CBSE Class–10 Social Science
NCERT Solutions
Chapter 6
Novels, Society and History

Ques1: Explain the following:

(a) Social changes in Britain which led to an increase in women readers

Ans: As the middle classes became more affluent in eighteenth century, women got more leisure time to read and write novels. Also, novels began to explore the world of women, their emotions, identities, experiences and problems. Domestic life became an essential subject of novels- a field women had an authority to speak about. They drew upon their experience, wrote about family life and earned public recognition.

(b) What actions of Robinson Crusoe make us see him as a typical coloniser.

Ans: The hero of Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe is an adventurer and slave trader.There are many actions of Robinson Crusoe's that make us see him as a typical coloniser are. Shipwrecked on an island inhabited by coloured people, Crusoe treats them as inferior beings. He is portrayed as "rescuing" a native and then making him a slave. He is arrogant enough not to ask him his name and gives him the name Friday, Colonised people were seen as barbaric and primitive, and colonialism became their self-professed civiliser. Crusoe was a direct representation of this ideology of colonisers.

(c) After 1740, the readership of novels began to include poorer people.

Ans: Initially novels did not come cheap. After 1740, the readership of novels began to include poorer people because of the introduction of circulating libraries. The books also become affordable due to technological improvements. In countries like France, publishers found that they could make super profits by hiring out novels by the hour. This made books easily available to the poor people, who could not afford books earlier due to high costs and absence of lending libraries.

(d) Novelists in colonial India wrote for a political cause.

Ans: Novelists in colonial India wrote for a political cause because the novel was a powerful medium for expressing social defects and suggesting remedies for the same.Colonial rulers considered the contemporary Indian culture as inferior one. On the contrary, Indian novelists wrote to develop a modern literature to produce a sence of national belonging and cultural equality with their colonial masters. It also helped establish a relationship with the past. Since people from all walks of life could read novels, it was an easy way to popularise anti-colonial ideas. It also helped bring about a sense of national unity among the people.

Ques2: Outline the changes in technology and society which led to an increase in readers of the novel in eighteenth-century Europe.

Ans: a) Changes in Technology

1. Change in print technolgy increased the affordibility, accessibility and readership of the novels. Publishers also started hiring out novels. Books could now be read in private or could be heard by more people,
2. Improved communication like railways connected small towns and rural areas imcrerasing the readership.
3. Prosperity, due to industrialisation, made new groups to join the readership for novels. Besides the aristocratic and gentlemanly classes, new groups of lower-middle-class people such as shopkeepers and clerks joined in.

b) Social changes.

1. Unlike other literary forms novel depicted the life of common man. It made novels real, absorbing and believable.

2.Readers were drawn into the story and identified themselves with the lives of fictitious characters. They now could think about issues like love and marriage, proper conduct for men and women.

3.The rise in the earnings of authors freed them the from the patronage of aristocrats. They could now experiment with different literary styles. Epistolary novel – Samuel Richardson's Pamela – written in the 18th century was the first of its kind. It was a story told through letters.while one of them read it out.

4. Due to prosperity, women got leisure time and they became readers as well as writers. They wrote about their domestic life,so it increased the readership amongst women.

All these changes increased the number of readers.

Ques3: Write a note on:

(a) The Oriya novel

- **Ans:** In 1877-78, Ramashankar Ray started to serialise the first Oriya novel, "Saudamini"; but it remained incomplete.
- Orissa's first major novelist was Fakir Mohon Senapati. He wrote "Chaa Mana Atha Guntha" that deals with land and its possession. This novel illustrated that rural issues could be an important part of urban concerns.
- The Oriya novels were path breaking and mainly based on rural issues of land and its possession.

(b) Jane Austen's portrayal of women

Ans: Jane Austen is an English novelist.Her novels give us a glimpse of the world of women in genteel rural society in midnineteenth century Britain.

Women, at that time, were encouraged to look for a good marriage and find a wealthy and propertied husband. Her famous novel 'Pride and Prejudice' depicts this well. It writes 'it is the truth, universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of good fortune must be in want of a good wife'.

The main characters are shown to be pre-occupied with marriage and money.

(c) The picture of the new middle class which the novel Pariksha-Guru portrays.

Ans:

1.'Pariksha Guru' is first modern novel in Hindi literature and was written by Shrinivas Das of Delhi in 1882.

2.The novel portrays the difficulties of the new middle class in adapting to colonised society

while preserving its cultural identity. It emphasises that Western ideals must be inculcated, but without sacrificing the traditional values of middle-class households.

3.The characters in this Hindi novel by Srinivas Das are seen endeavoring to bridge the two different worlds of modern education and traditional ethics.

4. But the novel did not go down well with the middle class readers due to its over moralising style and tone.

Discuss

Que 1: Discuss some of the social changes in nineteenth-century Britain which Thomas Hardy and Charles Dickens wrote about.

Ans: (i) Social changes in 19th century Britain highlighted by Thomas Hardy

- Thomas Hardy was a 19 th century English novelist.
- The breaking up of rural communities because of industrialization. Due to industrialization, peasants who toiled with their lands were disappearing as large or big farmers enclosed lands, bought machines and employed labourers to produce for the market.
- In his novel 'Mayor of Casterbridge', Hardy mourns the loss of the more personalized world which is being replaced by a more efficiently managed urban culture.

(ii) Social Changes highlighted by Charles Dickens

- Through his novels 'Hard times' and 'Oliver Twist' Charles Dickens looked at the terrible conditons of the life under indeustrial capitalism.
- Charles Dickens wrote mainly about the emergence of the industrial age and it's effects on society and the common people.
- Growth of factories and expanded cities led to the growth of business and economy and increased the profits of capitalists.

(iii) At the same time workers faced immense problems. Use of machines resulted in unemployment of ordinary labour; they became homeless, creating a problem of housing. Pursuit of profit became the goal of factory owners while the workers were undervalued and

almost lost their identity Human beings were reduced to being mere instruments of production.

Ques2: Summarise the concern in both nineteenth-century Europe and India about women reading novels. What does this suggest about how women were viewed?

Ans: In 19th century women in India and Europe were readers as well as writers. Protagonist in the society concerned about their reading due to following reasons.

The concern in both nineteenth-century Europe and India about women reading novels bore more or less similar fears. Women were seen as easily corruptible and an imaginary world that the novel provided was seen as a dangerous opening for the imaginations of its readers. In certain Indian communities, it was felt that women who read novels would leave their domestic environments and aspire to be part of the outside world- the male domain.This suggests that women were viewed as delicate and incapable of being independent. They were merely expected to marry a man who could take care of their financial needs while they maintained his household and remained subservient to him.

Ques3: In what ways was the novel in colonial India useful for both the colonisers as well as the nationalists?

Ans: The novel in colonial India was useful for both the colonisers as well as the nationalists on account of a variety of reasons.

For Colonisers : Colonial rulers found 'vernacular' novels illuminating for the information they provided on native customs and life. It was useful in the governance of this diverse country. Many British and Christian missionaries translated these novels into English for their valuable information.

For Nationalist : Indian nationalists used the form of the novel to criticise colonial rule and instill a sense of national pride and unity amongst the people.These novels also portrayed inbuilt contradictions in the Indian society like caste systems, untouchability etc.It made Indians to introspect to directed them to work for social integration.

Ques4: Describe how the issue of caste was included in novels in India. By referring to

any two novels, discuss the ways in which they tried to make readers think about existing social issues.

Ans: Indians used the novel as a powerful medium to criticise what they considered defects in their society and to suggest remedies. The issue of caste was included in Indian novels for this same purpose. Novels like Indirabai and Indulekha were written by members of the uppercastes with upper-caste characters.

→ Potheri Kunjambu, a lower-caste writer from north Kerala, wrote a novel called *Saraswativijayam* in 1892. It was a direct attack on caste oppression. The novel's hero, an 'untouchable' leaves his village to escape from cruelty of a Brahmin overlord. He converts to Christianity, receives modern education and returns to his village a judge of a local court. In the meantime, the villagers bring the landlord to his court, they believe the landlord's men had killed the hero. The judge reveals himself and the Nambuthri landlord repents and promises to reform. The novel emphasises the role of education in uplifting the lower classes.

→ A Bengali novel *Titash Ekti Nadir Naam* (1956) written by Advaita Malla Burman takes up the cause of 'low castes'. The people described are the Mallas - community of fishermen. The story covers three generations and describes the oppression of the upper castes. The lives of the Mallas is tied with river Titash. As the river dries, the community dies too. This novel is special because the author himself a 'low caste' describing the anguish of low-caste people.

Ques5: Describe the ways in which the novel in India attempted to create a sense of Pan-Indian belonging.

Ans: The ways in which the novel in India attempted to create a sense of pan-Indian belonging were:

→ Colonists depicted India as weak, divided and dependent community. On the other hand nationalist novelists tried to show India's glorius past and a sense of unity amongst Indians.

→ Many historical novels were about Marathas and the Rajputs which produced a sense of a pan—Indian belonging in Bengal. They imagined the nation to be full of adventure, heroism, romance and sacrifice. The novel allowed the colonized to give a shape to their desires.

→ Bankim's Anandmath is a novel about a secret Hindu militia that fight Muslims to establish a Hindu kingdom. It was a novel that inspired many kinds of freedom fighters.

→ Shivaji, the hero of the novel Anguriya Binimoy (1857) written by Budhadeb Mukhopadhyaya's (1827-94) engages in many battles against clever and treacherous Aurangzeb, what gives him courage and grit is his belief that he is a nationalist fighting for the freedom of Hindus.

→ Imagining a heroic past was one way in which the novel helped in popularising the sense of belonging to a common nation. It was another way to include various classes in the novel so that they could be seen as belonging to a shared world. Premchand's novels, for instance, are filled with all kinds of powerful characters drawn from all levels of society.