

A Short Sketch on Indian Writing English Novel

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Abstract

The impact of British rule gave rise to many new forms of literature, which can be conveniently called as Anglo-Indian Literature. The first forms of literature, in fact created by English men or English people after fascinated by Indian culture. The pioneer among this is Sir William Jones, followed by Leyden, Arnold, Sir Alfred Lyall and Sir Edwin Arnold. But their racial superiority stopped the intermixture of this cross culture. Nichola's 'Verdict on India' and E.M.Foster 'A Passage to India' are nothing but accidents in English Literature. After the introduction of English as Medium of Education in 1835, colleges and schools gradually increased and English spread as a popular medium. Indians needed a literary form to propagate their ideas. They needed a literary which is easy to read and quickly understood. Prof. M. K. Naik remarks: "One of the most notable gifts of English education to India is prose fiction for though India was probably a fountain head of story-telling, the novel, as we know today, was an importation from the West" Novel became a tool for them. Raja Ram Mohan Roy stood as a Titan among this period. Raja Ram Mohan inculcated the feeling that not only Indian culture but also some vital things are there to learn in western culture. This paper presents the origins of Indian novel and the Anglo-Indian literature during the British period. Further it covers the Indian writers during British period, after the independence and the trio of Indian novel. The feminine aspects dealt by male writers and Indian female writings in the Indian novel. In this paper the writers are mostly arranged in chronological order and the paper ends with current generation authors.

Keywords: British Rule, Anglo-Indian Literature, Indian Culture, Independence, Women Writing and Indian Novel.

THE BEGINNING OF INDIAN NOVEL

Indian English Novel originated from Regional Languages, probably Bengal. Bengal is the first state that underwent the first literary renaissance. Raj Mohan's wife of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee is the India's first novel written in English. It appeared in its book form very later. Bengali novels paved the way for the Indian Writing in English Novel. His novel "Anand Math" gave Indian National song, Vandemataram. The novels aftermath appeared from the states of Bengal and Madras. Mostly they took up the issues of social and political. They took the models from Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding and Walter Scott. Sir Jogendra Singh, member for Education and Health in Governor General's Executive Council contributed Nurjahan, Nasrin, Kamala, and Kamini. All his novels are historical romances except Kamini. His characters are liars, drunkards and admixture of philosophy and propaganda.

Ramesh Chunder Dutt translated Ramayana and Mahabharata. Apart from this he wrote 'A History of Civilization in Ancient India', 'Economic History of British India', and 'India in the Victorian Age'. R.C.Dutt's two Bengali novels 'The Lake of Palms' and 'The Slave Girl of Agra' are appeared in English. Ramakrishna Pillai's 'Padmini' and 'The Dance of Death' are prominent in this period. The last three decades of 19th Century was influenced by Swamy

Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swamy Vivekananda. Sri Aurobindo the dormant intellectual and critical impulse rehabilitated life and awakened the desire to creation. Tagore's remarkable position in Bengali literature compelled him to be bilingual. Tagore's 'Young Queen's Market', 'The Royal Sage', 'The Broken Nest', 'A Grain of Sand', 'Speck in the Eye', 'Eye Sore', 'The Bachelor's Club', 'Fair Faced', 'Chaturanga', and 'Two Sisters'. During the period 1920 – 1940 Venkata Ramani's 'Murugan the Tiller' is one of the remarkable novels. The contrasting pictures of urban and rural life and intermingling of realism and idealism makes the novel as first rated novel in the Transition period. 'Kandan, the Patriot' the second novel inspired by Gandhi's idealized the rural economy. Shankar Ram's 'Love of Dust' vividly portrays the farmer's attachment to the soil. M. K. Naik writes: "the Indian English novel of the period was deeply influenced by the epoch-making political, social and ideological ferment caused by the Gandhi movement"

THE TRIO OF INDIAN NOVEL

The real beginning of the novel starts with the writings of the Indian trio – R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, and Raja Rao. R.K. Narayan has several novels and short stories in his collection. 'The Bachelor of Arts', 'The Dark Room', and 'The English Teacher' are some of his best novels. He minutely depicts the vagaries of south Indian sophisticated life. "The Anglicized Indian is Narayan's peculiar province, and he is portrayed in novel or short story in all his self-division, self-deception and absurdity." 1. (Page No.46). Narayan created a utopian village Malgudi. All his collection of novels is dealt in the village Malgudi. It is not an exaggeration to say that Narayan has not missed any theme in his novels. In the words of Prof. Radhakrishnan, "He is an echo, his life a quotation, his soul a brain, and his free spirit a slave to things." Narayan's first novel 'Swamy and his Friends' is an imitation of Richmal Crompton's 'William'. The novel presents the pranks of Swamy and his friends and shows the world of school boys vividly, whereas the novel 'Bachelor of Arts' presents the world of College students. 'The Dark Room' portrays the life of women in a typical middle class family. Vasu in 'Man Eater of Malgudi', Raja in 'the Tiger for Malgudi', Jagan in 'Vendor of sweets', Margayya in 'the Financial expert' are not only characters in the novels but they represent typical species of attitudes. Humor in R.K. Narayan's novel is salt of his narration. Dexterously he adds salt to the novels and makes them more interesting

Mulk Raj Anand is engrossed in the struggles of under dogs of Indian society. In his novels 'Two Leaves and a Bud', 'Coolie', 'Untouchable', and the 'Village', he treats the pariahs of the society not with patronizing aspect but with sympathy and even with respect due to them as human beings. "The sweeper, the peasant, the plantation laborer, the city drudge, and the spy all emerge live from his novels, anguished and hungry, yet human, superstitious, and self-divided, vividly realized in spite of their thwarted purposing." Baka in 'untouchable' reveals that the borrowed clothes of tummies will never change his social status of untouchability. The untouchability does not apply to exploit women. Baka even though knows that his sister is molested by a Brahmin of a temple, unable to cross the line the social structure has imposed.

Baka does not know Gandhi's or the Vedic knowledge, he only feels happy that a new machine has been devised that there is no longer need to handle the dung with one's hands. Munoo in Coolie represents the situations of working class. The whirl of destiny shifts him from worker in a pickle factory, a porter, a circus boy, a laborer in Bombay industrial mill to a man servant. The destiny dictates him to die with tuberculosis. The concept of peer ship and comradeship is unknown in capitalist world. Laloo in the village entangled in the circumstances and perplexed with the superstition led world. He finally enlists himself as espy in war.

Raja Rao's Kanthapura is purely Gandhistic and explores the effects of Indian independence movement. He tried to indianite the English Language. But this narrative style has not lived last. After his mitigation with Indian Spirituality he changed the manner of his writings. His second novel 'The Serpent and the Rope' is an autobiographical account of the narrator, a young intellectual Brahmin and his wife seeking the spiritual truth in India. The theme is further continued in his 'The Cat and the Shakespeare: A Tale of India'. His last novel 'The Chess Master and His Moves' is peopled by various characters from various cultural identities. After the trio some new arrivals slowly occupied the place.

19th CENTURY AUTHORS

BhavaniBhattacharya, Kamala Markandaya, Kushwant Singh, Shanta Rama Rau, Sudhin Ghose and the rest gave promising achievement to Indian writing in English. They articulated interest in the psychosocial space in which the characters struggle towards a privatized individualistic self-awareness informed by essentially western. Bhavani Bhattacharya entirely immersed in social-realist fiction. "His writings exhibit the influence of Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. Unlike other social realists like Premchand, Bhattacharya adopted a pedagogical approach in making novels out of ideas, utilizing satire and making his ideas more tangible through situational examples."

Kushwant Singh is famous for his 'Train to Pakistan'. Kushwant singh believes that men of intellectual are less of action and men of breed are less in thinking. The other novels Delhi: a Novel and The Company of Women depicts the man and women relationship in a different angle. "Sudhin Ghose impeccable prose stylist and a master of sprawling narratives draw inspiration from myths, fables, legends and epics. Sudhin Ghose is among the greatest writers in Indian English literature a quartet of novels comprising And Gazelles Leaping, Cradle of the Clouds, The Vermilion Boat and The Flame of the Forest."

20th CENTURY AUTHORS

India is one of the biggest producers of novels in English after UK and USA. The themes of the novels have shifted much more in the 20th century. The writers of this period moved from public life to private life. This generation writers took their liberty to deal with the themes like feminism, patriotism, historical, mythological ideas, diasporic elements and explorative writings. The writers of this period and their works laid the seeds for future development of novel. The

creative urge among Indians improved the production of novels with various elements. Indian novel attained its own distinct form. One of the wonders in Indian writings are it adopted an alien medium to represent the tone of nation. Since, English became a global language the third generation writers has not faced any dilemma or problems in adopting English as a medium of writing. The movements influenced English literature like realism, surrealism, psychological aspects, colonialism, post-colonialism etc.also influenced Indian writing in English. The period between 1980s to 1990s is treated as Renaissance in Indian writing. Authors like Vikram Seth, Salman Rushdie, Vikram Chandra, Shashi Tharoor, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Shashi Desh Pande, Upamanyu Chatterjee, Geeta Mehta, Bharati Mukherjee and Amitav Ghosh enriched Indian writing in English with glorious ideas. Salman Rushdie is pioneer among these and the other writers like Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Allan Sealy, Upamanyu Chatterjee, Shashi Tharoor, Farook Dhondy, Rohinton Mistry, and Firdas Kaunga are treated as Rushdie's Children.

Salman Rushdie the pioneer among the third generation writers heralded a new era with *Midnight's Children*. His narrative technique is unique. He used allegorical first person narrative so as it give it an impression of an autobiographical novel. The hyperactive imagination of Rushdie draws him to surrealism. The novel 'Shame', a political allegory, depicts the situations in Pakistan, basing on the characters of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq. Another novel 'Satanic Verses' bestowed him notoriety and Muslim society issued Fatwa against him. Vikram Seth is known for his verse novel 'The Golden Gate', a self-discovery of John Brown, and Seth's epic novel 'A Suitable Boy' influenced by the five-volume 18th century Chinese novel 'The Story of the Stone' by Cao Xueqin. Even though the main plot appears as a search for a suitable boy for Lata, it offers satirical examination of national and political issues.

Shashi Tharoor, a politician, diplomat and also a writer wrote numerous books in English. His 'The Great Indian Novel' recasts the epic Mahabharata in the context of Indian Freedom Movement. 'The Show Business' is another novel which satirizes Bollywood Cinema by raising metaphorical questions about India and Indians. Upamanyu Chatterjee, an IAS Officer, wrote about the conflicts of Urban and rural life of Agastya Sen. It is long philosophy of life and self-discovery. 'The Mummeries of the Welfare State' is a sequel to his debut novel August. 'The Last Burden' deals with the social, economic and emotional problems of nucleus family. The novel 'To Go' is a sequel to the novel the Last Burden. Rohinton Mistry, Indian born Canadian writer's 'Such a Long Journey' is a story of a Parsi, devoted bank clerk. This book became controversial when one of the characters speaks derogatory remarks against Bal Thackeray.

Amitav Ghosh's the most reputed novel 'The Shadow Line', glimpses with the experiences of a young boy in Delhi and London. Another novel, 'The Calcutta Chromosome' a semi-mystic and semi scientific novel deals with the invention of malaria parasite and research of Ronald Ross. 'The Glass Palace' novel sets in Burma, Bengal, India and Malaysia. The economic and political fall of Burma, the moral impact of Indian soldiers after World War-II. 'The Hungry Tide', plot lied in sunder bans of West Bengal among Piyali Roy, an

environmentalist, Fokir, a fisherman and Kanai Dutt, translator between Piyali and Fokir. This novel deals with environmentalism and humanism and conflicts of personalities. Amitava Ghosh wrote a trilogy Ibis – Sea of Poppies, River of Smoke and Flood of Fire. Allan Sealy wrote ‘The Everest Hotel: A Calendar’ shortlisted for Booker Prize and another novel ‘The Trotter Nama’ tells the story of Seven Generations.

WOMEN WRITINGS

Among the Third Generation several women writers also emerged. Poetry is not an effective tool to convey their emotions. Bunch of women writers added another dimension to Indian Writing in English. They explored the area of female subjectivity in male patriarchal society. Ruth Praver Jhabvala is the foremost among female novelists. She used comedy of manners of westerners in her novels and also she used Bildungsroman i.e. literary genre that focuses on the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from youth to adulthood i.e. shift of character. ‘Edmond in India’, ‘The Householder’, ‘Get Ready for Battle’, ‘Head and Dust’ are her famous novels. The House Holder was filmed by Merchant Ivory under the screenplay of Ruth Praver Jhabvala.

Kamala Markandaya ‘Nectar in Sieve’ and ‘Some Inner Fury’ is known for culture clash between Indian urban and rural societies. Rukmani in ‘The Nectar in Sieve’ represents the attitude of middle class women. Even though her situation worsens every time, she endures it with patience and hopes things will be better soon. Her other novels include ‘Some Inner Fury’, ‘A Silence of Desire’, ‘Two Virgins’, and ‘Pleasure City.’ Nayantara Sahgal’s ‘A Time to Be Happy’, ‘This Time of Morning’, ‘Storm in Chandigarh’, ‘The Day in Shadow’, ‘A Situation in New Delhi’, ‘Rich Like Us’, and ‘Plans for Departure’ deals with the politics, and economic issues during the reign of Nehru and the crisis after his death.

Shashi Desh Pandey’s ‘The Dark Holds No Terror’ explores the trauma of a middleclass working women, Sarita, entrapped in the male dominated society. ‘Come Up and Be Dead’ is a novel of suspense. ‘Roots and Shadows’ focuses on the female protagonist’s interactions with others in their joint family. ‘The Long Silence’ echoes the voice of women. Her frustration, fear and anger is caused by her own not by others. Shashi Desh Pandey writes about women who belong to middle class family and are brought up in traditional environment, struggling to liberate themselves and seek their self-identity and independence. ‘A Matter of time’ focuses on social control, abuse, emotional exclusion and pressure. ‘A Small Remedies’ is an author’s plight to come over her the grief on her son’s death.

Anita Desai is one of the important novelists in Indian writing in English. K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar writes: “Anita Desai has added a new dimension to the achievement of Indian women writers in English fiction.” She concentrated not only on feminine problems but many psychological issues like the roots of our culture, self-identity, and the role of fate in human’s lives. Her debut novel, “Cry, the Peacock” is the story of a young girl, obsessed by a childhood

prophesy. She aptly illustrated the patriarchal culture in her novel. Anita Desai's 'Clear Light of Day' is her autobiographical novel. Her 'In Custody' is the story of an Urdu poet in his last days. In her novel, 'Fasting, Feasting' she explore two cultures American and Indian. This book is in two books. In Book-I she discusses the privileges of boy, Arun and pains a girl, Uma undergoes. In Book-II she discusses the culture and situations of America. Anita Desai describes tragedy of human souls entrapped in fate or life.

Kiran Desai's first work 'Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard' inspired from the life of Kapila Pradhan, who lived on tree for 15 years. Sampath Chawla wants to escape from the responsibilities of adult life and settles himself on a guava tree. He becomes famous as a holy man. 'The Inheritance of Loss' is related to colonialism and post-colonialism. She narrates the point of view of two persons Biju, an undocumented immigrant to the USA and Sai, an Anglicized Indian girl living with her Grandfather. Many persons want to become Anglicized persons and forgot their traditions and culture also. This novel has backdrop of Gurkha movement.

Arundhati Roy's debut novel 'The God of Small Things' is childhood experiences of fraternal twins and the novel explores how small things in life may change the behavior of people. Nilanjana Sudarshana Jhumpa Lahiri's first novel 'The Namesake' was influenced in part by a family story heard growing up. Her father's cousin was rescued from a train wreck by workers after seeing a beam of light reflected off a watch he was wearing. Similarly, the protagonist's father The Namesake was rescued due to his peers recognizing the books that he read by Russian author Nikolai Gogol. The wife and husband migrate to the USA. Their children grew up with different mannerisms and customs with what their parents have taught them. Sudha Murthy is renowned for her writings and social service. Her noteworthy novels are Wise and Otherwise, and Mahasweta

RECENT TRENDS IN INDIAN NOVEL

The recent authors choose writing not only as medium of expression but also as a career. They touched the themes of globalization and changes in Indian culture, diaspora, mythology and modifying the culture in terms of modern ways, untouchability, distinctions between rich and poor etc. Anita Nair's 'The Better Man' and 'Ladies Coupe' have been translated into 21 languages. In 'The Better Man', Mukundan after retiring from Government service returns to his village as a failure. He meets Bhasi and gets transformed. In constructing the community hall Bhasi's land was in threat and even Mukundan also clubs hand with Ramakrishnan, a locally important man. After the death of his father Mukundan realizes the things. The novel 'Ladies Coupe' is stories of 6 women. This novel raises the question whether a woman can live individually or her life is completed with husband?

Ashok Banker, Amish Tripathy and Devdutt Patnaik used mythology as source of novels. Ashok Banker wrote Crime fiction, Science fiction and mythological retellings. His novel

‘Vertigo’ represents new Bombay. Three of his novels ‘The Iron Bra’, ‘Murder & Champagne’ and ‘Ten Dead Admen’ are crime thrillers. He wrote Ramayana series, Omnibus Volumes, Krishna Coriolis series, Mahabharata series, Kali Rising, Ithihasa Series etc., Ashok Banker is the first writer in India who embraced changing technology. Banker began sharing his workthrough online platform with readers as early as 1990s. Amish Tripathy wrote novels like ‘The Immortals of Meluha’, ‘The Secret of the Nagas’, ‘The Oath of the Vayuputras’, ‘Scion of Ikshvaku’, ‘Sita: Warrior of Mithila’ and ‘Raavan: Enemy of Aryavarta’. The first three are Shiva series and the second three are Ramachandra series.

Deva Dutta Patnaik is famous for his works in mythology and interpretations of ancient scriptures. Myth = Mithya: A Handbook of Hindu Mythology, Jaya: An Illustrated Retelling of the Mahabharata, Sita: An Illustrated Retelling of the Ramayana, Business Sutra: An Indian Approach to Management, Shikhandi: And Other Tales they Don't Tell You, Shiva to Shankara: Giving Form to the Formless, in which he explores the layers of meanings embedded in Shiva's linga, we discover why and how the Goddess transforms Shiva, the hermit, into Shankara, the householder; Leader: 50 Insights from Mythology. All these three resourceful writers replenished Indian Literature in English with our cultural aspects. They adopted different strategies to popular their writings. Amish Tripathy approached marketing chains with his sample first chapter of his debut novel. And for second novel he approached film production team and you tube.

Chetan Bhagath is columnist, screen writer, motivational speaker and novelist. “His notable works include Five Point Someone, The 3 Mistakes of My Life and 2 States. Most of his literary works address the issues related to Indian youth and their aspirations which earned Baghat status of the youth icon.” His debut novel, Five Point Someone – What not to do at IIT!, deals with unfair grading system. ‘One Night at a Call Centre’ was adopted as Hello for Big screens. ‘The 3 Mistakes of My Life’ based on a sport cricket. Bhagat's novel ‘2 States: The Story of My Marriage’, is a autobiographical novel that focuses on the prevailing issue of interstate marriage in India. ‘Revolution 2020’ deals with rampant corruption in the educational system. ‘What Young India Wants’ consists the ideas on how to improve Indian economic sector through social reforms. ‘One Indian Girl’ is Bhagat's first attempt to deal with feminism in the life of modern girl through her experience in romance, career and arranged marriage. To read his novels there is no need of full knowledge in English. His novels are simple and without rhetoric.

The debut novel of Indian Author Shri Aravind Adiga, published in 2008 won the Man Booker Prize. He became one of the Indian origin writers who received this novel after Salman Rushdie, Arudhanthi Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga. This novel sheds light on the class struggle in India. It depicts the life in the retrospective angle of Balram Halwai a simple villager who becomes entrepreneur later. His second novel Between the Assassination refers to the period between Indira Gandhi in 1984 and Rajiv Gandhi in 1991. The stories revolve around different classes, castes and religions in India. The stories revolve around different set of classes, castes and religions in India. In each story, another set of characters is introduced, but places and names

appear again in other stories. His third novel 'Last Man in Tower' is the struggle of Murthy or Masterji to keep his apartment in the block from up surging real estate. His novel 'Selection Day', which was adopted into Netflix movie, narrates the story of a chutney seller who trains his two sons for Under-19 Cricket team.

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