story literature within their household. So, the assessment of Dr. Indu Rashmi seems to be the truth. He said, "niścai hē hindē kahānē ne pṛemcand ke vyektitwa me apnā vistār pāyā."

In this way the change in the objective of short story and its technique and style which was faintly discernable in the Bharatendu age, took a definite shape and form in the age of Dwibedi and with the advent of Premchand in the arena of Hindi short story, it matured fully and became a symbol of its excellence. This is the historic importance of Hindi short story which came before Premchand. According to Dr. Tribhuvan Singh it can be said, "pṛemchand ke kahānē kṣhetra me āgaman se hindē kahānē kā ja ek niścit diśā mili uskē bhumikā pūrbavartē kathā sāhitya me avaśya ban nāhē thē."

From the time of Insa Allah Khan to the time of Premchand, Hindi short story followed a definite course in its development. Though it was a little disorderly in the beginning, yet it cannot be denied that Premchand inherited a long tradition short story. So, following Dr. Indra Mohan Kumar Sinha, it can be said, "kahāniyē se kahānē kā spāṣṭh niścit rup ta nahē ban sakā, kintu inse bhavisya ke kahānēkāṁṇo kā māṅg-pradarśan huā."
2nd Chapter
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