

# Post Colonial Concerns and Indian English Literature

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In retrospect I remember the year 1995, the year of my project on Canadian Poetry in British Columbia University where I was to seek answers to the questions regarding the distinct identity of this literature. These questions were: Is Canadian literature an echo of British and American literature? or Is it original or unique in itself? How can we define Canadian literature? What are the contexts of Canadian literature which make it different from British and American literature? To day when we talk of new voices of Indian English literature, these questions once again seem to be pertinent. Here I reiterate these questions: Is contemporary Indian English Literature an echo of Indian English literature written so far? or Is it original or unique in itself? How can we define the New Voices? What are their contexts? The answer cannot be given to these questions independently because the questions have an assimilative character and so come the answers.

The literature of the new voices has been receiving increasingly academic and disciplinary recognition throughout the globe. It has emerged as a distinct literary genre. Its emergence has produced a radical transformation or 'paradigm shift' in literary and cultural studies. It is in the process of acquiring canonical status. The new voice are the voices of protest, the voices of challenge and the voices of stance. They are concerned with giving a voice to the protest against power structure ;they are concerned with giving a voice to the challenge against patriarchal, and institutionalized social and cultural frameworks; they are concerned with giving a voice to the privileged stance against indigenous and regional writers. But the new voices have not been valued for this

account. Rather they have been valued because they espouse social and political ideology; because they intend to offer a theory that explains how politics works in a society; and because they intend to provide a profound insight into the forces that shape a new society, its new literature and aesthetics.

If I categorically spot these new voices, I would say that it is the *dalit* voices that make protest against power structure, it is the feminist and women voices that make challenge against patriarchal and institutionalized social and cultural frameworks, and it is the diasporic voices that make a privileged stance against indigenous and regional writers. Here the common denominator is that their aesthetics is different from traditional aesthetics.

In order to deal with the new voices of Indian English literature, it would be in the fitness of things to have a cursory look at Indian aesthetics. In Indian context, aesthetics means “science and philosophy of fine art.” Thus it has two aspects—the first is the science and the second is philosophy. Here science means the creative use of language at the levels of phoneme, lexis, grammar, sentence or subject, episodes and composition and philosophy is the experience of the absolute or moral prescription as the function of literature. In Indian aesthetics this experience in literature has been understood as *Rasa-Brahma-vāda* (school dealing with the experience of absolute in literature), one of the three schools of Indian aesthetics, the other two being the *Nād-Brahma-vāda* (school dealing with the experience of absolute in music) and *Vastu-Brahma-vād* (school dealing with the experience of absolute in literature architecture).

The *dalit* aesthetics negates the function and purpose of traditional aesthetics as it intends to offer a theory that explains how politics works in a society and provide a profound insight into the forces that shape a new society, its new literature and aesthetics.

The *dalit* writers have received their inspiration from the *dalit* literary movement<sup>1</sup> and the Little Magazine movement.<sup>2</sup> They have also taken inspiration from the movement of Blacks in the distant land of North America, and have found answer in the creative display of protest, resistance and aggression rather than in the anguish, misery, pain and exploitation of *dalit*. They are

determined to narrate, and thus put on record their response and reaction to the place of *dalit* in the social system. It is important to note here that while responding to the past experience, the *dalit* writers are conscious of the present and give hint of the future. They make a fervent plea for a complete overhaul of society by questioning all notions of class and caste. This spirit is a kind of desire for a truly *dalit* literature which would confirm the *dalit* identity by :

- ∞ expressing the *dalit's* agony, assertion, resistance, anger, protest and mobilization, instead of generating sympathy for them;
- ∞ expressing the *dalit anubhava* (experience) which takes precedence over *anumāna* (speculation);
- ∞ using ungrammatical language, different from the standard norms of expression based on the creative use of language
- ∞ avoiding or targeting classical myths and symbols
- ∞ replacing the *savarna* protagonist with the *dalit* protagonist

Expression of the *dalit anubhava* (experience):

Arun Dangle defining *dalit* literature, says that *dalit* literature is not simply literature;- [it] is associated with a movement to bring about change;-it [is] strongly evident that there is no established critical theory behind [*dalit* writings]; instead there is a new thinking and a new point of view” (Dangle vii-viii). Daya Pawar's *Achūt*, Saran Kumar Limbale's *Akkarmāsi*, and Omprakash Valmiki's *Jūthan* etc deal with the lives of schedule castes, socially outcaste, separate well, separate cremation ground, non-availability of house on rent, hiding caste, prohibition for entering the public place, drawing of dead animal's all events are expressions of *dalit anubhava*.

### **Avoidance of creative use of language**

Regarding the creative use of language Limbale himself says: My father is a *savarna* (belonging to higher caste); my mother is an untouchable; my grandfather is a Mohammedan;-I am the son

of a kept of a village Headman. I do not know who I am” (Limbale 139). He further says: “I have six sisters; all got married but now they are separated from their husbands. They now live with somebody else.” He adds : “My mother was raped, my sister was raped. Do I need to express them in a creative language?” (Limbale 139). (translation is mine).

### **Targetting the classical myths and symbols**

The *dalit* writers hit Manu, Rama, Krishna, and many others. In his novel, *Digvijayi Ravana* Mataprasad, a *dalit* writer shows Ravan as a hero instead of Rama. In *The White Tiger* Arvind Adiga uses assertion, resistance, anger, protest as weapons to target Indian culture and Indian aesthetics. Here I would like to make a mention of U R Anantha Murthy, *Samskara: A Rite for a Dead Man* also in which Naranappa, said to Praneshacharya, the Crest Jewel of the Vedanta Philosophy: “I’ll destroy Brahmanism, I certainly will. My only sorrow is that there is no brahminism really left to destroy in this place—except you.” (23). Here Anantha Murthy targets the Indian institutionalized social and cultural framework based on power.

### **Replacing the *savarna* protagonist with the *dalit* protagonist**

In the novel Balram Halwai, a son of a rickshaw puller, hit Indian culture by describing the Ganga as “the black river”, the “river of Death” (Adiga 14-15). He murders his master, Ashok, a *savarna* for no fault of his own, and considers this act of killing a kind of awakening by recapitulating the words of Buddha, “I am just one who has woken up while the rest of you are still sleeping” (Adiga 315). He adds: “Kill enough people and they will put up bronze statues to you in near Parliament House in Delhi<sup>a</sup> but that is glory and not what I am after. All I wanted was the chance to be a man and for that one murder was enough” (Adiga 318). He, reiterating his justification of killing his master, says “I’ll never say I made a mistake that night in Delhi when I slit my master's throat” (Adiga 320-21).

Thus the *dalit* aesthetics is based on the theory of negation,

an operation with the help of which a new proposition is being inferred from a given proposition. It threatens the existing system based on caste and give way to a new system, based on casteless society. It claims to have history which is not illusionary or unreal as Hindu metaphysical theory may make one to believe. It condemns traditional aesthetics as brahminical. It negates expression causing aesthetic experience. It negates hierarchies of language and privilege.

As far as the women and feministic voices are concerned, they too intend to offer a theory that explains how politics works in a society. They intend to provide a profound insight into the forces that shape a new society, its new literature and aesthetics. By asking two basic questions related to the status of women in society: i) what is about the women? ii) why is the situation as it is?, they challenge the patriarchal and institutionalized social and cultural frameworks. The questions and reactions are based on the theory of difference, the theory of inequality and the theory of oppression. By theory of difference means that woman's location in, and experience of, most situations is different from that of men in that situation; by theory of inequality means that woman's location in most situations is not only different but is less privileged than or unequal to that of man; and by theory of oppression means that woman is oppressed, restrained, subordinated, molded, used and abused by man.

The feminist and women voices focus on major issues related to woman, her awakening to the realization of her individuality, her breaking away with traditional image, her relation with man and her aims and objectives. They have developed their own perceptions concerning the revival of woman, her urge and needs, her problems and predicaments, and her survival tactics, in view of their own social conditions but the common denominator in their works is the transformation of the idealized woman into an assertive, self-willed woman searching and discovering her true self.

There are three types of new women defined on the basis of the assertion that takes place in them. The contemporary poets, novelists and playwrights all give voice to such women characters falling under these three categories in one way or the other. These

women characters are:

1) Those who assert for their self and challenge the circumstances they are put in. They seek a new balance of power between the sexes. They realize that every relationship including marriage is a trap and so seek a refuge in extra marital relationship forced by loneliness and marital incompatibility. Later they learn through trial and error that imitating male attitude does not lead them towards a complete and dignified life. They seem to say that women should desire freedom within the bounds of her obligations and responsibilities. The women protagonists of Shashi Deshpande belong to this class. Indu has an extra-marital relationship with Naren in *Roots and Shadows*, Saru's socializing with Boozie has a calculated move to have sexual autonomy in *Dark Holds No Terror*, Jaya's relation with Kamat in *That Long Silence*, not precisely defined in the novel, all escape to find some humane empathy and sharing. But very soon they learn through trial and error that imitating male attitude does not lead them towards a complete and dignified life.

2) Those who are extra-ambitious and reject the traditional value system of Indian society. They attempt to make sense for themselves out of their senseless position in a world which makes no sense because the moral, religious, political and social structures, that men/women have erected, have collapsed. At a certain point of their life, they, realizing the absurdities of life, have their moments of self-actualization. Shobha De's Karuna in *Socialite Evenings*, Aasha Rani in *Starry Nights*, Nisha in *Sultry Days*, Mikki in *Sisters*, and the women characters in *Snapshots* represent the second type of women. Karuna in *Socialite Evenings*, a middle class girl who desperately wants to become rich, and so passes a series of events involving glamour, sex, unhappy marriage, divorce, wishes to transcend these absurdities of life by writing for the status of the Indian urban women. Aasha Rani in *Starry Nights* again a town girl who wants to become number one heroine of Bollywood, undergoes the absurdities of sexual experiences and then being disillusioned with them, turns with a hope for better life with her daughter to her father's studio and uses her creative potential. Similarly Nisha in her novel *Sultry Days*, Mikki in *Sisters*, and

the women characters in *Snapshots* realizing the absurdities of life, try to transcend them with a hope in one way or the other.

3) Those who assert without blowing trumpets or without offending any. They induce their family members with a feeling of warmth towards modernity; they deviate from dissatisfaction to acceptance and from tolerance to generosity. To them, family is not a battle ground for skirmishes and the desired results can be achieved through patience and perseverance as well. In Rama Mehta's fiction, there is the emergence of the third type of woman who seeks to synthesize traditions with modern values which are the needs of the hour. In *Inside the Haveli* the protagonist, Geeta without blowing trumpets or without offending any, induces her mother-in-law with a feeling of warmth towards modernity; she deviates from dissatisfaction to acceptance and from tolerance to generosity. Geeta asserts herself and proves that family is not a battle ground for skirmishes and the desired results can be achieved through patience and perseverance as well.

Here I would like to make a special mention of the women playwrights. The playwrights like Tripurari Sharma, Dina Mehta, Manjula Padmanabhan, Mrinal Pande, Malini Bhattacharya, Nabaneeta Dev Sen have carved a niche for themselves in this sphere. While the plays like *Lights Out*, *Brides Are Not for Burning*, *Mangalam*, *Getting Away With Murder* deal with gender violence in various aspects, the plays like *Bahu*, *Lado Masi*, *Swing of Desire* exhibit the suppressed and repressed self of woman that craves for fresh breath and space. Besides foregrounding issues that are largely ignored or deflected by the mainstream playwrights, playtexts like *Harvest*, *Wooden Cart*, and *Beyond Facades* deal with topical issues and stimulate intelligent exploration (Malik 07).

Like dalit and feminist voices, the diasporic voices also have been valued not merely because they are concerned with giving a voice to the displaced and dislocated, not because they are all determined to narrate, and thus put on record their pasts-bequeathed memories, oral testimonies, remembered histories and stories, but because they espouse social and political ideology and provide a profound insight into the forces that shape a new society; they offer a theory that explains how politics works in a society of

different cultures.

The fundamental premise of diasporic voices are as follows:

- ∞ it is associated with the sense of displacement;
- ∞ it carries a sense of desire for the return to their roots;
- ∞ it has feeling of nostalgia and remembrance of the home country,
- ∞ it is associated with a sense of loss;
- ∞ it informs the diasporic consciousness;
- ∞ it involves a painful process of acculturation and adjustment.

After migrating to any country directly or indirectly, there are social and political restrictions on the life of the diaspora, so the diasporic writers do not respond to the social and political life. In order to satisfy their creative urge and to awaken their national pride, they choose the past for their writings. They have a general exposure to other cultures after leaving their country and this makes them project their glorious past. The feeling of the better past than the present, which is haunting them, again gives a consequent curiosity in the past. They now want to make an assessment of their own nation in relation to other nations of the world. They are aware of the fact that they are different from those with whom they interact. They use past as a weapon of a psychological war. The feeling to do justice with a certain event is yet another factor of this diasporic consciousness among the diasporic writers. Though the scene is much changed now, the current of historical consciousness is still flowing among the diasporic Indian writers as they now make an assessment and re-assessment of the past from a fresh perspective. They do not spare any opportunity to express their nostalgic response to their homeland and reaction to the alien land lead to a kind of hope for change of the alien land into a new homeland.

This literature is filled with their immediate experiences in the hostile, social environment where they feel themselves doubly marginalized: first they are immigrants and second because they belong to racial often linguistic, usually religious minorities. In a

word, the alienation of the immigrant and the bitter stings of racism and religious bigotry, the painful daily realities and their native civilization and traditions are important factors in shaping their lives, politics and art. A crucial concern in contemporary diasporic literature continues to be memorializing of history. The lives of hundreds and thousands of labourers shipped from India to work in the Caribbean are remembered in their literature. V S Naipaul's *A House for Mr Biswas* and Laxmi Persaud's *Butterfly in the Wind* are good expression of this concern. If the diasporic literature is now largely set in degraded urban landscape and has its themes loneliness, harassment, exploitation, it is not only because they remain passionately conscious of their slave past, they also continue to perceive the society in the centre as being racially determined (*The Oxford Companion to English Literature* 105).

At the end of his work *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said quotes a twelfth century monk from Saxony Hugo of St. Vicar where he elaborates his journey of the exile from his homeland to the globe. He holds that the exile first becomes 'tender' (who finds his homeland sweet), then 'strong' (to whom every soil is his native one) and finally 'perfect' (to whom the entire world is a foreign place) (Edward 44). The diasporic poets who find themselves sandwich between two cultures: "born under one law, to another bound" (Parameswaran15). Uma Parameswaran versifies this nostalgia and exposes the sad façade that it actually is. Despite the fact that life is luxurious, the mother in one of her poems, feels imprisoned and so says:

I am too used to the sounds  
Of living things  
Of birds in the morning  
Of rain and wind at night  
Not the drone of furnace fan  
And hiss of hot blasts  
And whose of washing machine  
Open the windows, son,  
And let me go back  
To sun and air

And sweat and even flies and all  
But not this, not this.  
(Parameswaran 15)

In Uma Parameswaran's "Trishanku", a mythical figure, a king who floats between heaven and earth rejected by both, is a useful metaphor for displaced people. In the poem there are sixteen figures;<sup>a</sup>Poet, Chander, Usha, Chandrika, Dilip, Sharad, Savitri, Jayanta, Bihari, Poornima, Tara, Suri, Tara's Mother-in-law, Veejala, Visual, and Vithal;<sup>a</sup>to express nostalgic plain and Canadian consciousness. The poet is agonized to find herself in the state of Trishanku as "born under one law, to another bound" (Parameswaran 15). This state of trishanku also finds expression in "Migratory Birds" of Surjeet Kalsey. On the one hand, she seems to be confident to go back to the homeland while on the other she also realizes some force which checks her return from the alien land to the homeland:

We  
the migratory birds  
are here this season  
thinking  
we will fly  
back to our home  
for sure .  
But  
No one knows  
which invisible cage imprisons us?  
and the flight begins to die slowly  
in our wings.  
some of us are drawn with  
the chain  
some lag  
in the swamp  
no sun, no earth  
where to look at, what to look for?  
(Kalsey 40)

M. G. Vassanji puts this predicament in *No New Land* in the following way: "We are but creatures of our origins and however

stalwartly we march forward, paving new roads, shaping new works; the ghosts from our past stand not far behind and are not easily shaken” (Vassanji 109).

In the new generation of our English literary world, Kiran Desai, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Chandra, Vikram Seth and Arundhati Roy etc. had given India a new fame and frame in English fiction, but they all are limited to specific traditional grooves. To come out of this groove, to experiment boldly and to change English to a specifically indigenous variety has been done successfully by the writers of the new generation. This new generation includes a galaxy of young, dynamic Indian novelists like Chetan Bhagat, an IITian, Amitabha Bagchi, an IIT professor, Advaita Kala, an hotel executive, Ravi Subramanian, a Bank employee, Suketu Mehta, Associate Professor of Journalism at New York University. Altaf Tyrewala, BBA from City University of New York-Baruch College, Aravind Adiga, a journalist and such others command a special place today in Indian writing in English. Each one of them has written one novel except Chetan Bhagat and Aravinda Adiga and have earned tremendous popularity. Chetan Bhagat’s print order for his novels, *Five Points Someone*, *One Night @ a Call Centre*, *Three Idiots and Two States* has been in lacs. Amitabha Bagchi’s novel *Above Average* has been reprinted four times. More than one lakh copies of Ravi Subramanian’s debut novel *If God was a Banker* have been sold out. Advaita Kala has written her debut novel *Almost Single* and has become popular over night.

The writers today accumulated a vast readership and have made prominent inroads into the global literary prize factory; therefore, it is important to analyze what it is that the young writers are giving to the larger readership and explore the way they are doing it. It is also important to bring out the multi-cultural, multi-layered perspectives that they bring to their writing coming from different walks of life.

They use bold experimentation in their writings and also write in English which is rather typical. They are becoming new stars overnight. The craze for their writing impresses the reader of every age (from young to old). The specialty of their writing is that they do not speak of traditions and sayings rather they talk about very

simple things happening in our daily life.

The most significant fact is that people from different fields are coming to write in English. They present the incidents and events related to their system which is also concerned with the common people. The benefit of this is that the writing has become more real and the writing presents a varied universe. In the last decade the range has been surprisingly vast from Bankers to IIT professionals have entered in this field. In past days people from different fields did not dare to express their views and thoughts willingly through creative writing but now this convention has broken down. The huge local and foreign names in publishing houses are producing new traditions. Thus, the youth are not far behind in writing with the help of their laptops. Through this, not only do they express their restlessness but also it is also been seen that the way of writing in which people express their frustration through writing is very open and is giving recognition to them.

They talk about their inner truths and feelings. They speak about the growing generation for the new generation. The most important point is that these writers have broken the traditional image of fictional writing and are setting forth a new culture cult. They have broken the prevalent obstacles created by the use of Standard English inventing a new idiom and style in their writings.

These new writers come with new thoughts and frames. They know that the majority of the readers are the youth in search of a self-image concerned about their jobs, about their love affairs which are thought provokingly represented in this fiction. Movies had earlier cashed this tradition now publishers have come to know about it and are promoting this 'new fiction'.

The specialty of their writings is that they do not talk about traditions and ideals rather they say very simple things, narrate incidents which happen in the routine life of the young readers, the only difference is that they say it in a very simple and interesting manner that catches and captures the imagination of our youth. India is a young country and therefore anything that is written for them, of them, by them is bound to be meaningful. This is the mantra of the 'new fiction' of the new millennium.

Aravind Adiga's award winning novel *The White Tiger* is described as a compelling, angry and darkly humorous novel about a man's journey from Indian village life to entrepreneurial success. It is an unadorned portrait of India seen from the bottom of the heap. The narrative uses a landscape and mindscape that is the common property of us all and this makes us see our world, our desires reflected in the book.

*Almost Single* by Advaita Kala is the story of a young and single woman who lives in Delhi and works as a guest relation manager in a Five Star hotel at Delhi. She shares her experiences with her friends. Some people consider it a very bold book since it reveals the inside story of the outwardly glamorous world.

*If God was a Banker* by Ravi Subramanian is the story of two IIM graduates who get the top posts in a New York International Bank. The story of two different personalities, Sundeep, who will stoop to anything to get ahead and the other, is mature and sensible Swami, with a high regard for good old ethics. This book presents organizational politics, sexual harassment and disgraceful deeds of agents in banks in a very impressive manner.

*Above Average* by Amitabha Bagchi is the story of a middle class Delhi boy who has good ability in Science and Mathematics but has a desire to be the drummer of a rock band. Both of his wishes are fulfilled by his getting admission in a sophisticated IIT Engineering College. But, when he thinks that he is going on the right path of his life some people of a malicious mentality state an opinion about his life and change his life's direction. Such are the machinations of the world we live in and as similar stakeholders, this fiction goads us on to see how we can make do in a vicious world.

*No God in Sight* by Altaf Tyrewala is the story compiled with many stories having dozens of characters and incidents but at last ends it from where it started. Tyrewala portrays the picture of Bombay/Mumbai and the whole region around Mumbai including the relationship of the people from different fields and societies. Also, Tyrewala talks about the hot issues like clash between tradition and modernity to corruption to abortion to family values etc. In short, he describes the realities of India (in negative senses) why we are so much backward although we have everything. As the

problem is that we are not sincere to ourselves, our goal, our society and our country.

*Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found* by Suketu Mehta is a non-fictional work. He has described about the tale of the city Bombay where he was born and left it in 1977 and about the city Mumbai when he came back from New York, America in 2001. This book is the whole description of the city Mumbai/Bombay and all about the differences he had experienced and felt. It explains about the slums, Mumbai underworld, Hindu-Muslim relations, Shiva Sena and Chief of Shiva Sena Bal Thackeray etc.

Today, the writers have desire to return to their indigenous practices and cultural forms. Ashok K. Banker has recreated the *Rāmāyana*, a classical tale of war between absolute Good and Evil, written 3,000 years ago by Valmiki for modern readers everywhere in his *Prince of Ayodhya* (2003) with breathtaking imagination. The novel, *Prince of Ayodhya* is the first instalment of a six part series of books, which chronicles the events of the *Rāmāyana* in a modern retelling of the Indian Epic. The series revolves around the stories of Rama, Lakshman and Sita and their struggles against the demon-king Ravana, highlighting the intense love of Rama to dharma. In this first book of the Ramayana, it is predicted that Ayodhya, legendary capital of warriors and seers, will soon be a wasteland of ashes and blood. Only Rama, Prince of Ayodhya, can hope to prevent the onslaught of darkness.

Amish Tripathi in his *Shiva Trilogy* humanizes infinite 'Mahadev' the God of gods and destroyer of evil with philosophy as it is underlying the mythology. The first book of the trilogy, *The Immortals of Meluha* is a mythological novel that takes one of the gods of Indian mythology and portrays him as a man. Amish tweaks and warps the cast of familiar characters (familiar to Indian at least) and paints a fantastical version of Shiva's life that is credible in some parts and amateurish in others. It is not a version the religious or the traditional will appreciate, but is one that will appeal to those who are not averse to morphing mythology. Through the story he tries to reflect the nomenclatures like 'Virtue' and 'Vice'. From the very beginning of the story, the web of legends, Puranas and folktales sum to mingle into a cohesive pattern to give

us a glimpse of a time when the earth was ruled by old values and battles were fought for pride. That was the time when oracles used to turn an order of divinity , a time which we believe never existed in reality but only in epics and mythologies. And herein lies the greatness of our classical super past that always allows us a window to look through it only to find ourselves little insignificant beings in front of such a stupendous cultural cosmos. We also come to know about certain cultural rites beliefs and the logic behind such Dos and Don'ts. The story truly has captured the spirit of those bygone ages in their true color. The second book, *The Secret of the Nagas* by Amish Tripathi starts exactly where its prequel *Immortals of Meluha* ended. This logically and realistically explains all the feats fables that have supernatural elements in the Indian mythology and it does so with great panache. Lord Shiva is on his quest to end evil and the path is somehow leading him to the Nagas. The deformed and condemned tribe of the Nagas , on the other hand , have secrets and reasons of their own. The descriptive narrative style takes the reader to ancient India as the author slowly and steadily reveals truths behind customs and rituals modern Indians follow without questioning their origin or reason. In *The Oath of the Vayuputras* , the third part of the *Shiva Trilogy*, ancient India is painted in a very appealing modern way where men and women fight side by side for their country and every woman is respected. And above all , the Neelkanth gives the message of forgiveness and repentance. It sets off in Panchavati where Evil is revealed to the culmination of years of expedition and sets of a chain of conspiracies and a series of violent war that changes the course of the history of India.

Kavita Kane has focused on the characters of the Mahabharata and Ramayan. She has recreated Urvi, the wife of Karna, Satyavati, Urmilla, the wife of Lakshmana, Meenakshi, surparnka, Ahilya, Menalka,

To conclude, the new voices of contemporary Indian English literature have emerged and explored a place and space for themselves. The new voices have constructed and changed the contexts of the contemporary Indian English literature by making a protest against power structure, by making a challenge against

patriarchal and institutionalized social and cultural frameworks; and by making a privileged stance against indigenous and regional writers. These voices have competitive egoism and aggressive nationalism. They have aggression and peace, utility and creativity, competitive egoism and impersonal viewpoint, glamourized world and the realization of the great spiritual Unity of Man in their writings. The other set of writers are using Indian myth and legend as well as folklore and oral traditions of our own cultures to create nativistic images. The use of myth and local legend made by them is an effort at de-contamination, a process of freeing their cultures from colonialism's pervasive influence. The return to roots is an attempt to gain a measure of self-affirmation that is not tainted by colonialism. They use Indian classical myths, legends, and images as living vocabulary to narrate the nation.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The *dalit* literature received its first impetus with the advent of leaders like Mahatma Phule and Ambedkar in Maharashtra, who brought forth the issues of *dalits* through their works and writings. By the 1960s, with this new trend in writings, a sense of *dalit* consciousness was reinforced. As a result, this *dalit* consciousness inspired many *dalits* to come forth with their writings in Marathi, Hindi, Tamil and Punjabi. The writers like Narayan Survey, Namdeo Dhasal, Daya Pawar, Arun Kamble, Arun Dangle, and many others wrote stunningly new Indian literature in the sixties and seventies. A fresh crop of *dalit* poets like Joseph Macqwan, Saran Kumar Limbale, Omprakash Valmiki, Baburao Bagul, Bandhu Madhav and Shankarao Kharat, received the formal form from the Little Magazine movement which was a kind of rebellious manifestation of the educated youth of those days against the establishment. The *dalit* youths taking inspiration from the movement of Blacks in the distant land of North America, found answer in the creative display of protest, resistance and aggression rather than in the anguish, misery, pain and exploitation of *dalit*. The *dalit* writers from other states of India were inspired by this "liberative spirit, straight and strong style, and poignant poetic images." They portrayed the life and struggles of the lowest strata, the low caste.

<sup>2</sup>The Little Magazine movement was a kind of rebellious manifestation of the educated youth of those days against the establishment. The Little Magazine movement gave a genuine expression to this desire as its aim was to trace and value this development of letters which were distinctly impregnated with the *dalit* consciousness. Kamleshwar of *Sārikā* and Dr Maheep of *Sancetanā* initiated this step. The special issues of the Little Magazines like *Yuddharatā* ' *Ām Ādamī* and *Hans* on *dalit cetana* (*dalit* consciousness)<sup>3</sup>*kavitā* (poetry), *kahānī* (story) and *sāhitya* (literature) were brought out in which one hundred *dalit* writers were published. Thereafter a number of non-*dalit* magazines announced to bring out special issues on the *dalit* literature. The *dalits* of Maharashtra started *Anguttar*, a Hindi magazine from Nagpur, which, besides taking up the *dalit* issues, provided a forum for Hindi *dalit* writers also. There were many other magazines like *Bhīm*, *Ambedkar Mission*, *sambūk* (Patna), *Dhamm Darpan*, *Ham Dalit*, *Himāyatī*, *Abhimūk Nāyak*, *Dalit Prakriyā*, *Sajag Prahari*, *Aśvaghōśa*, *Samaya Sarokār* (Delhi), *Nirnāyaka Bhīm*, *Lok Sucak* (Kanpur), *Parisad Sandesa* (M P) and *Prajñā* (Lucknow).

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