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## **TRACING THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIAN ENGLISH WRITING**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Writing in Indian English is a vast and diverse discipline that has developed throughout the years with its own distinctive tone and manner of expression. The purpose of this research study is to chart the evolution of Indian English Writing from its earliest origins to the current day. It investigates the historical and cultural backdrop of Indian writing in English, as well as the primary topics, styles, and genres that have developed through time, as well as the important authors who have contributed to this body of work. In this study, we investigate the ways in which colonialism, nationalism, modernism, post-modernism, and globalisation have each had an impact on Indian English writing. In addition to this, an examination of the obstacles and prospects confronting Indian English Writing in the 21st century is provided.*

**Keywords:** *Indian Elements, Characteristics of Indian literature, Indianans in Indian writing,*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Introduction: Indian English Writing has come a long way since the colonial era. Indian English Literature started to flourish in the early 19th century when the British East India Company established a firm hold over India. Since then, the literary scene in India has undergone many changes, and Indian English Writing has emerged as a significant and distinct form of literature.

This research paper aims to trace the development of Indian English Writing from its beginnings to the present day. It will examine the evolution of Indian English Writing and highlight the contributions of some of the most notable Indian English Writers.

Early Indian English Writing: Indian English Writing can be traced back to the early 19th century when the British East India Company established a firm hold over India. The earliest

Indian English Writer was Sake Dean Mahomed, who wrote his first book, 'The Travels of Dean Mahomed,' in 1793. However, Indian English Writing did not gain much recognition until the early 20th century.

The early Indian English Writers were primarily English-educated Indians who were influenced by English literature. They wrote about India, its culture, and its people, but in a style that was heavily influenced by British Literature. Some of the early Indian English Writers include Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, and Mulk Raj Anand.

**The Influence of Independence:** The Indian Independence Movement played a significant role in the development of Indian English Writing. Indian English Writers became more aware of their cultural heritage and started to incorporate Indian themes and motifs in their writing. They started to write about the struggles of the Indian people and the need for freedom from British rule.

The post-independence era saw a surge in Indian English Writing. Many new Indian English Writers emerged, and they started to experiment with different styles and themes. Some of the notable Indian English Writers from this period include R.K. Narayan, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, and Amitav Ghosh.

**The Globalization of Indian English Writing:** Indian English Writing has gained global recognition in recent years. Indian English Writers are now being published and recognized on the international stage. The globalization of Indian English Writing has resulted in a more diverse range of themes and styles. Indian English Writers are now writing about a range of topics, including diaspora, identity, and globalization.

The battle for the nature, identity, and ultimately the fate of contemporary India is being fought out through Indian literature written in the English language. It is important to point out that there has been a campaign to popularise Indian writing in different parts of the world. This natural occurrence has not only captivated domestic listeners and readers, but also those from other countries. The works of Indian authors such as Toru Dutta, Sri Aurobindo, Sarojini Naidu, Nissim Ezekiel, A.K. Ramanujan, Kamala Das, Dilip Chitre, Amitabh Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Arundhati Roy, Jhumpa Lahiri, and Anita Desai have propelled Indian literature and writers to new heights. Writings by Indians originally composed in English are now officially recognised as significant contributions to the world of literature. Readership and creation of various works in vernacular languages in India are far bigger than the equivalent in the English language, both in terms of the quality and quantity of the writings produced. One must consider the readership of Indian English writing, which is, at best, little in India; hence, the intended audience seems to be the western regions of the globe where English is widely spoken. The article tracks this study, offering the outline research in origin, going through the growth and representation of Indianness in language, which is today known as Indian English literature. Specifically, the paper examines the history of Indian English literature.

Indian literature consists of works of writing that were produced in India before to the year 1947. Indian literature refers to works written in the Sanskrit language. These works include the holy scriptures known as the Vedas, Upanishads, and the major epics. This is because, back in ancient India, the language known as "Sanskrit" was considered to be very important. It was the language of high culture and the lingua franca since it was taught to the upper-class Brahmins, who, according to the Rigveda, were thought to have been born out of the mouth of a god (Purusha). After the year 1947, a constitution for India was drafted, and within it are provisions that recognise 22 different languages. Hence, Indian Literature was restricted to the time period before the republic.

According to the historical records of India, which were controlled by the Brahmins, who were an elite and highly educated priestly caste, religion and spirituality were the fundamental concerns. The goal of arriving in paradise, known as Mukti, and the practise of reincarnation are the two central tenets of Hinduism. According to the Karma philosophy, the notion of charity, also known as Dana, is stressed throughout the Vedas as a means to reach paradise. The idea behind reincarnation is that your actions from the past have a direct impact on your life right now. If in the past great actions were done, then it is certain that noble children will be born in the present. The narrative of Ram, who was the reincarnation of Lord Vishnu, is told in the epic Ramayana. Poets such as Dom Moraes, P Lal, P Nandy, A K Ramanujan, K.N.Daruwalla, and Kamala Das, to mention just a few, emerged throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Each of these poets had a distinct voice and a unique approach to their profession. The language of communication on a worldwide scale is now mostly English. The arrival of the Post-Colonial period in literary production marked the beginning of the Indian English language's ascent to the position of a separate speech form in its own right. Several Indian English authors including Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Khushwant Singh, Anita Desai, DilipChitre, ArunKulatkar, Amrita Pritam, Taru Dutta, Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Das, JayantaMahapatra, Arundhoti Roy, JhumpaLahiri etc. have brought Indian English to the West. By using the vocabulary of Indian regional languages, authors of this ilk have made significant contributions to the formation of Indian English. As a result, they have introduced a fresh facet into the process of creating Indian English. Indian features in English literature written by Indian authors have captured the attention of both serious readers and literary experts. The languages spoken in India today are the ancestors of some of the world's most ancient tongues, including Sanskrit, Prakrit, Pali, and Tamil, among others. It should not come as a surprise that words derived from these obsolete concepts have made their way into modern English. There are a vast number of terms of Indian origin that have been included into Indian literature written in English, and we welcome and acknowledge their contributions with a great deal of excitement.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To show the Indianness in the making of Indian creative writing in English.
2. To emphasise the points that Indian English literature is substantially Indian.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In order to accomplish its goals, this research will use both an analytical and a descriptive approach.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

### **The Origin of writing in India**

There are three distinguishable qualities that may be seen in the early works of Indian literature:

1. Devotion and an intensely spiritual outlook are the foundations of Indian literature.
  - The Vedas are considered to be India's earliest known works of literature. The Vedas are said to be *apaurueya*, which translates as "not of human action." They are also believed to have been immediately disclosed, and as a result, they are referred to as *ruti*, which means "what is heard." This book has songs and prayers addressed to several gods.
  - The people of India are of the opinion that in order to redeem humanity, one must have both an understanding of the gods and a firm faith in Hinduism.
2. The epic form, in which Indian literary masterpieces are often composed, correlates to significant eras in India's historical development.
  - The Mahabharata and the Ramayana are considered to be the two most significant epics in all of India. The Mahabharata also holds the record for being the longest epic in the world.
3. Sectarian writings dominated most of the early work produced in Indian literature throughout the mediaeval period. These early works were written in a variety of Indian languages and were intended to promote or glorify a non-traditional local religion. Instances of these include the Caryapadas written in Bengali, which date back to the 12th century, as well as the Lilacaritra, written in Marathi about the same time.

### **An Insight into Origin and Progress**

The English colonial rule that lasted for over two centuries in India is largely responsible for the development of English-language literature in India. It is impossible to deny the connection that exists between the piece of written work and the historical context from which it was inspired. In spite of the imperialism and colonialism practised by western nations, the Indian culture has made tremendous strides forward during the last two hundred years. It is a well-known truth that the Englishmen arrived to India under the guise of commerce and instantly understood that a solid governmental rule would significantly boost their profits. This is a reality that has been passed down from generation to generation. The

financial resources amassed in the Indian possessions via the collection of taxes and other forms of income were the only thing that allowed England's Industrial Revolution to continue. After that, they started the process of annexing other regions in and surrounding India in order to establish a colonial empire. The agricultural self-sufficiency of the farmers was entirely destroyed as a result of British control, and the commerce in silk fabric went into a downward spiral as a direct result of the increased availability of English factory-produced cloth at lower prices. After losing their jobs, the weavers and craftsmen were forced to find employment on cotton plantations in order to provide for themselves and their families. Millions of Indians were forced into abject misery and poverty, and many of them lost their lives as a result of the thorough and methodical demolition and overhaul of the preexisting order.

After a few years of colonial rule and consolidation, the English empire became embroiled in a hotly debated and discussed issue regarding the introduction of the English language into educational institutes. This issue centred on the question of whether or not English should be the primary language taught in educational institutions. It was a pivotal choice that led to the introduction of English into the educational system in India. At the time, it was acknowledged that this represented a distinct epistemological template in which not only the language but also the lifestyle and culture was enforced. It is clear that the hatred and disdain that was directed against Indian languages was done with the intention of strengthening their domination and brainwashing the colonised. The intention behind teaching English was not to empower people or generate intellectuals. In addition, the invaders had nothing but scorn and disgust for the preexisting languages, knowledge, beliefs, religious practises, and educational institutions, which they labelled as being illogical, pagan, primitive, unscientific, and immoral. The establishment of the notions that the empire is a beneficent authority and has now taken on the responsibility of bringing light in the form of knowledge to the ignorant population occurred simultaneously with the introduction of the English language, which allowed the missionaries to gain a better hold on the country and political situation. A number of authors and poets became Christians as a direct consequence of receiving an education in English and copied the manner in which the English Romantics and classicists wrote prose and poetry in their works of literature.

The conquerors first had a great deal of success in establishing a class of translators between themselves and the masses of people they subjugated. The English found that using education as a tactic was a powerful ideological weapon that legitimised their control in the colonies. This was especially true in the American colonies. It is clear that a hierarchy is constructed in which the western educational paradigm incorporates wisdom and knowledge in contrast to the colonial people who are considered to be idiots. The education that was introduced was naturally one-sided, and it not only elevated English customs and ways of life, but it also gave newly educated English urbanites a very restricted and constrained space for liberal thought. This was because the education that was introduced was naturally biased. When the nation was portrayed to be afflicted with depravity, bestiality, and religious prejudice, the indigenous people of India started to think that the European invaders had a moral obligation

to fulfil. Instead of instructing students in English grammar, the evangelists chose to teach passages from the Bible, which allowed them to spread Christianity in an indirect manner. When they were first published, these groundbreaking works of poetry, fiction, drama, travel, and belles-lettres were audacious acts of mimicry and self-assertion simply due to the fact that they were written in English. Today, however, they are read almost exclusively by experts in their respective fields. In addition to this, the topics that they touched on and the kind of societal challenges that they dealt with would not be examined by other Indian literatures until many decades after they had been written.

### **Phases and effects: Transformation of language**

The first part of Indian literature written in English takes place approximately throughout the previous half century, before the Great Rebellion in 1857. An English education and ideas from the West had started to have a significant liberating influence during this time period in a nation that had been plagued by political unrest for close to a century at this point. This was the time period in question.

The acceptance of Indian writing in English as part of the English canon is a topic that is frequently the subject of debate. Some critics are of the opinion that this literary genre did not gain acceptance until the late 1950s, when Indian writers made the decision to establish it as a discipline. Other critics, on the other hand, consider the works that were initially written by Indians in the English language to be the real formation of this literary genre. Rajmohan's Wife by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was the first book written by an Indian author to be published in English. It was published rather late in 1864 and is Chatterjee's sole novel written in English; the rest of his fourteen popular novels were written in Bengali. Since it was published in a journal, Kylas Chunder Dutt's "A Journal of Forty-Eight Hours of the Year 1945" (1835), which came out before Bankim's book, is also about a fictitious armed insurrection against the British. But, it cannot be considered the first novel because it was published.

As a result, the "language of command" is inverted and transformed into the "language of subversion," which reveals itself as the visionary beginnings of a country. The uprising that occurred in 1857 was a turning point, and as a result, India became an empire under the dominion of the British, which was exemplified by the viceroy. During the uprising, the traditionally antagonistic Indian states came together to fight a common foe. There are many folk songs, ballads, and pieces of literature that chronicle the war and the savagery with which it was put down as a result of the bravery, valour, and courage that was shown by Indians. It seemed that the British authority may be overthrown, but it took one hundred years for the British colony of India to finally become independent. The British were able to obtain total control over India when they established a comprehensive set of laws and regulations, which included specifying the power of Indian princely states and other autonomous entities. The colonisers rigorously watched any writing that was subversive to the British policies, government, or laws, and this resulted in a significant rise in the level of censorship that was

practised on written works. Political topics were now tackled via literature, usually in the form of historical novels or romances that extolled the virtues of the nation's previous leaders.

The social inequities, superstitions, and abhorrent working conditions of the peasants and labourers that afflicted Indian society were pushed to the forefront of public attention by the books written in the nineteenth century. Women's empowerment, education, and widow remarriage also became prominent subjects in the novels during this time period, which has been nicknamed the "renaissance" of Indian literature in English. Other common themes included the remarriage of widows. The tradition of novel writing in India is an imitation of a phenomenon that originated in the West. As a result, it is distinct from the majority of earlier writings, which were focused on the pursuit of metaphysical and transcendental knowledge. In these earlier writings, the present world is portrayed and painted to be nothing more than an appearance. Tagore was a prominent individual who contributed to the fields of poetry, prose fiction, and songwriting with his extensive body of work. His inventiveness is unsurpassed, regardless of whether it is expressed in Bengali or English. In addition, it is quite risky to view writing in English Indian as being part of a nation's literary canon, particularly in western educational institutions. This is due to the fact that it is produced by a subculture that is socially ascendant. The production of literature in regional languages, each of which has its own set of values and storylines, should not be seen as less important just because they are not published in English. If this were the case, the Indian culture and way of life would be reduced to nothing more than an afterthought.

The incorporation of Indian writing written in English into the canon of English literature is a significant accomplishment since it grants autonomy to this genre by preventing it from being amalgamated with writing from the Commonwealth or being labelled as an imitation of that writing. In past times, the polemics of criticism refused to embrace it as a field of academic investigation since it did not expand to the degree that it has today. Those who are able to read the English language and are to a greater extent proficient and at ease in English than in their mother tongues are considered to be members of a particular class of people known as "Indian writers writing in English." These individuals are of Indian origin and have learned the language well enough to be able to write in that language. They are masters in explicating the ideas and lives of Indian characters living in India who do not speak English and do not live an English life because of their conditioning, which does not make them any less of a writer. To be able to describe in English the lives of individuals who do not speak English as their native tongue needs a very high level of ability, insight, and extraordinary comprehension of bilingualism.

Patriotism, freedom struggles, exploitation of the factory workers and the relationship between the colonizer and the condition of the colonized formed the corpus of Indian writing in English. Gandhiji inspired and influenced the writers and poets immensely and this fact is clear in the way activism and courage was liberated from aggressiveness and violence. The tumultuous political situation of the nineteen thirties due to the civil disobedience movement under the leadership of freedom fighters created a readership that wished to explore and get information about their country's rapacious plunder and the miserable, starving plight of its

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citizens. The prevailing nationalistic fervour and political situation witnessed a portrayal in the literature produced at that time. Some writers advocated the Gandhian method of non-violence to attain freedom while the others wanted independence through any means whether it involved violence or not remained immaterial to them. The partition of the subcontinent had a prolonged disturbing and traumatic effect on the psyche of millions of Indians and became one of the most discussed, debated and analysed theme in numerous novels. After independence, the era of hope and certitude got side-lined by an age of self-scrutiny, scepticism and an attempt to deal with the one's sense of identity exposed to divergent cultures, Indian and Western. Post-independence fiction reflected an anxious reality "On one hand freedom had been won; ostensibly the exploiter had been expelled and the forces of evil were no longer in the land. But on the other hand, writers and intellectuals generally felt that the only change effected by independence was the change in the colour of the exploiters' skin." Political satire and a growing disillusionment with the current state of affairs were highlighted in numerous novels by writers of different vernacular. Moreover, the theme of partition and the consecutive wars with China and Pakistan created a sense of despair in the literary arena and greatly affected the works of writers.

Caste and communalism have become major issues in Indian English writing. Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* is read as a remarkable and revolutionary novel by both critics and readers, and in this novel he illustrates the pitfalls of a parasitic casteist Hindu society. The concept of 'marginalization' is a common leitmotif in the novels depicting lower caste people and women. Meenakshi Mukherjee says that "A huge social divide exists between those have proficiency in English and those who do not. Along with 'marginality' a sense of alienation is an underlining concern in numerous novels. Anita Desai's *Cry, the Peacock* (1963) focuses on the female sensibility at odds with the male dominated society. Her later novels like *Fire on the Mountain* (1977) describe the isolation and alienation of man from family and society. Upamanyu Chatterjee's *English August* dissects and beautifully expresses the estrangement felt by the characters in the novels.

Highlighting the transformation in the Indian writing in English, Desai exults the unconventional use of English language and the playfulness with which Desani wrote *All About H. Hatter* (1948) explicating a hilarious encounter of west with the east. His novel is difficult to grasp and fit into a simple interpretation, it only mystifies as it grapples with half-comic and half- tragic autobiography of the hero's search for a viable philosophy of life. The most defining moment, however, was the publication of Rushdie's masterpiece which gave the Indian English writing a new lease of life and a revival that can be assessed by the remarkable rise in the number of novelists. Desai says:

The picture changed abruptly, dramatically, in 1981, when a book called *Midnight's Children* appeared on the scene like a thunderbolt and the author was sent to India on that until then unknown exercise, a book - tour. It was the combination of a book that proved that Indian English was a language in itself, capable of presenting serious important ideas with.



Indian writers writing in English sometimes get undue publicity as media glorifies even their weakest attempts while a lot of good regional literature finds no takers. All these factors along with the global and economic power of the English language has made the survival and flourishing of regional language literature a bit difficult.

One can argue that the earlier writers of English did write to a Christian western world, explaining almost apologetically India's pluralism and trying to fit in the constraints demanded by English literature and are accused of "exoticising" India to the foreign readers. The readership issue of Indian English literature has assumed dimensions more varied than just simple publishing politics. Even now the debate continues and those who choose to write in English argue that English is also an Indian language and they know this language the best. They are accused by those writing in vernacular of not being in touch with the masses and aiming only for self-aggrandizement. Interestingly, a new generation of writers has slowly emerged that does not feel the need to provide a glossary for Indian vernacular terms or the Indian way of life. Desai reiterates the fact that "a new generation of Indian writes, addressing Indian subjects and items in a language taken from Indian streets newspapers, journals, and films, and a class of enterprising business who decided they were worth publishing - marked the '80s and '90s."

## **CONCLUSION**

Conclusion: Indian English Writing has come a long way since its beginnings in the early 19th century. It has evolved from a style heavily influenced by British Literature to a distinct and unique form of literature that incorporates Indian themes and motifs. Indian English Writing has contributed significantly to the literary scene, both in India and on the global stage. It will be interesting to see how Indian English Writing continues to evolve in the future.

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