

Indian Writers' Contribution to World's English Literature

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Abstract

This paper purposefully focuses on the major Indian English writers who have contributed a lot to English literature. We all know that English language and English literature are very rich. Many writers from the world have contributed to English literature. But in this paper the writer's intention to show that the Indian writers are also not least or behind in the contribution to English Literature. Many writers like Rabindranath Tagore and V.S. Naipaul have even received the Nobel laurels for making English literature prosper and glorious. The writer will also discuss the progress of World's English literature and Indian English literature. And the paper would explain how the Indian literature brought the glorious changes in world's English literature.

Keywords: focus, major, very rich, contribution Nobel Prize, Indian English literature, World's English literature

Literature is an art form whose medium is language. It differs from ordinary spoken or written language. Literature is not only about ideas but also about experiences. It communicates what he feels like undergo an experience, whether physical and emotional. "Writers of essays, fiction, drama and poetry, however, may try to put their readers inside the mind of such a character, making readers intimately share the patient's experience and feel what it is like to be the patient." 1. Henderson and Waller P.1 English language and literature both are very rich in many aspects. When we think of English language; now it is not belonged to any particular country or continent but now it has become a global language. And many writers have been writing in English. As we know that most of the books have been publishing in English language. And even those who have written in their vernacular languages now they are also translating their works in English in order to become a global writers. In each country of the world English language has been made compulsory.

Today we have many English writers all over the world. Today we have many English books; like poetry, novels, dramas, short stories and one-act-plays. It is not only the English speakers contributed to become English Literature a globally rich literature but the writers from

all over the world have contributed to English literature. And even the Indian writers are not lagging behind in this contribution. The writers like Rabindranath Tagore, Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan have contributed a lot to English literature.

The English language spread throughout the world with the development of the British Empire between the late 16th and early 18th centuries. At its height, it was the largest empire in history. By 1913, the British Empire held sway over 412 million people, 23% of the world population at the time, During the nineteenth and twentieth century, these colonies and the USA started to produce their own significant literary traditions in English. And in the last hundred plus years numerous writers from Great Britain, both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, the USA, and members of other former British colonies have received the Nobel Prize for works in the English language, more than in any other language. Since English has become the global language, we have abundant literature in the various forms according to changing period and need of the time.

At present novels and short stories are in great demand but still we regard William Shakespeare is the genuine pioneer of English Literature. At the same time the English poetry has gone through many phases yet we look back to few classical poets like John Dryden and Alexander Pope and few romantic poets like John Keats, William Wordsworth and Lord Byron. Because they give us sheer and pure enjoyment. English Language is used by default today in Literature, Social Media, Television, Industry, Schools, and Colleges. So there are no as such fear remains as it earlier as a second or third language in India. English is the global language and accepted all over the world. Therefore research, innovations, patent, international news, messages etc. lodged in this language; English become the reference and communication language today. English literature plays a vital role in the development of English language. Literature is not just remain to provide thought, problem, solution or vision only but literature today is understanding the new challenges, terms, coinages, linguistic changes before English. Now the scholars are focusing on the linguistic approach, socio-

linguistic approach, and interdisciplinary approach and so on of English language. Although the research is the continuous process and it's going on before, today and tomorrow also. So every work of art is deadly needed to find the change in the writing style, language, structure, meanings, contemporary changes, technical terms used and its suggestive nature in the form of notice or warning.

Now let us come to Indian English literature. India is a multilingual nation with several regional languages and dialects of which English is not one. The British ruled over most of India and that is how English came to India. Many Indians willingly learned this beautiful language and communication became possible between India and the outside world. Kashi Prasad Ghosh is one of the first poets to write in Indian English literature as early as 1830. Sohee Chunder Dutt was the first fiction writer to contribute to Indian English Literature. Each Indian English writer had to face several challenges to make a mark in the world of literature. The writers were regarded as traitors to their own land as they wrote in a foreign tongue. In spite of the opposition these writers had to face, these writers created a mark in the world of literature. Their writings reflected the Indian culture and the life of people from remote villages of India. Many social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy used their writing skills to bring about social change.

When we look at the Indian English literature in the context of the world literature; the Indian writers are not least in comparison of the world's writers. Many of the Indian writers have got fame and esteem at the world's panorama by showing their iron to the world. Many have got the Nobel Prizes and Booker Prizes and other world level awards. They have been writing incessantly and contributing to the world's English literature. These literary activities are going from pre-independence era. Many renowned writers like Rabindranath Tagore, Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Khushwant Singh, V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Srojni Naidu, Jhumpa Lahiri and so many other Indian writers have contributed the Indian literature to make it rich and embellished. Even the modern writers like Chetan Bhagat, Arundhati Roy, Shashi Tharoor, Anita Desai and the many emerging writers are contributing to Indian English literature. The modern writers are more courageous and understand their power and responsibility. Writers like Salman Rushdie and Arundhati Roy have made India proud by winning Booker Prize for their superior writings. Our writers and their heart touching and praiseworthy novels, fiction and poems have made the world notice India in a different light. They keep reminding us why the pen is mightier than the sword in attaining respect and glory.

Today we recognize this literature by various names such as Anglo Indian literature and Indian writing in English

When we think about the Indian writers contributions to English literature a long list of the writers comes before us. And it is not possible to discuss or write about all of them. So I have selected few male English writers who have helped India to get the fame in all over the world. The writers who made the difference in their ordinary lives are; R. K. Narayan, Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, Manohar Malgaonkar and Raja Rao. Through their writings these writers, created the Indian English by depicting the genuine scenario of India. We can imagine the picture of South India in R.K. Narayan's *Malgudi Days*. We can see the trust of Indian people's trust and faith in the almighty through Tagore's *Gitanjali*. We can feel the agonies of caste differences through the stories of Mulk Raj Anand. We see the social injustices through the novels of Raja Rao. Manohar Malgaonkar also raised his voice against social injustices in his novels and short stories.

R. K. Narayan (1906-2001) contributed over many decades and continued to write till his death. He was discovered by Graham Greene in the sense that the latter helped him find a publisher in England. Greene and Narayan remained close friends till the end. Similar to the way Thomas Hardy used Wessex, Narayan created the fictitious town of Malgudi where he set his novels. Some criticize Narayan for the parochial, detached and closed world that he created in the face of the changing conditions in India at the times in which the stories are set. Others, such as Greene, however, feel that through Malgudi they could vividly understand the Indian experience. Narayan's evocation of small town life and its experiences through the eyes of the endearing child protagonist Swaminathan in *Swami and Friends* is a good sample of his writing style. Simultaneous with Narayan's pastoral idylls, a very different writer, Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004), was similarly gaining recognition for his writing set in rural India, but his stories were harsher, and engaged, sometimes brutally, with divisions of caste, class and religion. According to writer Lakshmi Holmström, "The writers of the 1930s were fortunate because after many years of use, English had become an Indian language used widely and at different levels of society, and therefore they could experiment more boldly and from a more secure position." *2 Khorana Meena G. p. 1-2. Kamala Markandeya* is an early writer in Indian English Literatures who has often grouped with the trinity of R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. The contributions of Manoj Das and Manohar Malgaonkar to growth of Indian English Literatures largely remain unacknowledged.

Rabindranath Tagore embodies the quintessence of Indian culture. He was a renowned scholar, poet, novelist, playwright, lyricist, and painter. With over a thousand poems, two thousand songs, eight novels, twenty-four plays, volumes of short stories, and a mass of prose, this creative genius has been responsible for reshaping India's literature and music. Tagore has composed the national anthem of two nations-India's "Jana Gana Mana" and Bangladesh's "Amar Shonar Bangla." In 1913, Rabindranath Tagore was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for *Gitanjali*, his most acclaimed work. A collection of 157 poems, *Gitanjali* was first published in 1910 but remains perennially relevant. In 1939, he established an institute called Vishwa Bharati with the money he had received from the Nobel Prize. This university is one of India's most renowned places for higher learning.

Tagore is such a compelling figure in Indian Literature that he is not writing in English. At a time when so many believed that English was right and indigenous forms of expression were wrong, Tagore pretty much invented the short story in Bengali. His embrace of both social realism and transcendent themes were all composed in his native tongue, making his contributions to the Indian literary canon powerfully compelling and highly significant. Tagore was also one of the first artists of a "globalized" world. This means that his contributions were even more significant because they spoke for a condition of Indians, as well as people all over the world. This was because Tagore had been exposed to literature that many in India had not experienced. "Tagore modernized Bengali art by spurning rigid classical forms and resisting linguistic strictures. His novels, stories, songs, dance-dramas, and essays spoke to topics political and personal. *Gitanjali* (Song Offerings), *Gora* (Fair-Faced) and *Ghare-Baire* (The Home and the World) are his best-known works, and his verse, short stories, and novels were acclaimed-or panned-for their lyricism, colloquialism, naturalism, and unnatural contemplation." 3. De Silva & Wriggins p. 36

In the history of Indian fiction, the most prominent writer that contributed very significantly to Indo-Anglian literature is Mulk Raj Anand. He was indeed, the true representative of the 20th Century Indian literary scenario. His literary works reveal that he was not merely great intuitive observer but penetrating commentator on life. Mulk Raj Anand, the internationally known novelist and short-story writer, is considered by many critics to be one of the best Indian writers in English. In the diadem of Indian writing in English, he is one of the luminous jewels. Anand has established the basic form and themes of Indian literature that is written in English. The most

important writer in the new wave of realism that swept over Indian literature in the 1920s and 1930s was Mulk Raj Anand. Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004) was "first" to his name among modern Indian authors who have chosen the English language as their medium of expression. He was one of the oldest practitioners in the field; he has sixteen novels, a novelette and nine collections of short stories to his credit which rank him the most prolific writer of Indian English prose. Novelist, short story writer, art critic, art historian, author of children's literature, professor, Mulk Raj Anand's contribution to culture and literature is enormous. In the form of books it is around 100 volumes of highly creative, as well as profoundly scholastic works, all in English. Mulk Raj was a path breaker. His immortal creations are *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves a Bud*. In all his novels and short stories he raised his voice against the social injustices. His all novels and short stories are the voice of the depressed forbidden class against the upper class of the then society in India.

As a contemporary of writers such as Mulk Raj Anand, Khushwant Singh and Kamala Markandya, it is a fact that Manohar Malgonkar's contribution to the genre we refer to today as Indian Writing in English (IWE) remains largely unacknowledged. Yet, this prolific writer of novels, short stories and essays, who passed his last days in a bucolic village near the Goa-Karnataka border, was one of the last of a generation that has living memories of events that changed our nation's history and society in the most profound ways. As the author of the novels *A Bend in the Ganges*, which traces the lives of three characters in the violent aftermath of Partition, or *Distant Drum* (his first novel, published in 1960), an eye-opening account of life in the Indian Army during the days of the Raj, Malgonkar's contribution to the IWE canon is seminal and salutary. History obsessed Malgonkar. Author Ravi Belagare, who was one of the last people to have interviewed him and who has translated his books *The Devil's Wind* and *The Men Who Killed Gandhi* into Kannada, says "Malgonkar was one of the Indian authors who based their novels on the British rule in India. His best books, according to me, are *The Princes* about an Indian royal family and *A Bend in the Ganges*." Malgonkar often drew from his own experiences, using his stint in the British Indian Army during the Second World War, for instance, as a base for the book *Distant Drum*.

The last of the 'big three' is Raja Rao. Close contemporary with Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan. Raja Rao has a very high sense of the dignity of this vocation as a writer. He looks to his work in the spirit of dedication. For him literature is *Sadhana* not a profession but a vocation. He

was deeply influenced by sages Sri Atmananda to whom he dedicates "The Serpent and The Rope". Raja Rao, unlike Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan, has not been a prolific novelist, having written just four novels beginning with *Kanthapura* (1938) which is perhaps the finest evocation of the Gandhian age in Indian English Fiction. Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960) is the greatest of Indian English novels. This novel, which took ten years in shaping itself, is a highly complex and many sided novel. Being at once the tragic story of a marriage of minds which drift apart: the spiritual autobiography of a learned, sensitive and imaginative modern Indian intellectual, as also a saga of this quest of self knowledge and self-fulfillment. Raja Rao's fiction obviously lacks the social dimension of its two major contemporaries. Not for him the burring humanitarian zeal of neither Anand, nor Narayan's sure grasp of the living description of the daily business of living. But only his two novels have given him the same fictional chord of their contemporaries.

Salman Rushdie , Arundhati Roy and Chetan Bhagat. Many of our writers have won the Nobel Prize and Booker

Prize and reached their heights of fame at the top of the world. And these activities are going on since the era of pre-independence when many European countries were teasing India and the Indian writers for their poor English. But now the scenario has totally changed. Now we can observe that the Indians are not lagging behind in literary activities. Many of Indian writers and their creations are getting fame and popularity in all over the world. When we think of the Indian English writers, we have plenty of them.

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