

The Effects Of Intolerance Behaviour Of Swami

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ABSTRACT

Indian English Literature contains the work of the eminent writers in India who contributed their writings in English language. Indian writing in English had started during the period of the British rule in India with the introduction of Christian missionary education. Earlier to that, Indian writers wrote in vernacular medium. Slowly, it spread to different parts of India and other places in the world and people started showing interest towards the Indian writing. Indian English Literature is two hundred years old and Sri Aurobindo was the first poet in Indian English Writing. Initially Indian Writing in English was started by writers like Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, R K Narayanan, and Raja Rao. In modern time many writers have come forth and won many awards and prizes for their works which are on varied topics unlike the earlier writers who portrayed on the societal problems. The works of the Indian writers reveal that their works are not an imitation of English literary style or theme but extremely original Indian writing in all spheres. Indian English literature is the guiding star to show the glittering diamonds of Indian writing in English. Indian writing has paved the way for Indian writers to write and to show Indian culture, values, traditions, history, life styles etc. Indian writers contributed even to the world literature by writing on topics like freedom struggle, nationalism, social realism etc. The present paper focuses on R.K. Narayan's Novel 'Swami and Friends', which is set up in an imaginary small town called 'Malgudi'. The paper deals about the behaviour of Swamy and his friends based on the theme "The Effects of Intolerance Behaviour of Swami".

KEYWORDS: Indian English Literature, British rule, earlier writers, R.K. Narayan, Swami and Friends, intolerance behaviour

INTRODUCTION

Indian writing in English was started with the contribution of Indian writers writing in English having their own style of writings in words and themes. Indian writing in English had started during the period of the British rule in India with the introduction of Christian missionary education. Then it spread to different parts of India and other foreign countries. As a result native readers of India and foreign readers started showing interest towards Indian writing in English. This was made possible with the efforts of Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, R K Narayan and a few others. These four writers are considered as four pillars of Indian writing in English. English education in India paved the way for Indian writers to write in English and it gave a form to Indian literature.

Indian English literature:

Indian English literature contains the work of the eminent writers in India who contributed their English writing. Indian English literature is the work by Indian writers who write in the English language but their native or co-native language could be one of the languages of India. It also contributes the works of the Indian diaspora members' i.e, writers who like V.S Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, etc. Indian English literature is 200 years old and Sri Aurobindo was the first Indian Poet in Indian English literature who wrote a book in English

was SAKE DEAN MAHOMET with the title Travels of Dean Mahomet in 1773 in England. So Indian English literature has attained an independent status in the world literature. Many writers and commentators from England and America appreciated Indian English novels.

Now English became popular in India especially among the elite group and middle class Indians. English has become a convenient medium to express the views, feelings and talents of the writers. So the works of Indian writers reveal that their works are not an imitation of English literary style or theme but extremely original Indian writing in all spheres.

EARLY WRITERS

Early Indian writers used English unadulterated by Indian words to convey their experiences.

SRI AUROBINDO

Sri Aurobindo one of the early writers was considered as the first poet in Indian English. His famous works “The Human Cycle and the Ideal of Human Society” taken together shows Sri Aurobindo’s vision of the future happenings of man and the humanist thoughts.

Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya produced a significant corpus of dramatic writing.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE (1861-1941)

Rabindranath Tagore is commemorated in the sphere of English literature and his literary output is rich and varied. He won Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 for his work Gitanjali (1913). Rabindranath Tagore is novelist, dramatist, short story writer, musician, philosopher, painter, educationalist, reformer and critic. The Setting of the novel and their characters are natural, realistic etc. Tagore presented the socio-religious culture of Bengal very brilliantly in his novels. His novels deal with problems of the woman of his age, different kinds of human relations and modern problems of our society. He has a long list of poems and plays, both in Bengali and English to his credit, which made him one of the world’s greatest writers.

RAJA RAMMOHAN ROY

In the history of Indo Anglian literature, the stalwart Raja Ram Mohan Roy stands first. The renaissance in modern Indian Literature starts with Raja Ram Mohan Roy because he had acquired good command over English language while working with British officials. He removed old precepts and typical rituals through Brahmasamaj and gave new ideas. He worked for betterment of woman, freedom of press, English education, social justice and situation of Indian farmers and wrote Prose and Poetry in it. He also drafted the address presented to Lord William on 16 January 1830.

NEXT GENERATION WRITERS – THE TRIO

Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R K Narayan are called the TRIO of Indian novelists.

MULK RAJ ANAND (1905-2004)

His novels highlights mainly on the inequalities of the less fortunate / under privileged people. His contribution to the literature are many. He wrote Untouchable (1935), Coolie (1936), The Village and the private life of an Indian Prince (1953) which talks / describes the evils prevailing in the society in the Marxist term.

He wrote many short stories. He played a vital role to bring awareness of the inequality that prevailed in India and advised solution for those issues.

RAJA RAO (1908-2006)

Raja Rao has a reputation as a novelist of metaphysics and philosophy who justifies his contribution in upholding these themes in his novels. He novels deals with the domestic injustice and tyrannical tradition, and the writer shows his women characters as a little ambitious but end up playing a role of a wife like Savitri in “The Serpent and the Rope”. Indian culture being rooted into consciousness fails him to offer any concrete solution to the besetting women’s issues. The other works of Raja Rao are The Cat and The Shakespeare, Comrade Kirillov and Kanthapura. Raja Rao uses his novels to spread the Gandhian message and as propaganda against social evils.

R K NARAYAN (1906-2001)

Rasipuram Krishna swami Narayan swami was another author was unique in his writings, especially in Indian Fiction. Where he sets in the fictional South Indian town of Malgudi. He portrayed the Socio economic aspects of the simple Indian families. (His language and style shows the excellence of his simplicity) or the excellence of his language and style lives in his simplicity. Narayan typically portrays the distinctive character of human relationships and of Indian daily life. His style is graceful, and makes a remarkable position in the history of Indian English Fiction. R K Narayan brings out a fictitious small town life called Malgudi and in it all its experiences through a novel called “Swami and his Friends”.

Swaminathan was a boy of ten years old. “Swami and Friends” was the first novel by R K Narayan in 1985. This is the story of a nine year old boy. The novels tells us about the incidents and experiences of Swami in a fictional town called “Malgudi”.

Swami’s friends are Somu, Shankar, Mani and Samuel. Swami likes his class very much and among the four friends Mani is very close to Swami. With the arrival of a new boy in the class Rajam, the son of new police officer, disturbed their relationship.

IN SCRIPTURE PERIOD

The scripture period was the last class in the morning. The teacher Ebenezer shows his intolerance when he was teaching Bible. When he compares Jesus with Krishna, Swami become intolerable in his behaviour by questioning his teacher twice and as a result the teacher wrenches his left ear.

AT RIVER SARAYU

Rajam is a new student in the 'First A' and he impressed the whole class on the very first day itself. He dresses well by wearing socks and shoes, fur cap and tie and a coat with knickers. He comes to school in a car and above all he is a good student and speaks good English.

This Rajam is an enemy to Mani. Mani said "I am going to bring Rajam here bundle him up and throw him into the river." Mani said "What do I care? Some night I am going to crack his shoulders with my clubs".pg 15

Swami suggests Mani to be away from Rajam as his father is the police Superintendent. But Mani tells that he is not a coward like you and in fact warns Swami to be away from Rajam. This leads to unfriendly relationship between Swami and Mani, as a result Swami becomes a friend of Rajam.

This intolerance behaviour, of Swami and friends destroy the relationship between friends Somu, Shankar the Pea and Swami.

SWAMI NAMED AS TAIL

One day when Swami enters the class and all the students start laughing. He looks around in the class and he sees something written on the blackboard in big letters TAIL. When he sees that he becomes indignant and directly goes to Pea and slaps on his cheek and then turns to Sankar and slaps on his face. Soon there is a big fight in the class. Swami is called as Rajam's tail and this made him angry.

Here, the intolerance behaviour of Swami spoiled the friendship among his friends.

BREAKING THE WINDOW PANES

On the 15 of August 1930, about two thousand citizens of Malgudi gathers on the right bank of Sarayu to protest against the arrest of Gauri Sankar, an important Politian of Bombay.

In the morning, when Swami reaches school he witnesses a strike going on in the school campus where all the students shouting slogans of patriotism and the Headmaster requesting the students to go to their classes quietly. But the students boycotts the classes and starts throwing stones at the window panes and starts breaking the school furniture in which Swami is also part of it.

Here we can understand that Swami is not tolerant and behaves in the manner which was not appropriate to his age.

The next day, the Headmaster enters the class and surveys the class for a few minutes and says "Are you not ashamed to come and sit there after what you did yesterday?" Pg. 121

Then he reads the names of students who did not attend the classes. He asks them to stand their benches and realises that punishment is not enough so asks them to stand on their desks. All the students are asked to give explanation why they were absent for the classes. When it is Swami's turn, he wanted to say that he was not absent, but the attendance register will prove that he was absent, then he wanted to say that he was stoned, etc. as he is thinking of

presenting so many excuses to tell Headmaster, caned him because he was not answering. Finally Swami opened his mouth and said that he could not come.

Headmaster asked for peon to come in.

“Swami Nathan thought “what, is he going to ask the peon to thrash me? If does any such thing, I will bite everybody dead”. pg. 124

Here we can understand the intolerant behaviour of Swami even in his thoughts.

So peon gives witness saying that he has seen him breaking the window panes. So Headmaster beats Swami severely and asks him to stand on the desk for his acts.

Here the effect of Swami’s intolerant behaviour is, he is sent out of Albert Mission School leaving all his friends and joining in Board High School.

ABSCONDING FROM SCHOOL

Cricket proves its worth in Indian games and sports. Even the children of Malgudi were active in playing Cricket. So they form a team and registers it as Malgudi Cricket Club.(MCC). Rajam trains Swami to play Cricket. The three friends, Rajam, Mani and Swami were involved in the game completely forgetting all other things, because their dream is only to play cricket.

Rajam is made the captain of the team, he chooses other players from his class to form MCC which consists of eleven players. They start practicing in a ground behind Rajam’s bungalow regularly in the evening. But Swami is not all regular for cricket practice and whenever he comes he is late for practice due to his drill class in Board High School.”

“It is this”, Rajam said, “he is a good bowler and he needs some practice. He can’t come to the field early enough because he is kept in the school every day after four-thirty.” Pg 159

So, Swami requests Headmaster to send him home early and gives so many reasons to convince Headmaster. In spite of his efforts the Headmaster does not accept his requests.

MCC challenges a friendly match with Young Men’s Union, so Swami and his team want to practice for the match, but he is not allowed to go early from the school and should attend drill class without fail.

It was during the geography hour on Friday the Headmaster came to the class and asks Swami to stand, questions him about the his absence to the drill class and reprimands him saying that he would strip him and shall ask peon to cane him.

Next moment, the vicious snake like cane, would have fallen on Swaminathan’s palm. pg 171

Then out of fear, resentment and rage he plucks the cane from Headmaster’s hand and throws it out of the window, quickly ran to his desk, grabs his bag and runs out of the room.

Now Swami is out of school and he sits under a tree and starts thinking how he left two schools in the same fashion and there are no more schools in Malgudi. Then thinks about his father, he knows that his father will not allow him to stay in the house and he cannot go to school. His condition is neither he can be at home nor go to school. Due to the fear of his father he decides to run away to Madras. Swami starts his journey but loses his way after

leaving Malgudi. Swami in his hastiness did not think about the consequences that he would face being away from home. He keeps on walking till night and realises that it is dark and finds himself in the forest and thinking about his loneliness and desperate condition and does not understand how to return to Malgudi in spite of all his efforts.

So Swami struggles a lot during that night in the forest. Early in the morning on Saturday, Ranga the cart man sees Swami lying on the way, takes him to the forest officer's bungalow. The forest officer brings him to his house the next day in the evening. When, Swami's returns home, neighbours, his father's friends and even his friend Mani come home and see him. Swami tells Mani what all happened. Mani also tells him that MCC has lost the match to the YMU. Swami enquires about Rajam. Mani tells him that Rajam thinks that Swami has spoiled the game and cheated him leaving the team in time of need. Mani tells Swami that Rajam said so many things but he don't want to repeat what all he said but tells him only one thing that Rajam never wants to see or talk Swami again.

Here we see Swami loses his best friend Rajam because of his intolerance behaviour.

Conclusion:

In the novel "Swami and Friends" we see the intolerance behaviour of Swami and his friends at river Sarayu and their attitude towards Rajam.

We see how Swami loses his friendship with his friends because of his intolerable baviour when he is called as tail of Rajam.

We also see intolerable behaviour of Swami in breaking the window panes of the school building and as a result, was sent out of the school.

Finally we see the intolerable behaviour of Swami for cricket practice, he skips his classes and leaves school early, when questioned he runs away from the school

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