

SCIENCE FICTION STORIES IN MARATHI: A REVIEW

Sagar Raghunath Surwase

Department of Marathi, School of Languages and Literature, Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Solapur University, Solapur.

Raghvendra S. Vanjari

Research Centre, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru.

Abstract

Scientific literature is streamlined in the Marathi literary world after 1975, but it is rooted back in the beginning of twentieth century. It has begun with the translation process; later science fiction stories took the independent shape. It had been misunderstood as children's literature or as ghost stories because of contemporary writers in such genres. Science fiction stories from Jayant Narlikar has turned the way of understanding of Sci-fi stories in Marathi and received attention from large amount readers. This review article tried put the initiation, trends, and development of Sci-fi stories in Marathi literature. Concluded by identifying the gaps as directions to upcoming stories.

Keywords: Science fiction, Stories, Marathi, Genre, Jayant Narlikar.

Scientific literature in Marathi language was begin in 60's but it is evidenced that this was a flourished in the beginning of 20th century. 'ChandrawarSwari' was the translation of Jules Verne's 'Man on the moon' was first piece in Marathi science fiction. It was published during 1900-1907. Thought the popularity for science fiction was very limited in Marathi S.B. Ranade and V.N.Kogekar were starting writing stories. In 1974 Marathi Vidnyan Parishad started conducting story writing competitions specifically dedicated to science fiction.

B. R. Bhagwat is well known for his remarkable contribution in Marathi science fiction. After 1938 he started writing separately, he brought several western science fiction stories into Marathi. On the other hand, the real popularity of science fiction amongst the reader was by the enormous contribution of Dr.J.V.Narlikar. His sci-fi stories have increased the interest of readers towards. This limited handled genre science fiction stories became an unavoidable subject of discussion in Marathi literary world.

Fundamentally, scientific literature has been arrived from European literature. The editors of magazine 'Kerala Kokila' had started publishing the translation of Jules Verne's 'Man on the moon' periodically. 'Navapushpakarandak' a collection of science fiction stories of popular story writer V.M. Joshi got published. 'AdrushyaKirananchaDivyaprakash' and 'Waamalopana' were included. A science fiction story of S.B. Ranade 'Taryanchehasya' got published. Several stories were coming thereafter includes, 'Ekdiwasachyasuttit' by V.G.Apte, 'Sharadlokachisafar' by T. R. Devagirikar and N. V.Kogekar's 'Mrutyukiran'.

B.R. Bhagwat started science fiction story writings with 'Udatichabakadi. He also translated several stories from English to Marathi. He was more popular in children's literature. Readers thought that science fiction stories are part of children's literature. According to R.B.Mancharkar, B.R. Bhagwat succeed in designing his science fiction stories for children's. What's why, readers understood that like a children literature. It grown as an inseparable part of children's genre. Hence, science fiction could not create its own image in the mainstream Marathi literature.¹

D.P.Khambire, D.C. Soman, Narayan Dharap, D.B.Mokashi, D.B.Kogekar, Yashwant Ranjankar were also started writing science fiction stories. D.B.Mokashi's 'Baalchandra' composed with four stories. D. P.Kanbare's 'Maze naavRamakant Valawkar' and D. B.Kelkar's 'Aantarchakshu' were published in 1965. 'Kshitij Seema' by VidyadharSahastrabuddhe. Narayan Dharap was a contemporary writer, known for his mystery stories. He contributed 'Vidnyan KathaYatra' but it could not make as best as his mystery pieces.²

D. C Soman has also contributed science fiction stories in Marathi but the collection was not published unfortunately. YashvanthaRanjankar begin his writings in magazine 'Naval' in the year of 1958. 'Shevatcha dis (1960)' was one of his significant contributions. Bhalba Kelkar started illustrating the

Bengal, Past and Present

scientific concepts in one of the popular periodicals 'VagmayShobha'. He wrote two parts of 'VidyanalaPankhKalpaneche'. Science fiction stories were arrived in Marathi as translation. It did not receive the dignity as much as other forms of stories. On the other hand, due to the limited writers; collection of stories was also in limited numbers.

In 1974 Marathi Vidnyan Parishad started conducting Sci-Fi story writing competition. N.B.Jagtap got first price for his story 'Krishnavivar'. N.B.Jagtap was nothing but Dr. J.V.Narlikar. He thought his name may suppress the reviewers, hence he used when name as N. B.Jagatap. When a Physicist like Dr. Jayant Vishnu Narlikar started writing science fiction stories in Marathi, it resulted into a good turn to the genre.

Renowned writer Durgabai Bhagwat appreciated Narlikar's during Akhil Bharatiya Marathi Sahitya Sammelan in Karad. Marathi science fiction genre received the strong recognition. Thereafter science fiction writers were also recognised as literary personalities. 'Yakshachidenagi' was first published story collection by Narlikar. He described his views more vividly. He narrated the story in informative style.

There were several contemporary Sci-Fi story writers in Narlikar's period. Niranjana Ghate is one among them. 'Spice Jack (1984)', 'Bhavishyawedh (1989)', 'Yantra lekhak (1995)', 'Yantra manavachi saksh (2000)', 'Pratirop (2001)', 'Swapnachaurya (2009)' are popular collections of his stories. He also translated several stories into Marathi as 'Jag prasiddha Vidyanakatha'. He edited the Sci-Fi stories and published as 'Nivedak Marathi Vidnyankatha (1992)' and 'Marathi nivedak Vidnyankatha (2001)'. Ghate used Robotics as the central theme of his several stories. His critics are also notable in the genre.

Bal Phondke is an important writer in Marathi science fiction. 'Chiranjiv (1986)', 'Goodbye Earth (1989)', 'Virtual Reality', 'Kaalvalay (2000)', 'Garbharth' and 'Cybercafé' are popular collection of Sci-Fi stories. He also edited several science fiction stories from various Indian languages in, 'What happened tomorrow'.

Subodh Javadekar an eminent scholar has conscious about human life and corresponding literature. He used to comment on human life through his sci-fi stories. 'Googly (1991)', 'Vamanache Chautha Paul (1994)', 'Sanganakachi Savali (1994)', 'Aakashbhakite (2003)', are the popular collections to his credit.

Lakshman Londhe is well known sci fi writer. In 1984 his first collection, '22 July 2095' published. 'Dusra Einstein (1989)' was his second book. Then 'Devaansi jive gadile', 'Remote control', 'Thank you Mr. Faraday' etc. were published.

Arun Mande has two story collections to his credit, 'Amanush (1996)' and 'Robo corner (2001)'. Amanush comments on politics deeply. Sanjay Dhole is well-versed in scientific knowledge. His contributions in Sci-Fi story collection received the great appreciation. 'Pratishodh (1998)', 'Premacha Renu (2007)', 'Ashmajiv (2010)', 'Sankatit (2015)', 'Antaralati Mrutyu (2015)' are the Sci-Fi story collections to his credit.

Writers such as Yashwant Deshpande, Pandit Vidyasagar, Arun Heblekar, Anil Gokhale, M.V. Divekar were also contributed.

After 1980 women writers were also started their contribution. Shubhada Gogate's 'Marginals (1985)', Jayshree Thattar's 'Manavache vardan', Madhuri Shaanbagh's 'Punarjanma (1999)', and 'Swap (2005)', Rekha Baijal's, 'Antarikshatil Shejari' are the readable works. Currently there are limited number of writers in this field, but several newcomers are writing.

Pandemic impacted human lives inside out. It has changed the way and style of living and thinking individual as well as social level. Such social alterations would reflect in literature. In that way it is expected that Sci-Fi stories may appear near future. It is also expected that the narration of how human will you face such deadly pandemic in future.

Marathi science fiction stories were composed with limited themes for example, Robots, Time machine, Aliens etc. by using such themes writer can explore the new tales around pandemic.

Spread of Covid-19 has not only affected the urban lives but villages also. From food to health, from transport to education everything got impacted. As per Bagul Fula, future of science fiction stories will be focusing on village life more and more. 4

Conclusion

Science fiction stories has appeared in Marathi literature in the form of translated work. Few story writers adopted the plot from Western stories and developed with Indian settings. There was rarely appearance of Sci-Fi stories in periodicals dedicated to stories because it had less readership choice. These stories were misunderstood as mystery or fairy tales. Jayant Narlikar's writings and its increased audience dispelled themisconception. Many writers join this is smallstream afterwards with a tiny number of women contributors. Village atmosphere is not yet arrived in Marathi science fiction stories, it is expected to be in near future. The life impacted by pandemic is also well expected in upcoming sci-fi tails.

References:

1. Mancharkar R.B. (2006). Marathi Vidyankatha. Marathi Sahitya Parishad. Vol 319, October.
2. Jahagirdar, D.V. (2004). Akhil Bharitya Marathi Sahitya Sammelan, Aurangabad.
3. Bagula, Phula (2020). Corona Kalatil Vidyan Kathechya Disha, Chaprak Diwali Ank.