

INDO- ANGLIAN FICTION - A SPECIAL STUDY

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Abstract:

The term 'Indo-Anglian Literature' is used to denote original literary creation in the English language by Indian authors. It is a part of truly Indian fiction. Indo-Anglian fiction has gained momentum and hence has been drawing much attention all over the world during all these years. It has very effective form of literature depicting the society in its true nature. Larger volumes of literary works involving various socio-cultural and political themes have been generated by the Indo-Anglian writers. This paper briefly introduces the readers to Indo-Anglian literature making them understand how Indian writing in English has a solid tradition behind it.

Keywords: *Indo-Anglian fiction, momentum, literary works, socio-cultural, political themes*

Introduction:

The term 'Indo-Anglian Literature' is used to denote original literary creation in the English language by Indian authors. It is a part of truly Indian fiction and not a tenuous extension of English fiction. Socio-cultural and political perspectives which become the very core and integral part of Indo-Anglian fiction writings produce very distinctive aspect of literature representing almost every dimension of life such as caste, class, gender, culture, values, morals, beliefs, customs, tradition, language, religion, art, music, etc. Indo-Anglian fiction writing in particular gives an incisive understanding into the intricacies of the above aspects in Indian society as reflected in the works of Indo-Anglian writers.

Indian writing in English has a solid tradition behind it, beginning with the great Bengali reformer and philosopher, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, founder of the Brahma Samaj Movement. Indo-Anglian literature continued to grow and flourish for attaining higher peaks of excellence through a significant number of eminent Indians like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan, the three foremost Indian writers in English who contributed a lot to the growth of fiction in English. Writers like K. Nagarajan, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgonkar, Kushwant

Singh, Kamala Markandaya and Anita Desai followed suit by contributing to the rich thought and technique of the form so as to make Indian novel in English secure a place of prestige in Indo-Anglian literature.

The Indo-Anglian literature is different from the Anglo-Indian Literature. The former is the genre written and created by the Indians through the English Language; the latter is written by the Englishmen on themes and subjects related to India. The Indo-Anglian literature, therefore, is very much associated with Indian English, The evolution of a distinct standard the body of which is correct English usage, but whose soul is Indian in thought, colour and imagery, and now and then, even in the evolution of an idiom, which is expressive of English usage. Tagore cast a sweeping and transforming influence on it. His novels Gora, The Wreck, The Home and the World and short stories were originally written in Bengali. They were translated into English. The form of his novels is old fashioned. His works brought to Indo-Anglian fiction realism and social purpose. He gave emotional and psychological depth to character portrayed.

The Early Pioneers:

The early pioneering works of Indo-Anglian fiction were socials, historical, detective and romantic. They lacked depth and style and technique to leave any permanent imprint. Indo-Anglian fiction was deeply influenced by Mahatma Gandhi. Mulk Raj Anand brought to Indian the new technique of the stream-of-consciousness. Raja Rao adopted the autobiographical form of narration. But the credit of bringing a name and reputation to Indo-Anglian fiction goes to a few contemporary writers such as Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan, and Nirad Chaudhuri. They are the four wheels of contemporary Indo-Anglian fiction. Other luminaries who have enriched the Indo-Anglian fiction are Khwaja Ahmed, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Mrs. R. Praver Jahabavala, Lumber Mascarenhas, Mrs. Vila Raina, Khushwant Singh and others.

The Indo-Anglian writers of fiction writers were with an eye and hope on the western readers. This influenced their choice of the subject-matter. That is why in Indo-Anglian novels there are Sadhus, Fakirs, Caves, Temples, Vedanta, Gandhi, Rajahs and Navabs, etc., that is to say. There are subjects that interest the western audience. The women writer, especially Kamala Markandaya, Santha Rama Rao and Anita Desai have a fine eye for the urban scene. Bhabhani Bhattacharya and Khushwant Singh, in very different ways, give us valuable insights into the pathos of economic impoverishment, misdistribution of wealth and human degradation caused by political upheavals.

The Technique of Narration:

The most prominent technique of narration in the Indo-Anglian fiction is the first person narrative. The central character of the hero is the narration of a novel. This technique is seen in many novels such as Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope*, Manohar Malgonkar's *The Princess*, Nayantara Sahgal's *A Time to be happy*, K. Natarajan's *The Chronicles of Kedaram* etc.

The Indo-Anglian fiction has imported the technique of the creative use of myth. Radha Krishna legend is a recurrent myth in Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope*. There is the use of myth in Narayan's *The Maneater of Malgudi*. In *The Old Women and The Cow*, Anand uses the myth of Sita's fire-ordeal as part of his technique. Raja Rao has created an Indian Sanskrit rhythm in the syntax of English.

Raja Rao says, we cannot write like English men and we should not. We cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as part us. Our method of expression therefore, has to be a dialect which will someday prove to be as distinctive and colorful as the Irish or the American. Time alone will justify it. Khushwant Singh himself follows Mulk Raj Anand in respect of Language.

The Themes of happiness and fulfillment through suffering and sanyas is also recurrent in the Indo-Anglian fiction. It is found in R.K. Narayan's *Guide*, B. Rajan's *Dark Dancer*, Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* and Bhawani Bhattacharya's *He Who Rides a Tiger*. Politics is also inseparably the subject matter of the Indo-Anglian fiction from 1920-1950. The mood of comedy, the sensitivity to atmosphere, the probing of psychological factors, the crisis in the individual soul and its resolution, and above all,

the detached observation, which constituted the stuff of fiction, were forced into the background.

The Theme:

The political theme as a matter of choice was very much influenced by Gandhi's role and philosophy. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* and *The Cow of Barricades*, K.A. Abbas's *Inquilab*, R.K. Narayan's 'Waiting for the Mahatma', Mulk Raj Anand's 'Sword and the Sickle.' Some other novels related to politics, especially the post-independence politics are Nayantara Sehgal's *This Time of Morning*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan*, Manohar Malgonkar's *Bend in the Ganges*, Attia Hossain's *Sunlight on a Broken Columns* etc.,

R.K. Narayan is one of the leading figures in Indo-Anglian fiction. He has written about a dozen novels and about 51 short stories. His novels can be classified under four categories:

1. *The school and college novel of his earlier period such as Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts and The English Teacher.*
2. *Domestic novels such as 'The Dark Room'*
3. *Novels leading with money such as The Financial expert, Mr. Sampath, The Guide and 'The Man Easter of Malgudi'.*
4. *Political novel such as Waiting for the Mahatma.*

'The English Teacher' (1945) is his third novel dealing with school and college life of India. Krishnan, the English teacher, was a producer of system of education which makes us 'morns', 'cultural morns' and his repeating mugged up notes from year to year was a fraud practiced for a conservation of a hundred rupees. He believed in freedom of a soul and Independence of mind. He had studied out of his creativity. He found teaching synonyms with sitting in his chair and keeping his tongue active whether his students understood him as felt baffled by what he said.

R.K. Narayan is a novelist of common people. His plots are built of material and incidents that are neither extraordinary nor superheroes. The tone of his novels is quiet and subdued. He selects day to day incidents that happen to almost every one of us. His heroes are normal human beings and they do not possess any extraordinary capacities, but through some accidents attain greatness very soon to return to their original state. We find nothing extraordinary as Savitri, Ramani and others live, love and suffer in a mare of incidents which are just common place.

Conclusion:

The early Indo-Anglian fiction writings have brought into limelight certain aspects of the reality such as imperialism, casteism, religious fundamentalism, cultural hegemony, authoritarian political leadership and dominance of a particular political ideology which influenced the society for long time, starting with pre-independent era. Now much of Indo-Anglian literature speaks of larger volume of changes that the society is going through over last many years, the change from autocracy to democracy, from totalitarianism to liberalism, from socialism to individualism and from single dominant hegemony to society.

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