Rise and Development of Indian English Novel

Kaushik Das*1 & Tithi Sen2

*1 Department of Mathematics, Gobardanga Hindu College, Gobardanga, West Bengal, India
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2812-0261

2 Bhawanipur, near Indane Gas Office, P.O. - Basirhat College, 743412
Ph- +91 7063048316, Email: tithisenn1993@gmail.com
Corresponding Author’s Ph: +91 7908026601/9641363216,
Corresponding Author’s Email: kaushik.das53@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The British Government established English as a language in India. As a result, English would almost certainly perish as a language in India. It grew into something more. From a historical standpoint, Indian English literature has gone through many periods, including Indo-Anglian, Indian-English, and Indian writing in English, and, most recently, Indian English literature. Despite the diversity of its languages, races, and faiths, Indian writing in English has effectively grasped and embodied the multi-cultural, multilingual community. The present study focused on the development of the Indian English Novel of Pre & post-independence period. The main objective of this study to find out the rise and development of the Indian English Novel of multilingual India. Methodology Employed based on qualitative research.

Keywords: Development of Indian English Novel, English Novel, India, Pre-Independence Period, Post-Independence Period.

Introduction:

The novel is an impeccable creation of Indian English literature. English novels are written in India before pre-independence. Indian English Novel is a change in Indian culture, tradition. The English language has come quite a long way from mere use to the authentic tool for expressing one's ideas, thoughts, concepts, and imagination. Indian English Novel has had phases of development. There were already three parts in the myths, in the folklore, and the umpteen languages and cultures (R. Patil & Vidya, 2012).

Results:

Development of Pre independence period:

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee’s (1838-1894) first and only novel in English, Rajmohan’s wife (1864) was serialized in the Calcutta weekly, The Indian Field (1864) (Naik, M.K, 1982). Earlier short fiction in English, A Journal of 48 Hours of the Year 1945 (1835) by Kylas Chundar Dutt and The Republic of Orissa: A Page from the Annals of the Twentieth century (1845) by Shoshee Chundar Dutt. Peary Chand Mitra’s Alaler Gharer Dulal (The Split Son of a Rich Family, 1855-57, Bengali), and anticipates some of the major developments of the novel as a genre (Anjaria & Ulka, 2015).

From 1860 up to the end of the 19th century, story novels continued to appear mostly by writers from the Bengal and Madras. Novels by as many as three women novelists appeared before the turn of the century. Toru Dutt’s unfinished novel, Bianca or The Young Spanish Maiden, a romantic love story set in England (Calcutta, 1878); among the novels published between 1864 and 1900. Tarachand Mookerjee’s The Scorpions or Eastern Thoughts (Allahabad, 1868); Lal Bahari Day’s Govinda Samanta or The History of a Bengal Raiyat (London, 1874)- revised and enlarged version published under the title Bengal Peasant Life (London, 1908); M. Dutt’s Bijoy Chand: An Indian Tale (Calcutta, 1888) and B. R. Ranjan Iyer’s fragment of a religious novel, True Greatness or Vasudeva Shastri (1925) (Naik, M.K,
1982). Ramesh Chander Dutt is the greater renowned as an administrator and as a Bengali and English writer. Two of his Bengali novels into English: The Lake of PaPalms: A story of Indian Domestic Life (London, 1902) and The Slave Girl of Agra, an Indian Historical Romance (London, 1909) is set in the Mughal period. He is the measure of his greatness as an Indo-Anglican poet. (Iyengar, K. R Srinivasa, 1945).

The Indian novelists in English have their roots in two traditions- the Indian and the western. It was a challenge for them to expresses distinctly and Indian sensibility in an acquired language. Many novels were being written in the regional languages, such as Bengali, Hindi, Marathi and Malayalam, they had no English tradition. Indian writers were greatly influenced by the European masterpieces of Leo Tolstoy, Henerie Balzac and Fydor Dostoevsky in English translations (Meti & Ravi Pandurang (2014). Sharath Kumar Ghosh’s Verdict of the Gods (1905); The Prince of Destiny: The New Krishna (1909)- a novel about an enlightened Rajput Prince of the later 19th century, which to deal with East-west relationship, an oft-repeated theme in the Indian English novel.

**Development of post- independence period:**

The Indian English novel of the period was deeply influenced by the epoch-making political, social and ideological ferment caused by the Gandhian movement. K. S. Venkataramani (1891-1951) of the earliest novelists of this period, his first novel, Murugan, The Tiller (1927), contrasts the careers of two young South Indian friends—Kedari, a flashy materialist finally ruined by his chicanery and Ramu, an introvert, whose spirit of public service brings him spectacular rewards after an unpromising beginning. English with Ramu’s ideal on Gandhian principles to which he retires with his repentant friend. His second novel, Kandan, the Patriot: A Novel of New India in the Making (1932) is setting against the background of the civil Disobedience movement, tells the story of Kandan (Naik, M.K, 1982).

The most significant of Indian English Fiction in the 1930s was the appearance on the scene of its major trio: Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao (Naik, M. K, 1982). Anand’s early novels, Coolie (1936), Two Leaves and a Bud (1937), Village (1939), Across the Black Waters (1940), The Sword and the Sickle (1942) and The Big Heart (1942). Anand’s first novel Untouchable (1935) is Classic experimentation in respect of theme and technique. Ending this novel, Bakha ‘thinking of everything he had heard, though he could not understand it all’ (Meti, Ravi Pandurang, 2014). Narayan’s art reached its maturity, when he was finally able to enlist his good-humored irony of serious moral concern in three novels: The Financial Expart (1952), The Guide (1958) and The Man-eater of Malgudi (1962) (Naik, M. K, 1982). He is a natural story teller in his novels: Swami and Friends (1935), the painter of Signs (1976). His unsuccessful experiment in another direction in Mr Sampath (1949) brilliantly and realistically describe South-Indian life. William Walsh says, R. K. Narayan’s writing is “a distinctive blend of western technique and Eastern material” (Meti Ravi Pandurang , 2014). Raja Rao was not a prolific writer. He has written only three novels and two collections of short stories. In his first novel, Kanthapura (1938) which is perhaps the finest evocation of the Gandhian villages, the new upsurge fused completely with traditional religious faith, thus rediscovering the Indian soul. Other two novels: The Serpent and The Rope (1960) and The Cat and The Shakespeare (1965) (Sen, S and Chopra J. K, 2004). Bhabani Bhattacharya is strongly influenced by Tagore and Gandhi. His first novel, So Many Hungers (1947) deals with the
theme of exploitation- political, economic and social. His Shadow from Ladakh (1966) contrasts the Gandhianism of Satyajit Sen of Gandhigram with the scientism of Bhaskar chief Engineer of Steeltown. Monohor Malgonkar's The Prince (1963) is indubitably his best novel, he goes beyond his self-avowed role as a story-teller (Naik, M. K, 1982).

The works by the women writers critique the novels of awareness of modern India and are part of this period. Their writings bring to light the hardships women faced, who usually did not inherit money, could not work and where their only chance in life depended on the man they married. Anita Desai was one of the respective novelists of this period. Some of her best-loved works are set against India and Abroad. Her works: Fasting, Feasting (1999); Journey to Ithaca (1995); Baumgartner’s Bombay (1988); Cry, The Peacock (1963) (Khurana & Monika, 2017). Her fiction can advance from the vision of ‘aloneness’ as a psychological state of mind to that of alienation as a metaphysical enigma (Naik, M. K, 1982). Shobha De is important example of literary realism and are admired for her sketch of elite society (Khurana & Monika, 2017).

Santha Rama Rai’s Remember the House (1956) is a charming picture of the East-West encounter, particularly as it affects young Indira, whose growth from adolescence to maturity is another theme. Nargis Dalal proved a salutary influence on her fiction: Minati (1967); Two Sisters (1973); The Inner Door (1976) and The Girls from Overseas (1979). Shakuntala Shrinagesh's The Little Black Box (1955) is interesting, though not wholly successful, an experiment in psychological fiction, depicting the thought processes of Sarala, an embittered rich woman, who lies dying in a hospital with her money-box under her bed (Naik, M.K, 1982). Jhumpa Lahiri examines her character's struggles, anxieties, and biases to chronicle the nuances and details of immigrant’s psychological behavior in her works. Chitra Banerjee Divakarini takes her themes in women, immigration, the South Asian experience history, myth, magical realism and diversity in her novels.

Salman Rushdie was a distinct influence on fiction in this period. His works have signaled a fresh style in writing as well as giving influence to multicultural concerns. His notable works: Midnight’s Children, Shame, The Moor’s Last Sigh, Fury, Shalimar the Clown— the work that propelled him into the limelight was his satanic verses. Rohinton Mistry, V. S. Naipaul, Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor and Upamanyu Chatterjee are also significant, as well as being an example of the post-colonial period (Khurana & Monika, 2017).

Discussion:

Indian writers in English have made the most significant contribution in the field of the English novel. The third-generation Indian writings in English have enlightened the literature with its quality and vividness. It represented the culture, history and all the various necessary for the enrichment of the literature. These third-generation Indian writers also dealt with historical, cultural, philosophical and much more basing their themes around mankind. Several novelists on the contemporary scene have given expression to their creative urge in no other language than English and have brought credit to the Indian English Fiction as a distinctive force in the world fiction (Yesapogu & Venkateswarlu, 2015).

Conclusion:

The novel was the last to arrive on the Indian English literary scene. Post- Independence Indian English Fiction retains the momentum the novel had gained during the Gandhian age (Naik M.K, 1982). Indian English novel has gone through a lot of transformation from its initial days to the present time and has attained a whole new intensity in terms of concept, marketing,

Declaration of Conflicting Interests: The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

References: