

Relationship between Literature and Journalism

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Abstract. Literature is the mirror of society. Before the 18th century, thinkers of the society gave ethical, social and philosophical views through local songs, Lyrics, Poems, Parables, Drama etc. But in modern age, it is being done by the process of Journalism. Today it has emerged as a new means of literature and as such it plays a pivotal role in influencing the taste of reading public as well as that of the common mass. It has its visible and invisible impact on all aspects of modern life. Journalism and Literature grew with differences, but their motto is the same – a journalist as well as a man of literature both hanker after the same thing – the story and the truth. The present paper is an attempt to explore the relationship between Literature and Journalism.

Keywords : Cinematography; lithography; human values and ethics; interpretation of life.

Literature has often been studied as a mirror to reflect our society. The 17th century is known as the beginning age of journalism. In the 17th and 18th centuries in place of 'Periodical', Latin words, 'Diurnal' and 'Journals' were used. Before the 18th century, thinkers of the society gave ethical, social and philosophical views through local songs, lyrics, poems, parables, drama etc. But in modern age, it is being done by the process of Journalism. Literary speaking, Journalism is the occupation of conducting a news medium including publishing, editing, writing or broadcasting. Today, journalism has emerged as a new means of literature and as such it plays a pivotal role in not simply reflecting the social throbs rather it is the most important factor to influence the taste of reading public as well as that of the common mass. Actually, it is a way to the compilation and transmission of information through print media or electronic media.

Journalism has its visible and invisible impact on all aspects of modern life. The newspaper, the radio, the T.V., the advertisement and the film – the major media or modern mass communication - wage a frantic war of ideas, ideologies, and opinions every day on the tensile nerves of our social fabric which had been early done by different forms of literature such as poetry, novels, drama, short Story etc. Modern newspaper, radio wavelength, television, satellites and multicolour cinematography today play an all-pervading role of mass educators and mass-entertainers. Noam Chomsky says, "The duty of Journalists is to tell the truth. Journalism means you go back to the actual facts, you discover what the record is, and you report if that way". (Interview)

As Journalism and Literature grow, they grow apart but the motto of both is the same. Both are like envelope which covers the society with its proper address of honour and dignity. For more than three centuries, journalists and authors have been after the same things : the story and the truth. Writers of both news and literature, infact, have commonly used the terms for their products and purposes, whether they go out and get it or sit down and write it, a story has long been something familiar to both reporters and authors. The similarities in Journalism and Literature go well beyond terminology. In each realm, writers seek to capture some aspects of reality and convey them to an audience through the medium of language. They have collected it whether it consists of facts, or impressions, both reporters and authors must give to this raw material same kind of form, often turning to many of same conventions including metaphor, imagery plot and characterisation.

Journalism is an expression of total perfection of human life as literature is. It is also an expression of human culture, literary thoughts, religious and spiritual behaviours. It evaluates the present human values and ethics as literature does. If we go back to the past time, the ancient Greeks had great orators like Demosthenes who spoke to large mass of people consisting of hundreds or even thousands of people who would assemble in amphitheatres. Obviously there was no microphone in those days. Oratory was an art developed by the Greeks and the Romans.

Emperor Ashoka's rock edicts and pillar inscriptions in the third century B.C. are examples of ruler's attempts to communicate with a large number of their literate subjects and through them to the illiterates by word of mouth. The Roman rulers from Julius Caesar's time (B.C. 100-44) used wall postings containing imperial dicta to inform the public on a daily basis about what the public had to know or do. These "all-news bulletins" were called *Acta Diurna* (Daily Acts). Some historians consider them the first Newspaper, but it is doubtful if they reached many Roman subjects directly. Perhaps their contents were orally transmitted to the general public by those who were able to read them or by the town criers appointed for the purpose.

From handwritten bulletins evolved handwritten newsletters and later lithographed Newsletter and bulletins. Lithography (stone writing or printing from images of letters cut in stone) was a stepping stone to other form of printing. When Marco Polo returned to Europe after his long tour, he brought with him information about the art of printing from movable types. This kind of printing was prevalent in Korea too, but it fell into disuse for some reason. Quicker and cheaper printing of books had a big impact on the cause of socio-economic and political communication in subsequent centuries. First, printing of secular books began to be printed, production and dissemination of information moved out of the compounds of religious institutions into the midst of common people. The most characteristic literary form of the 18th century, the essay owed its origin to these same coffee-houses, and, as someone has written, "true to its original purpose, if faithfully

mirrored the manners of the day when fiction presented nothing but ideals and artifical comedy only caricature – “The Tatler”, “The Spectator”, “The Rambler”, “The Idler” all these were not exactly newspapers, in the modern connotation of the term, but they were some of the most important journalistic ventures of any time, and, at the beginning, they did not wholly disdain to be topic. Later on, however, they ceased to have any news value and literature, not politics, usurped their main interest. The literature of the time was connected to the exhibition of vices, foibles of the society of the times. Literature became an interpretation of life the kind of life, that was led in the social and political circles of the times. The literature of this period is written in terms of social super structure and not in terms of the individual mind. The poetry of Alexander Pope particularly in “The Rape of the Lock” is a fine exhibition of social and political life of the 18th century.

Poetry naturally became the poetry of the town, the coffee house and the artifical society. It is highlighted by R.C. Churchill, “In this powerful literary world of London, the most powerful element was in the coffee-house and it was to this public that the two representative writers of the age, Addison and Steele, came to address themselves”. (Ahuja 93)

I would like to say that the main spring of poetry and the intimate touch with the primeval springs of the life were perfectly neglected. The literature of the age lost all touch with the country life. Infact, literature often portrayed the life of the town to the minutest detail. In this period, satire was also a prominent form of the literature developed during the age of Pope. Even during the Restoration period satire was in the air and prominence was given to satirical literature. The satires of Dryden and Oldham are well known to us. Satire was directed not against sin in Langland, but against dullness and personal enemies.

Steele and Addison, Johnson and Goldsmith were journalists as well as literary men – their journalism blossomed forth into literature with the passing of time. Their age is mirrored in their lightest effusions; they are the stethoscopes through which we hear the heart beats of their century. Journalism has to take into account the essay form, as it has to reckon with the various other modes which literature and the time spirit adopt. If they do nothing else, they do this, as Thackeray, a keen student of the 18th century, suggested in his famous lectures on the English Humourists that as we read in these delightful volumes of “The Tatler” and “The Spectator”, the past age returns, the England of our ancestors is revivified. The churches are thronged with daily worshippers and the gentry, the ladies are thronging to the toy-shops; the chairmen are jostling in the streets : the footmen are running with links before the chariots. The function of Journalism is not only to entertain the society but it offers information, news, education and awareness. It also motivates people directly or indirectly. The new ideal of the present century viz; the value and

importance of the individual life demanded a new type of literature. So, the Journalism as literature is born to mirror the tastes and requirements of the new class of readers and audience through different medium. G. K. Chesterton said, "Journalism is popular, but it is popular mainly as fiction. Life is one word, and life seen in the newspapers another". (44) Journalism is of different kinds :

Print Media Journalism

Print media journalism presents various informations thorough news paper, magazines and books. Professionals of this stream are staff correspondents, special correspondents, news editors, chief editors, political commentators, cartoonists, columnists, feature writers, content writers for magazines etc. These professionals have amazing abilities to analyse political, economic and social situations prevailing in a region, nation or the globe. They weave a magic spell of words in the print media and regularly attract the attention of readers. They are in touch with politicians, editors of newspapers and magazines and the people closely assaulted with press production. Charles Lamb also stated in 1833 in "On Book and Reading" that newspaper always excites curiosity. No one ever lays one down without a feeling of disappointment.

Radio Journalism

Radio journalism works for broadcasting news and various informations through an important medium of mass communication. Radio journalists move to various (distant) locations to get news or interview the V.V.I.P. They may collect news or data from the masses as well. They are also supported by various agencies such as Univarta, Bhasha, the UNI, PTI etc. In case of Radio-broadcasting besides original plays, radio adaptation of outstanding novels, short stories and stage plays in Indian languages are broadcast in the national programme of plays which started in 1956. A series of monthly chain plays are also broadcast in the field of entertainment and recreating for all sections of the people, and encourage all forms of cultural expressions - traditional, classical, modern and international.

T. V. Journalism

The importance of this kind of journalism is increasing rapidly in every part of the world. This is the second organ of broadcast journalism. Nearly 90 percent of India's population is being covered by various T.V. broadcasts. T. V. is an audio-visual communication tool. It requires the attention of two senses of the targeted individual – audio and visual. Hence, the T.V. Journalism has not only to give pleasing music, voices or other audio signals to the targeted subjects, but also he has to mesmerize them with the help of his personality, mannerize, news and appropriate colour combinations. T.V. Journalism also includes recording of music, dance shows or live chat shows and offers the service of an anchor, too.

Cinema / Film

Now a days, cinema is the most prominent and important art of literature. The cinema can create sensation, thrill and cheapness. Today, so many films are being made on the story of novels and dramas. The novels have to be compressed into two-hour movie in such a way that it captures the curiosity of the audience, attracts their attention and entertains them by satisfying their ideals and desires.

Internet Journalism

Internet is a source of all kinds of information. With the increasing importance of interent, internet journalism is spreading its feet in all fields to collect data and information for the general public. Internet is an ideal platform to give a vent to one's feelings. The articles or messages posted by people can be appreciated or eschewed online. Whatever we want to read, hear or watch, we can do through Internet.

Thus, it can be said that the development of radio, cinema, T.V., internet has enormous impact on literature. In early age before the appearance of different media of journalism, theatre, dramas, novels were the media for presenting the social message in the form of entertainment but now a days, journalism helps to make people aware of the latest news and events. It provides a new kind of knowledge related to economy, science, health care and technology through print media and electronic media both. It also helps in entertaining a huge mass of our society through cinema, music, serials, fashion etc. Edward Albert has rightly said that in so far as the radio brought literature into the home in form of broadcast stories, plays and literary new field for authors, its influence was for the good. At the same time it must be remembered that film techniques were the basis of a number of experiments in the novel.

In a nutshell, we can say that there is a strong relationship between literature and journalism from the very beginning. There is something permanent in a literary creation. That is why a seasoned journalist has described journalism as the literature of the hour. Today's headlines are tomorrow's footnotes. Even the Victorian poet, Matthew Arnold has defined Journalism "as literature in a hurry".

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