INTRODUCTORY

Literature is inextricably connected with life, society and politics. Not much has been said on the relation of literature with politics with the result that any attempt to prove their intimate relationship is bound to be controversial. Ralph Fox in his essay on 'Literature and Politics' says, "- - - - - - in many cases literature is political, openly and deliberately political art. - - - - - - The art of the novel was founded in this country by a man who was extremely political in all his work, by Defoe, and his best known work, Robinson Crusoe, was actually used as a thesis in political economy by the supporters of the capitalist system in the eighteenth century." ¹ Such a conception of literature and politics is based more or less on the theories expounded by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

The present thesis is not concerned with the political writings or the literary productions primarily meant to propagate certain political tendencies. Its scope is to trace the influence of political movements on Hindi poetry and fiction during the period 1906-1947. The evaluation of only those literary works have been made wherein the influences of political movement or movements have been inwoven in the texture. No ambitions venture has so far been made by any Hindi critic to explore the dense jungle of such works. All that has been written on the subject is that a particular piece of literature has the impact of the political movement or movements without the name of any movement having been mentioned. Professor Suchindra has, of course, in his work "Hindi Kavita mein Yugantar"

¹ Ralph Fox - The Novel and the People - Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow 1956 - Pp. 41 & 42
made a critical study of the various trends in Hindi poetry during the first two decades of the present century. In this work, the writer has described the changes in Hindi poetry exercised conjointly by the social, cultural, economic, communal and political conditions of the time. The lack of conscious, systematic, and chronological study of the various political movements of the 20th century and their immediate and far-reaching effects on the contemporary Hindi literature, especially poetry and fiction, has been acutely felt and in the ensuing chapters it has been desired to fill this vacuum.

With a view to give a complete political background, the period under study has been divided into -

(i) Jagriti kāl (Period of Awakening) 1906-1919.
(ii) Utthan Kāl (Period of Uprising) 1919-1935.
(iii) Sangharsh kāl (Period of Struggle) 1935-1947.

This division into periods is rather an innovation entirely based on the research of the cross-currents of the political movements of a particular age and their profound impact on the contemporary Hindi literature. It helps to give an ordered and panoramic view of an age and the literary works of that age are held in relief when viewed against the political background of those times. The conspicuous features of the political movements of the Jagriti kāl were to eulogise the past glory, to imbibe the spirit of patriotism, and to foster political consciousness among the ignorant and the unlettered. The significant political movements of this time were the Home Rule, the Hindu-Muslim unity and the Revolutionary movements. No less was the contribution in this field of such socio-political movements as the Swadeshi, the Boycott
and the Peasant movements. During this period the ground was being prepared to launch a bigger and a more effective campaign to win Swarajya. Coming to the literary aspect of the time, it shall be noticed that poetry was the most developed form of the Hindi literature. The great poets like Badrinarayan Chowdhry 'Premghsn', Rai Deviprasad 'Purna', Mahewirprasad Dwivedi, Jaishankarprasad, Ramnaresh Tripathi, Gayaprasad Shukla 'Sanehi' and 'Ek Bhartiya Atma' were immensely influenced by the current political movements. Fiction was comparatively less developed, consequently the fictional works of this period do not embody the cross-currents of the political movements. Premchand was the only main novelist who came under the influence of the Patriotic, the Swadeshi and the Swarajya Movements. At the same time, he was moved by the Marxist Movement in Russia.

The Utthān-kāł witnessed the rise of political movements like the Satyagraha and the Non-cooperation Movements. Most of the Hindi writers of this age were active political workers but in no way did they stoop to make literature an instrument for political teachings rather they showed the knack of blending political reality with the poetic and artistic imagination. Kaithilisharan Gupta, Mākhānāl Chaturvedi, Siyaramsharan Gupta, Jaishankar Prasad, Sohanlal Dwivedi, Subhadra Kumārī Chauhan, Harikrishna 'Premi', Ramdharī Singh 'Dinkar', Suryakant Tripathi 'Mirālā' and Bhagawati Charan Varma are the poets in whose literary writings the impact of the political movements is not like the picture on the surface of the cloth rather it is like the picture which emerges out of the warp and woof of the cloth. In the field of fiction, Premchand, Jainendra Kumar, Manmath Nath Gupta, 'Ajheiy',
and 'Pahari' were in the forefront.

Sangharsh kāl - the period of struggle - covers the years from 1935 to 1947. The Individual Civil Disobedience Movement, the Quit India Movement, the Pakistan Movement, the Socialist, the Communist and the Trade Union Movements were the main movements through which the political activities of the age found fullest expression. Though all these movements strived for the attainment of Independence, their ideologies and the means to attain their goal were different-sometimes antagonistic. The Individual Civil Disobedience and the Quit India Movements, which were sponsored by the Congress, were non-violent but the Socialist Party within the Congress fold was restive and more or less resorted to violent methods. The Muslim League propagated for a separate Islamic State and could not but bring about a cleavage between the sister communities. The dissensions among the Hindus and the Muslims resulted ultimately in communal riots. The Hindi poets condemned such riots and emphasised the need for greater harmony between the two communities. These poets were keen to create an atmosphere for better understanding of each other's point of view. The Socialist and the Communist Movements, which had by now gained a considerable following, had political-economic aims. They wanted to eliminate the disparity existing between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Under the influence of Marxism, a new kind of literature - both in subject - matter and form - was fostered which was called later on as the Progressive literature. Sumitranandan Pant, Bhagawaticharan Varma, Dinkar, Anchal and Nirala were the most famous poets who wrote under the influence of Marxism. Among the writers
of fiction and short stories, Yashpal, Bhagawaticharan Verma, Rangaynaghava, Rahul Sankrityayan are prominent.

The first chapter of this thesis deals with the relation between literature and politics and how literature is influenced by political movements. The next chapter briefly enumerates the political movements (1806 to 1947) which have influenced the contemporary Hindi poetry and fiction, whereas in the subsequent three chapters the effect of contemporary political movements on Hindi poetry has been investigated. In the sixth, seventh and eighth chapters the same influences in the fictional Hindi literature have been probed.

In the end, it appears necessary to mention the difficulties experienced by the author in collecting the material which was not only in a scattered form but also, in many cases, vague and obscure. No reliable history of the political movements of the first half of the 20th century has been written in a unified form and whatever is available, it is inadequate. It has been the endeavour of the author to view all these movements in a disinterested and scientific way. In this connexion personal contact was also maintained with a number of political workers and the top-most Hindi writers whose works have been profoundly influenced by one or more than one political movements, but no guidance could be obtained. An extensive tour was undertaken to consult the files of the Saraswati, the Karyada, the Pratap, the Bharat Mitra, the Hans etc. available at Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi and Calcutta. Besides these journals, as many as 300 books consisting of about 70,000 pages were intensively studied. In many books the influence of the political movements was
not obvious on the surface but pervaded them in a symbolic manner. The author is deeply indebted to Dr. Indranath Madan who gave valuable guidance and thereby helped him to visualise the things in their right perspective.

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