



## FORMATIVE JOURNEY OF INDIAN FICTION IN ENGLISH

Dr. NEELIMA DUBEY

Lecturer in English

Sri Bhagwan Dutta Girls Degree College, Kakval, Gauri Bazar, Deoria, UP



Dr. Neelima Dubey

### ABSTRACT

Conflux of cultures always produce a new phenomenon, it was the time of Indian writing in English. My current research is about the acknowledgement and effulgence of the literature which reveals eternal imprint of the British and intellect of Indians. Both amalgamated a new genre. They gave a spark of English language, but it turned into a blazing fire of literature. Many Indian pioneers cherished the childhood of this literature, gradually it bloomed with adolescence and youthfulness after that reached at the peak of perfection. Now it is spreading its mellow light all over the world with its majesty. It aims at the endeavours of Indian English literature, that how the Indian writers in English have succeeded in creating native hue to English without tarnishing its true English character.

**Keywords** : Fiction, Indian writing in English, Britishers, phenomenon contemporary.

©KY PUBLICATIONS

This research mirrors the formative journey of Indian English literature in the form of novel "The rise of the novel in India was not purely a literary phenomenon. It was a social phenomenon as much, rather the fulfillment of a social need".<sup>1</sup> Writes K.S. Ramamurti in his book *Rise of the Indian Novel In English*. Of course, fiction can be called a new branch, a new attempt in comparison with poetry, prose and other treatises, but today we can claim that it is the most popular genre of Indo-Anglian literature. Although in the beginning the fictionist had to face a lot of problems, mainly the problem of language to express the emotions and sentiments of different fictitious characters and to describe truths related to traditions and circumstances through the mouth of an illiterate character, but by and by these problems were overcome by the sincere efforts of eminent fictionists.

After the departure of Britishers Indians thought of using their knowledge of English language and vocabulary in the field of literature

and, consequently, Indo-Anglian literature was born. Formerly, it was the general opinion that literature was possible only in mother tongue. Miss Lotika Basu, a critic held the view that Indians should not write in English when so many native languages were already present and R.K. Narayan was considered a traitor for writing in English but fictionist like Mulkraj Anand, Raja Rao, etc. were encouraged by the examples of writers like Tagore, Manmohan Ghosh, E.P. Rice and W.B. Yeats. All of them had not written in their mother tongue. So the fictionist attempted to express Indian customs, considerations, prejudices, superstitions, and different religious and mythical experiences and people abroad became acquainted with them and while doing so he also got a wide range of readers along with a bigger variety of criticism. Thus Indian creative writing in English is an expression of one of the languages which Indians speak. As the late C.R. Reddy states-

'Indo-Anglian literature is not essentially different in kind from Indian literature. It is a part of it, a modern facet of that glory which, concerning from the Vedas has continued to spread its mellow light, now with greater and now with lesser brilliance under the inexorable vicissitudes of time and history, ever increasingly up to the present time of Tagore, Iqbal and Aurobindo Ghose, and bids fare to expand with our and humanity's expanding future.'<sup>2</sup>

If we look back at social and political conditions of India before the arrival of Britishers, we find them inviting enough for British raj which is a great contributory factor in the rise of Indo-Anglian Fiction. India was a fractured entity. There were regional and caste disparities. Feelings like loyalty and patriotism were nowhere. Various communities were fighting against one another. So, Britishers found an opportunity to rule over India in the name of consolidation and ironically they were supported in this effort by almost the whole of India. Nizam and the Marathas supported them against Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan. Peshwa supported them against other Maratha leaders. The Marathas were against Rajputs and Muslims fought among themselves. Thus India was the name of these divided states. At such a critical time Britishers introduced an ideal judicial system to strengthen their sovereignty and the whole of India welcomed this British raj like a sudden blessing.

By the mid of the eighteenth century India was a veritable wasteland. From political, cultural and economic point of view there was a vast vacuum. The old world was dead and the new world was not powerful enough to be born. The East India Company was the only cohesive force present on the Indian soil. This trading company, supported by the British empire gradually acquired military power to supplant the weak rulers with its own administration and then it established its sovereignty over India.

In the beginning the Britishers found the worst state of society and education. In Bengal they found no school, no building and teacher without skill. Learning was limited to a bit of reading and writing. Women were also denied education. So,

Britishers felt the need of imparting English education to Indians. Consequently, many schools were opened. Christian Missionaries came to India for religious purposes in the nineteenth century and helped much in imparting western education. They also opened many schools with the aim of conversion.

Similarly, the society witnessed some shocking evils in the beginning of the nineteenth century like untouchability, early marriage, sati-tradition and maltreatment with women and nobody dared oppose these malpractices due to the dominating role of tradition and sacraments.

When the social reformers like Mahadev Govind Ranade tried to wipe these evils out of society they confronted a big opposition of the orthodox society. Finally, the united efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and William Bentinck bore fruits who were supported by Akbar, Jahangir, Peshwa Baji Rao and Britishers like Metcalf and Sati tradition was declared illegal in Bengal in 1829, in Madras in 1836 and gradually in other parts of the country. Missionaries were also determined to abolish the darkness of ignorance. Their patience was also finally rewarded. Evils disappeared from society to a large extent.

But the British raj was tormenting from a political point of view as they believed in the policy of 'divide and rule'. All the high posts were reserved for Britishers. Indians were forced to work hard and the money was drained by the Britishers. The judicial system was equally unjust. For administrative purposes the Britishers wanted educated Indians who could read and write English skillfully. Therefore, they paid attention to the educational development of India. Missionaries also helped by setting up printing presses in different parts of the country. Thus Britishers imparted English education in India for preparing an army of clerks. They also translated a large number of Indian classical books and Indians finally realized the rich tradition of their country. Iyenger writes-

'English Education was a new force part elixir, part Poison injected into Indian life'.<sup>3</sup>

Though the Eighteenth century was a fluid from the political point of view, the first four decades of the Nineteenth century were very eventful. The

establishment of a systematic government meant that law and order were established. People began to concentrate on the burning problems which society faced. This was also the time of national resurgence contemporaries of Ram Mohan Roy, Dayanand Saraswati, Ramkrishna Parama Hansa and Swami Vivekananda carried forward the social reform movement. Walter Allen observes-

‘Contemporary novels are mirrors of the age, but a very special kind of mirror, reflects not merely the external features of the age, but also its inner face, its nervous system, the coursing of its blood and the unconscious promptings and conflicts which way it’.<sup>4</sup>

Thus English writing began to sprout vigorously, all over India as a consequence of long reign of Britishers over India. Further this was the western impact on Indian mind which gave rise to a new phenomenon known as Indo-Anglian fiction. The basic issues of Indo-Anglian fiction were-freedom struggle, east, west encounter, exploitation of women and presence of evils like castism in society. This new genre had an astonishing significance because literary creativity was based on social phenomena on the one hand and, on the other hand, the fictionist attempted to express Indian sensibility in Indian English that was enough to draw the attention of readers from all parts of India as well as abroad. Dr. Meenakshi Mukherjee asserts-

‘Indo Anglian novel came into existence long after the novel had become an established genre in other Indian languages’.<sup>5</sup>

This phenomenon will continue till the existence of the earth because creation and creator can not die.

#### Reference

1. K. S. Ramamurti- Rise of Indian Novel in English, New Delhi. Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd. 1987 (P.24)
2. Quoted by K. R Srinivasa Iyengar – Indian writing in English – New Delhi. Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1984 (P.3)
3. Ibid – (P .27)
4. Quoted by Dr. G. N. Agnihotri in Indian Life and Problems in the Novels of Mulk Raj
5. Anand, Raja Rao & R. K. Narayan. (P .9)