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## DEVELOPMENTS OF MODERN TRENDS IN INDIAN ENGLISH FICTIONS



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### ABSTRACT:

The advent of Indian English fiction could be a strange literary phenomenon. India has a long tradition of fiction writing from ancient times, and yet it accommodates the advent of the literature in language whose genius is entirely new to the country. Indian English fiction seems quite unique. Perhaps this is the only instance in the country where a fiction growth in a alien language has subsequently become one of our own. More over the growth and achievement of Indian English fiction amazes any literary historian.

### KEY WORDS:

Innovation, Feminine sensibility, globalization & modernization.

### INTRODUCTION:

K.R. Srinivaslyengar rightly remarks: "When an Indian writer of fiction uses a learnt second language like English, he is actually recording a kind of half-conscious translation (from mother tongue into English) that has taken place in the mind. Most of our writers are bi-lingual, some equally proficient in English and the mother tongue, and some more in one



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than in the other. The background and the situations are usually Indian but the characters may often be drawn from bilingual milieus. The need for expressing the values verities and heartbeats of one culture in the language of another poses its own problems and there is doubtless the inner urge to render in English the

rhhythms, idiosyncrasies, images, idioms and proverbs of the local speech." Thus one of the

most outstanding characteri- stics of

Indian writing in English is that the background is Indian and

the language though foreign has adopted

itself to the needs of the Indians. Today

Indian English as well as Indian

writing in English has got its own

identity. Actually speaking the most

interesting aspect of the fiction at the turn

of the present century from the Indian point of

view is the emergence of new talent. A number of

recent Indian novelists have produced significant novels, making

a mark in the literary world. However, on reading every novel, one can get some idea about

the changing trends in Indian writing in English.



“The point needs urging that without the wine of poetry life would lose its savour, yet it is conceded that prose is staple food of the mind”. When we have glance at the Indian English fiction from Raja Rao, to Arundhati Roy, and many more have reveal mind blowing variety of themes as well as style. With regards to the new trends and techniques in Indian English fiction there is a remarkable movement connecting the movements with the public spheres of works.

Indian English fiction has always been responsive to the changes in material reality and theoretical perspectives that have impacted and governed its study since the time of its inception. At the earlier stage the fictional works of the writers like Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao were mainly concerned with the down-trodden of the society, the Indian middle class life and the expression of traditional cultural ethos of India. At that time, even to a much later stage when writers like K. S. Venkataramani, Markandaya, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Chaman Nahal, Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, Arun Joshi, and Khushwant Singh wrote, Indian English fiction concentrated on the depiction of social reality of the times. And the study of these writings was largely based on realist ideology. The critical studies of their works were directed to explore how far they had been successful in giving expression to the reality around them. Much of the study was based on sociological and Marxist theoretical perspectives. Apart from the views related to the study of external reality, the psychological reality expressed through different characters formed another aspect of literary criticism

Second World War, Indian Freedom struggle, Gandhian philosophy Indian independence communalism socialism the partition of the country, Indo-China War, The Indo-Pak War, The blue star operation, The Kargil War, the influence of Globalization, Liberalization and Privatization on the society, the IT and BT bloom and its influence on the youth, Indian Diasporic writing, Dalit literature, the emancipation of Indian women and their writing, ‘expatriate’ and ‘diasporic’ descriptions are the historical forces that gave an impetus and a momentum to the Indian literature, especially the novel with a social purpose.

There was enough material in the society torn by political maneuverings, social disparities, communal frenzy, and corruption in bureaucracy for the thematic treatment by the Indian writers to stir the imagination of the people to a new awakening. Thus the Indian English fiction writers have succeeded in their efforts to portray creatively in a realistic manner, the rural as well as urban India. They not only present the various problems social, political, economic and cultural-of the contemporary society but also offers solution in terms of fictional art, especially in fiction and drama. In Indian English literature, the changes begin to register with the ushering of the decade of 1980s with the publication of Salman Rushdie’s (1981). Thematic concerns, characterization, society, politics, history or culture as depicted in fictions of recent times with the above mentioned concern could prove the research to have raison d’être in today’s context.

Postcolonial perspectives have also impacted the critical and the creative aspects of Indian English fiction. How the colonial rulers created a particular image of their subject races to perpetrate their hold on them forms an important feature of the emerging forms of narrative.

Contemporary writers hailing from the previously colonized nations, particularly India, explore forms of life that existed during the British rule and expose the subtle strategies employed to make the colonized people take their subjugated position as something natural and transcendental. These writers also bring out the functioning of almost the same power politics that defines the relations between the power wielding people and the people kept at the margins even after the end of political imperialism. A number of contemporary writers fictionalize these aspects of life and the postcolonial critics analyze and expose the way colonialists propagated constructed reality about different societies and cultures as the reality. The theoretical perspectives used for the purpose are usually based on the

insights provided by Michel Foucault, Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha and the other postcolonial thinkers. All these ideas contest monolithic, unitary and totalitarian views about reality and its understanding. The study of literary works is taken up to find how the writers have presented experiences of the colonized people. The variety of life that forms the subject matter of postcolonial creative and the critical writings also includes different forms of oppressed human existence even after the end of British Imperialism. It points out the colonialist nature of the native rulers and challenges the essentialist understanding that treats certain races as always the colonizers and the others as fundamentally free from such cultural traits.

The postcolonial fictional writings often provide a revisiting to history and contest its existing interpretation. The fiction writers often mix fact and fiction to re-examine the earlier happenings, incidents, views and assumptions. Their major concern being the nature of reality that existed during the colonial period, these writers often concentrate on the political and social happenings with a view to contesting the academic or the accepted versions about them. In the process these writings use the historical facts and references to persons and places to subvert the earlier discourses. The fictional polemics in such writings is often premised on the ideas that treat history as something constructed, hence a kind of fiction. The major function of these writings is to expose and criticize the subjugation of man by man in all its forms. Therefore, the critical stance used by post colonialists turns extremely relevant in the works concentrating on the decolonization of the social groups oppressed in the name of class, caste, gender and race. Instead of objective and realistic, this kind of fiction tends to be purposive and political as it involves the assertion of specific views in the name of giving voice to plurality, multiplicity and heterogeneity informing life.

Feminine sensibility has emerged as one of the most significant themes being treated by the post-Independence Indian English novelists. Although the trend of depicting this theme was set by the Big Three, it did not occupy as much important place in the pre independence novels as it did in the novels produced after 1950s. While Raja Rao's novels specially *The Serpent & the Rope* & *The Cat & Shakespeare* depicts the ideal womanhood as enshrined in our scriptures, Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan have dealt with the predicament of women. Anand's *The Old Woman* and *The Cow* presents the central figure Gauri as submissive and meek like cow. Despite her submissiveness she is treated inhumanly by her husband who mercilessly draws her out of his house and sells her to Seth. R.K. Narayana has treated feminine sensibility in *Guide*, *The Dark Room*, and *The Painter of Signs*. The post Independence shift in the attitude to women has led to the uplift of their status in society. Now they are not generally treated as inferior to men. This subject has now become the prime concern of a majority of post independence Indian English woman novelists. Prominent among such novelists are Anita Desai, Kamala Das, R. P. Jhabvala, Shashi Deshpande, Shobha De, Nayantara Sahgal, Kamala Markandaya and Manju Kapoor. The theme of Women's subjugation and their consequent predicament has also been treated by a few novelists such as Bhawani Bhattacharya, Arundhati Roy and Kiran Desai.

The trend of Magic Realism which was conspicuous by its absence in the novels produced before independence became the dominant genre in the post independence period. Emergence of Magic Realism led to the weakening of the tradition of social realism. As M.K. Naik says, Magic Realism is a jealous mistress, once you set up house with her, social realism becomes an unwelcome guest."3. G.V. Desai's *All About Hatterris* the most sterling example of Magic Realism. Most of the post Independence novelists followed the tradition of Magic Realism set by G.V. Desai got strengthen in the hands of Salman Rushdie after G.V. Desai. Salman Rushdie's first novel *The Midnight's Children* which won the Booker of Bookers Prize is an outstanding example of the trend of Magic Realism. Although he

employed this technique in his subsequent novels such as *Satanic Verses*, *The Moor's Last Sigh* and *the Ground Beneath Her Feet*, he was not as successful as when he wrote *The Midnight's Children* in this genre.

Shashi Tharoor's first novel *The Great Indian Novel*, Boman Desai's *The Memory of Elephants*, Ranjit Lal's *The Crow Chronicles*, Amitav Ghosh's *The Circle of Reason*, G.J.V. Prasad's *A Clean Breast*, Kiran Nigerkar's *Ravan and Eldie*, Tabish Kher's *An Angel in Pyjamas*, Rukun Advani's *Beethoven among the Cows*, Mukul Kesavan's *Looking Through Glass*, Vikram Chandra's *Red Earth and Pouring Rain*, and Makarand Paranjape's *The Narrator* are the typical examples of Magic Realism.

The woman novelist did not lag behind in resorting to the technique of Magic Realism. Prominent among the novels produced by the woman novelists who wrote under the influence of Magic Realism were Suniti Namjoshi's first novel *The Mothers of Maya*, Dilip Nina Sibal's *Yatra*, Chitra Bannerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Species*, Rani Dharkar's *The Virgin Syndrome*, Radhika Jha's *Smell*, Sunny Singh's *Nani's Book of Suicide* and Kiran Desai's *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard*.

Industrialization, urbanization, globalization & modernization constitute the minor themes recurrently & consistently treated in the Post Independence Indian English novel. Shashi Deshpande, the novelist of urban and western backgrounds highlighted these contemporary issues as an evidence of the impact of the contemporary realities on them. Kamala Markandaya's *The Coffers*, *A Silence of Desire* and *Pleasure City* presents the havoc played by the affluent people who are hell bent on the execution of their developmental plans at any cost in the rural areas, rich in natural resources. The jobless villagers for employment & rich villagers for availing the educational health & recreational facilities migrated to the cities after independence with the result that "the size of the cities started swelling to an enormous and unanticipated point causing new and more complicated problems for the urbanites. The big cities became horrible orchestras producing strange strains of hustle and bustle, noise and uproar, tension and worries."<sup>3</sup>

Another theoretical perspective that asserts multiplicity, heterogeneity, and plurality in socio-cultural reality and the world of ideas relates to Bakhtin's insights about dialogic nature of discourse and significance of interactive voices. His insights in terms of heteroglossia, polyphony and dialogism have provided new ideas for the understanding and analysis of fictional works. Earlier a fictional discourse was understood to be governed by the singular perspective of the narrator or the author or some dominating character. All the fictional details were supposed to move towards a unified world view presented in a work of art. All other voices were subordinated to the governing consciousness of the author or the character assumed to carry the ideas of the writer. In the changed scenario, reality presented in a novel as well as the world view of the characters form 'polyphony' of voices. Sometimes even the characters subordinated to the predominant voices in a novel represent multiple valid voices. These ideas have challenged the unitary nature of reality, the authority of the omniscient narrator and presence of a centralized perspective. It points out a decisive shift in the understanding of reality and its presentation in fiction. As reality is no longer treated to be unitary and singular, the meaning of a work of art too is no longer considered to be ultimate, complete, total and limited to the intended meaning of the writer that he can convey in authoritative terms.

Apart from different theoretical views, quick urbanization of the Indian society in recent years, emphatic role of institutionalized form of democracy and an unprecedented awareness of human rights have resulted in self-assertion and individual independence that can be observed from a lack of the sense of community and a disregard for moral and social values. Corresponding to these developments, there has emerged a spurt of writings about what is commonly called the marginalized forms of life. These writings concentrate on the life and problems of the people kept at the margins due

to the compulsions of gender, caste and ethnicity. For example, the writings concentrating on the problems of women are now explored with a view to ascertain how far they support women's struggle for liberation from patriarchy. Using theoretical ideas propounded by different western feminist thinkers, the critics study the fictional works of art as an expression of a specific reality related and limited to women's existence in society. Similarly, the life and experiences of the people related to specific, particularly minority, ethnic group also form the subject of study in a number of fictional writings. Although these writers tend to give a realistic view of the life around but the way they fictionalize these forms of life marks a study of reality from a specific point of view that makes the presented reality created and constructed purposefully rather than being representation of reality understood traditionally. Consequently what has been presented does not seem as important as how it has been presented. It highlights the fictional nature of the reality depicted and tends to make these writings a politically symbolic act. Such writings further highlight multi-layered and heterogeneous nature of reality and the vertical nature of cultural division instead of horizontal.

### CONCLUSION

Today, marketing of any product is very crucial for success. Like everything else, in novels too marketing skills matter and this is particularly visible in Indian English novels. At the end of the day, sales will depend on how good the marketing was. This does not mean that the best sellers have poor creative content but it means that if marketing is not done adequately there might not be enough sales that a novel truly deserves. Better marketing skills mean so much more audience for the work and hence the one with maximum marketing capacity becomes the bestsellers. Today we can find a lot of technocrats, management professionals especially from abroad making bestsellers in India. The credits can be given both to marketing skills and creative writing skills. The social networking Medias are also helping in marketing. Many authors like Chetan Bhagat, Shobha De, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai have Facebook fan pages and the writers are also active in Twitter and Blog. This helps them to know more about the wants of the audience and helps indirect interaction. Even books are available on e-reading. Many authors publish excerpts of their books online for encouraging sales. Today, the habit of reading is decreasing. So the writers have got to keep up more to the tastes of audience and their fast paced lives. The audience needs maximum entertainment in minimum time and effort. However, the Indian English popular fiction portrays the tastes of Indian writers and hence can be analyzed as a cultural study material.

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