

RURAL NARRATIVES: FUSION OF CONVENTION AND REVOLUTION

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Abstract

As we all know that village is at the center of Indian realm. It is being talked about in every field be it politics, literature, philosophy, or history. In Indian English fiction it is the most popularly discussed theme which is barely impossible to ignore or forget. It has influenced every aspect of Indian English Fiction. Literature and rural narrative is still left untold at certain ends and so I would like to make a modest attempt in re-inventing the rural narratives in the light of Indian English Literature. The present paper is an attempt to analyze the village writings of almost all known figures in the realm of Indian fiction in English. The entire Indian English writings can be divided into two parts as far as its development is concerned: Pre and Post-Independence period. The foremost writings which have been critically and analytically discussed in this paper belong to the post-independence period which has been a period of astonishing fertility in the creation of rural literature.

“India or the Republic of India is located in South Asia. It ranks seventh as far as area is concerned and is the second most populous nation, after China. The country’s economy is dominated by agrarian activity. Village life in India is as interesting as its current prominence among leading economies of the world.”

-Gaynor Borade

India is the largest democracy in the world. It is often said that India is a nation of villages. Village is the soul of India, without which it can’t survive. While the urban population has dramatically increased over the last couple of decades, the rural economy and life is central to India’s existence and identity. Village or village society did not spring up all of a sudden, but they developed slowly as a result of adjustment with environment. In the world the people of different parts lead different types of lives. Their native place has direct impact of their ways of

living which are as different as their mentalities. In all over the world the people are divided into two distinct groups- Urban and Rural.

Viewed from a distance, an Indian village seems to be a simple community of individuals based on agriculture. It has many images of harmonious simplicity such as a cluster of mud-plastered walls shaded by a few trees, set among a stretch of green or dun-colored fields, with a few people slowly coming or going, birds singing, cattle lowing and oxcarts creaking etc. When we talk about the village, we also remember the city. Though it is possible to distinguish between village and city landscape, there are some difficulties as both are interrelated. The cities are characterized by multi-ethnicity, skilled craftsmanship, brisk trade and commerce. In villages, the general masses lead a simple life, depend on agriculture. When we compare urban and rural areas, we find interdependence between both the areas. Urban living provides great prosperity and development but the prosperity has been eclipsed by the decline in peace. The rural regions have a slow paced life but they have room for emotions and affection. In villages, humanity is still alive. In India, after independence the revolt and resistance movements against colonial oppression can be seen in the villages. Bipin Chandra's et al. *India's Struggle for Independence* (1987) has a fine description of the widespread revolts in rural India which reveals the rural communities' reaction to injustice and oppression at the local and regional levels. The Gandhian movement was a major force in focusing on the reform of rural community. This shift of focus on the rural areas encouraged the urban youth who were politically active, so the gap between the city and the village began to be bridged.

Literature gives similar importance to rural and urban areas. But Indian literature is mainly based upon Indian society, its culture and conditions. Although it has no boundaries and limitations, it is closer to Indian society than any other culture. Village as the dominant part of Indian society has great impact on Indian literature. If village is the soul of India, literature gives breath to this soul.

Indian literature depicts the village as a simple and backward place. But it also reflects upon the changes that have taken place over the years. Vedic literature gives the real picture of ancient rural India and its customs. The *Arthashastra* (400 BC-200AD) provides us a picture of ancient village with a classification of the king's duties related to the administrative affairs of the village. *Manusmriti*, the book of Brahminical laws, (100 AD-300 AD) classifies villages in terms of their size and habitation. Classical literature does not treat village and town as opposites. The *dharma-sutras* and the *grihya-sutras* throw light on the various aspects of the lives of villagers. But classical literature gives some facts to distinguish one from the other. The village is presented as inhabited by peasants, artisans and the food suppliers and the city is portrayed as a seat of royal power in the classical literature. Krishna-Sudama's narrative, the *vrat-kathas*, all of them, differentiates both on the basis of the quality of life.

As a mirror of society, literature unveils the veracities of society. Village as the prevailing part of Indian society has great impact on Indian literature. In Hindi, Sanskrit and other literature, village life has an important place. In Hindi literature many writers wrote about Indian villages such as Premchand's *Godan* (1936), *Rangbhumi* (1924) and *Karmabhumi* (1932), Rahi Masoom Reza's *Adha Gaon* (1966) and *Neem ka Ped*, Bhupendra Nath Shukla's *Gaon ka Aadmi* (1988). Premchand portrayed the village as a nation. Rahi Masoom Reza presented the village in a different form but in a typical manner. Thoppil Mohammed Meeran's *Oru Kadalora Kiramathin Kathai* (1988) is a Tamil novel, based on rustics, translated into English as *The Story of a Seaside Village*.

The Indian village has always been the midpoint of magnetism for the writers of Indian English fiction. They also tried to establish novel writing in accordance with the old Indian tradition of story-telling. Story-telling is well acquainted form in India from very early period. The didactic stories like *Hitopadesh*, *Jatak-kathas*, *Panchatantra* and the narratives like *Dashkumarcharita* and *Kadambari* were written long before the western novels of Hugo, Scott and Dickens. Indeed, narrative writing is an important part of Indian literature. Early writers who were upper class Bengalis like Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Romesh Chandra Dutt, Toru Dutt and Rabindranath Tagore also tried to establish novel writing in accordance with the old Indian tradition of story-telling. Rabindranath Tagore examined the life of simple villagers in his short stories. He typically associated his novels with the life of common villagers. His novel *Gora* (translated into English in 1923) deals with rural life with a penetrative depth and feeling. In *Gora* Tagore presents a graphic picture of the exploitation of the Indian tenants by the British planters and Zamindars. Dhan Gopal Mukherjee's novel *Hari, the Jungle Lad* (1924) is a story of a young boy who resides in a village on the outskirts of a forest. It is a fine portrayal of the countryside life.

Several examples may be quoted to show that right from the beginning rural life has been one of the most significant and constant themes of Indian English novels. The writers explore the contemporary Indian rural society without distorting the reality. Here one thing needs to be mentioned that some rural novels also deal with the city life as a part of rural living. K.S. Venkataramani has described an ideal village based on the Gandhian concept of love, devotion and sacrifice in his novels *Kandan- the Patriot* (1932) and *Murugan, the Tiller* (1927). In *Murugan, the Tiller* he also talks about industrialization and urbanization of the village.

Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* is the best example of a rural novel which presented social development of a south Indian village Kanthapura. During that time Indian villages were facing many problems such as unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, caste distinction etc. But Raja Rao presented a total reformation of a village where caste distinction, backwardness and superstition have no place but self-employment, women participation, social awareness and the pride of their Sthalapurana. He says in *Kanthapura*, "There is no village in India, however mean, that has not a rich sthala- purana, or legendary history of its own" (43).

Indian English literature comes under the broader realm of post-colonial literature. The term colonial was based on the theory of the dominance of European culture or imperial culture and the aptness of the empire. The literature, written by the native people including the writings by creoles and indigenous writers during the colonial times, is known as colonial literature. Postcolonial literature means the literature written after the withdrawal of colonial rule. Postcolonial literature deals with colonization or the colonized people. India was a British colony until 1947. In Indian English literature post-colonialism is characterized as the appearance of new consciousness and the concept of self-expression. Creation of new themes and techniques is a part of post-colonial English literature.

Post-colonial Indian English novelist as R.K. Narayan, Kamala Markandaya Anita Desai, Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh and V.S. Naipaul deal with the conflicts of identity and cultural belonging as the result of post-colonialism. Post-colonial writers also made some experiments with their style and form of novel writing. Narrative is an art of storytelling in which a narrator (a person who tells the story) narrates the whole theme, events and environment of the novel. Most of the rural novels were written as a narrative. Indian English authors wrote not only social but personal narratives also. Khushwant Singh, Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai and many other novelists followed the Indian tradition of narrative writing.

From 1930 to 1970, Indian English authors perceived the Indian sensibility and divulged its unedited realities. That was the time when villages were caught in their own struggle for survival. The authors looked with troubled eyes on the enormous complexity of that time. They revolved to represent rural life of India. Now they devoted to social reform with their revolutionary ideas. When the British policies for land development were placed side by side with the policies and farsightedness of earlier rulers, these writers made a direct critique of the British interests. Early writers like Rabindranath Tagore examined the life of simple villagers in his short stories. He typically associated his novels with the life of conjoint villagers. His novel *Gora* (translated into English in 1923) deals with rural life with a penetrative depth and feeling. In *Gora* Tagore presents a graphic picture of the exploitation of the Indian tenants by the British planters and Zamindars. Dhan Gopal Mukherjee's novel *Hari, the Jungle Lad* (1924) is a story of a young boy who resides in a village on the outskirts of a forest. It is a fine portrayal of the countryside life.

Several examples may be quoted to show that right from the beginning the centrality of the village cannot be disputed. The writers explore the contemporary Indian rural society without distorting the reality. Their writings were considered as a response to break away from the colonial literature. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* is the best example of a rural novel which presented social development of a south Indian village Kanthapura. *Kanthapura* also took forward the tradition of narrative writing because of its effective story-telling qualities. If Raja Rao presented a metaphysical man in his novels, Mulk Raj Anand portrayed man as the maker of ever new worlds. Anand had great knowledge of social, economic and political aspects of village life which he shows in his village trilogy that comprises *The Village* (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1941) and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942). R.K. Narayan who did not write about pure rural areas is known as a writer of the 'middle class life' in a fast semi-urban town called Malgudi. Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao have really enriched the heritage of Indian narrative writing.

Between 1930 and 1950 the Gandhian impact was seen in the Indian English novels. Entry of Gandhi ji and B.R. Ambedkar into Indian political scene witnessed a total transformation of the code of conduct enforced by the upper caste groups. He is an immense source of writing and there is hardly any discipline that he has left uncommented. Most of the novelists of that time wrote under the impact of Gandhism which is an ever changing amoeba. *Gram Swaraj* was a pivotal concept which had great influence on Indian writers. There was hardly any area of Indian fiction writing which was left untrammelled by this Gandhi Mania. The basic concept of **Gram Swaraj** is all about a self-reliant village which should have all amenities required by the community. Many other novels which were dealing with the evils of modernization and urbanization had the impact of Gandhian thought. In the Gandhian era, the writers of rural India were writing about the freedom struggle against social evils such as poverty, hunger and exploitation. The miserable condition of the peasants is the main theme of the novels of that era. Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* (1935), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) are also based upon Gandhian ideology. Not only English writers but Hindi authors like Premchand were also inspired by the Gandhian philosophy. Premchand's novels *Godan*, *Karmabhumi* are realistic rural narratives, inspired by the Gandhian ideology.

R.K. Narayan who did not write about pure rural areas is known as a writer of the 'middle class life' in a fast semi-urban town called Malgudi. But in his novels we find the scenario of Indian rural life. His novels like *Swami and Friends* (1935), *The Dark Room* (1938) and *Mr. Sampath* (1949) depict Indian rural life in different ways. Narayan's *The Guide* (1959-

60) is regarded as the most rural of his novels. It gives the description of the superstitious and gullible villagers of Mangala. During the failure of monsoon these simple villagers are easily carried away by the divine afflatus of the pseudo-saint, Raju. He adopted a very simple and straight forward style of narration. We can say that Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao have really enriched the heritage of Indian English novels. They gave a rich contribution to Indian narrative writing. Besides these writers, Dhan Gopal Mukherjee, K.A. Abbas, Ahmed Ali and Humayun Kabir also wrote about the social, political and economic life of rural India in their novels.

During this era the women novelists did not contribute much to Indian English fiction and the male writers mainly dealt with the themes of social and industrial evils, the status of women, caste distinction, class system, illiteracy etc. in the rural areas. But in the post-independence era, both the male and the female writers rehabilitated the form of the novel and it evolved and matured. Now the novels experienced a change in their theme and the focus was shifted from the public to the private sphere. The writers of this generation such as Khushwant Singh, Arun Joshi, Manohar Malgonkar, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Chaman Nahal introduced a new kind of rural novel which dealt with contemporary issues. Similarly they followed the tradition of the early novels which were mainly dealing with the social, political and historical concerns. But now their novels were depicting a balance between the social and the personal life. They were also influenced by post-colonial issues.

These writers were psychologically dealing with the social and the individual's life. They deal with humanity at large. For instance, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956) not only gives the picture of a village in Punjab but also describes the partition tragedy. It is the story of love, hate, anger and the revenge of the whole humanity which felt the trauma of partition. Through this narrative the novelist depicts the village along with its humanity.

Some novelists like Manohar Malgonkar, Bhabani Bhattacharya and Kamala Markandaya dealt with the poverty of rural people, their exploitation and their horrendous standard of living. Through their artistic narrative style they worked for those rural people who were the victims of defective economic policies and planning of the government. These writers established a relation between the rural living and the city life. It was a different form of the rural novel in which the author presented an urban-rural encounter. Bhabani Bhattacharya's *So Many Hungers* (1947) and *He Who Rides a Tiger* (1954), Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954) and *A Handful of Rice* (1966), Sudhin Ghose's *The Balaram Tetralogy* [The tetralogy comprises four novels- *And Gazelles Leaping* (1949), *Cradle of the Clouds* (1951), *The Vermilion Boat* (1953), *The Flame of the Forest* (1955)], Anand's *The Old Woman and the Cow* (1960), Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* (1964) are some dynamic novels which depict rural hunger and poverty, exploitation of rural people with the cognate theme of village city encounter.

Arun Joshi's *The Apprentice* (1974) is also based upon the urban-rural encounter. In this novel the central character Ratan Rathor, is a jobless village boy who later becomes a very successful urban man. The narrative keeps on swinging between the past and the present of Ratan. He was the son of a martyr whose mother was ill. He came to the city in search of a career. Due to the harsh circumstances of his life he chose the corrupt way to get success and reached the high point of his material success.

These writers were psychologically dealing with the social and the individual's life. They deal with humanity at large. Rural industrialization was inspired by the ideas of Jawaharlal Nehru who was a staunch champion of industrialization. Nehru wanted to make India a modern, industrialized and democratic socialist nation-state. The theme of industrialization and

technological advancement created a great change in the rural novel in Indian English. With the changing scenario of rural India, one thing that needs to be mentioned is that early novelists of Indian English fiction like Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand were influenced by Gandhian ideology and favored only the small industries and 'swadeshi' but the modern writers welcomed modernism and simultaneously they exposed the sympathy towards the traditional values. It is stimulating to note here that the authors of other languages presented mostly the disparaging side of industrialization. For instance, Premchand's *Rangbhumi* in Urdu, G.N. Dandekar's *Padghwali* in Marathi present the loss of the rugged rural atmosphere caused by industrialization. They don't show the idea of synthesis between tradition and modernity. But modern English novelists accept this change and do experimentation in their novels. Now the Indian English authors started writing about the biggest historical truth of industrial revolution. They wrote about the serious conflict between the rural tradition and technology. But the traditional issues like poverty, illiteracy, exploitation of poor, status of women etc. have always been reflected in the Indian English fiction.

The post-modern writers of this era identify Indian village as a 'global village'. They write about the different aspects of the life of villagers, new technologies introduced in the villages, capital and the village culture. Simultaneously, the burning social concerns such as gender bias, class conflict, the rich-poor divide, superstitions, caste system, untouchability and exploitation of the lower class people by the leading upper class people have also been highlighted by the modern writers. Unlike the pre-independence period when most of the literary field was male dominated, in the post-independence period women novelists had made a significant contribution to Indian English novels. A number of women novelist such as Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, Ruth Pravar Jhabwala, Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande worked for the development of the Indian English novel. These women writers mainly wrote about female experiences, sexual politics, gender relationship, the status of women in society and her quest for identity. The condition of women was very pitiable in the pre-independence era but after independence some positive changes came into the lives of women due to education and government policies. Some women writers wrote about rural India effectively. Women writings reflect the change in rural scenario. They described the lives of women under the impact of rural background. They present the concept of a new woman who is strong, fully awakened and ready to fight against the patriarchal norms. Male novelist in general and female novelist in particular began to treat rural women as a legitimate subject for their novels.

In 1960, feminism appeared against the colonial rule, patriarchal practices and the ideology of female subordination. Feminism works against the secondary and inferior position of women in the male dominated society. As a socio-economic movement it demands legal and political rights for women. It challenges the age long tradition of gender differentiation. In India, feminism appeared as an organized movement in the late 1970's. Many feminists have realized that in the Indian context the subject of women's emancipation should not be reduced to the contradictions between man and woman. The Indian English writers explore the psychological, domestic and personal life of their women characters. Through the feministic approach the problems and predicaments peculiar to the Indian women found artistic expression in the Indian literature in English. In the rural narratives, the female protagonist evinces sufficient vigour and courage to question the oppressive role of society, religion and culture but they avoid the path suggested by the western feminists. They choose their own path. Novelists like Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande and Arundhati Roy have always been giving voice to the voiceless women.

Kamala Markandaya wrote about the rural peasant society in her novel *Nectar in a Sieve*. She also depicts how the rural woman can fight against her fate. Anita Desai who holds a unique place among women writers also wrote about the problems of Indian village in her novel *The Village by the Sea*. Women novelists, who write about Indian villages, raise their voice for all the fundamental human rights- religious, social, economic and political. Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997), a Booker prize winning novel, is based upon the Indian rural background. It is a fantastic village narrative which deals with the ravages of caste system in a South Indian village of Kerala and the struggle of a woman in a patriarchal society.

Early Indian English novelists who wrote about Indian village and urban-rural encounter presented city life as a chaos where people felt restlessness. Villagers who go there for their betterment also feel very awkward and uneasy. Village writings depicted urban life as a hectic life in comparison to the calm rural life. The rural woman is also an important part of their writings. Kamala Markandaya's *The Coffer Dams* (1969), Manohar Malgonkar's *Combat of Shadows* (1962), *The Princes* (1963), Bhabani Bhattacharya's *Shadow from Ladakh* (1966) and Anita Desai's *The Village by the Sea* (1982) present a complex picture of the clash of traditional life with the machine, the resentment of the elders against the invasion of technology, the welcome of the materialistic culture by the younger generation and the disintegration of the rural families.

Unlike the 1930s and 50s, the year 1980s marks significant changes in the development of rural India. When post-colonialism came, post-modernism was reflected on the horizon of Indian English fiction. Post-modernism is a reaction against modernism in the wake of the Second World War. After the First World War we find a remarkable change in novel writing, which is called modernism. Post-modernist writings break the old traditions and recreate a new vision. Postmodern writers introduce a new pattern in writing novels. In India post-modernism refers to the works of literature after 1980. By the end of the nineteen seventies and the early eighties, some fresh faces appeared on the Indian fictional scene. It is the period of the so-called 'new' fiction. It includes a breed of new novelists such as Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Shashi Deshpande, Shashi Tharoor, Amitav Ghosh, Arundhati Roy, Upamanyu Chatterjee, Amit Chaudhury, Shoba De. In the field of village writings during this era the Indian English novelist wrote about the luxuriant growth of the Indian villages.

Development is a continuous process and it is true in the context of Indian villages. In Indian English literature the male and female novelists present this continuous process and write about their own experiences. They write about different issues to depict the changes which have come in rural living from the British Colonial rule to the modern era of 20th century. They also offer a great contrast between the urban luxury and sophistication and the traditional rural modes and manners.

In the 1980s we find a variety of themes in the rural novels of Indian English literature. The eighties and nineties have been the most valuable, eventful and productive decade of Indian English literature and it is also proved in the reference of village writings. The writers of this era deal with the theme of alienation, the loss of identity and the search for identity. Like the traditional novelists modern writers of this era also give importance to the rural background in their novels. Shashi Deshpande, who has a prominent place among the writers of the Eighties, basically writes about family relationship, women issues in most of her novels such as *The Dark Holds No Terror* (1980), *A Matter of Time* (1996) and *The Stone Women* (2000). In *Roots and Shadows* she depicts the theme of alienation and the search for identity. The story is set on the rural background, depicting urban-rural conflict also. Her novel reveals the emergence of the

‘new woman’ in the Indian firmament. In the Indian English novels the women characters of rural background present the change in their traditional life, modernity in their search for identity, independence and fulfillment of their dreams. They are different from the early rural women characters that were illiterate and worked like puppets in the hands of men. During this period we find the combined influence of the great philosophers of the West and the fast changing elements in the social structure of India and it is portrayed in the village narratives.

Amitav Ghosh, one of most popular names in recent Indian English fiction writing started with *The Circle of Reason* (1986) which is followed by the village background and presents the theme of urban- rural encounter. Upamanyu Chatterjee’s *English, August* (1988) is also the story of urban-rural relationship and cross culture phenomena.

As we know Indian English fiction right from its inception, represents various phases of Indian village society and its developments. But due to the increasing forces of urbanization and industrialization most of the modern novelists shifted gradually their focal point from rural to metro India as Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Pravar Jhabvala, Shashi Deshpande, Amitav Ghosh, Rohinton Mistry etc. But it doesn’t mean that the rural masses have no place in it. Indian English fiction is continuously dealing with village life, its problems and its reforms. Industrialization and urbanization are dealt as the part of it. Some modern writers depict the theme of displacement and relocation in their village narratives due to urbanization, industrialization and several other reasons.

The early twentieth century saw a new phase of villagers’ participation in the broad based movement. As more interaction between the city and village took place, a larger number of literary works depicted the village. Many writers have written about urban -rural relationship on the basis of sociological, geographical and developmental concepts such as economic, political regional etc.

Ashish Gupta’s *Dying Traditions* (1992) and David Davidar’s *The House of Blue Mangoes* (2002) are the two village narratives which deal with the story of three generations of a family removed from a village. These village narratives focus on the village culture and traditions and on the influence of time on the village life. Both the writers reveal how a major part of village life is influenced by the modernization or urbanization with the passage of time. By locating the village within a historical framework, they also explore the shifting of traditional customs to the modern values. Both the novels present the reflections of the contemporary times, when the village with their inherent sense of bonding, close interdependence, traditional values and kinship among people have been pushed to the margins due to urbanization and technological development. These village narratives have great significance in the early twentieth century in the context of the cultural values and social relationship nurtured in the villages.

Vikram Seth’s *A Suitable Boy* (1994) which is not a pure village narrative but it is set in a village like small town Brahmipur and reflects rural culture and tradition includes Hindu-Muslim strife, abolition of zamindari system, land reforms and empowerment of Muslim women also. It is really the story of changing India and Indian interwoven family networks. In the recent times the Indian English novelists are presenting an authentic view of contemporary India. They give a double vision of both- the rural and the urban Indian life. For instance, Arvind Adiga’s *The White Tiger* (2008) portrays both urban and rural life. By following the tradition of modern writers, Adiga also discusses globalization and urbanization in his novel. It is a superb narrative, based on a village theme which reflects the emergence of new India.

These modern writers follow the story-telling mode like the early writers of Indian English fiction. They have significantly contributed to the gradual development of the Indian narrative style. Recent writers in Indian English fiction such as Arundhati Roy, David Davidar, Arvind Adiga and Shashi Tharoor show a particular direction towards narration, narrative style and its techniques in their works.

Literature has the power and ability to visualize and imagine the cultural space of different communities. Indian English novels explore the various possible patterns of the urban-rural encounter with their literary significance. Indian English novelists admit the possibility of the synthesis of Indian traditionalism and techno-industrialism. Indian writers are rooted in Indian culture so in the rural novels they are trying to write about a specific rural culture but being social reformers they also write about reforms in the tradition bound rural culture. Urbanization is a weapon for social reform in the rustics. Indian English novelists use this weapon by locating it in most of their writings. From Raja Rao to Adiga, Indian English writers write about these two different communities and try to create a positive relation between the two. They establish a moving equilibrium between traditionalism and modernity.

The village has continued to change after the 1960s in significant ways. Indian novels depicting the impact of new economy, new political equations and cultural remapping of village life continue to be written in most Indian languages. The Indian village refuses to become the city-in-miniature. The complex variety of the village narratives reconnoiters the interesting juxtaposition of the past and the present through the revolutionary philosophies.

Literature, being a form of representation, is a way of imagining and structuring the world. In doing so, literature makes us aware of the ideological nature of writers, conception of reality. The obvious theme that surfaces in village narratives is to look at the changing contemporary significance of the village and the city as part of the liberalized globalized world. These village based narratives, village novels together weave a multi-dimensional, indefinable, intricate and yet everlasting narrative and explore the reflections of multilayered reality of the village life.

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