



*Journal of Advances and
Scholarly Researches in
Allied Education*

*Vol. VII, Issue No. XIII,
January-2014, ISSN 2230-
7540*

**A STUDY ON PHYLETIC INJUSTICE DESCRIBED
IN THE SELECTED NOVELS OF MULK RAJ
ANAND**

AN
INTERNATIONALLY
INDEXED PEER
REVIEWED &
REFEREED JOURNAL

A Study on Phyletic Injustice Described In the Selected Novels of Mulk Raj Anand

Rekha Rani

Abstract – India has a rich and hoary tradition of story – telling, a brilliant galaxy of story – tellers who illumine the pages of her history and literature. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's wife* (1864), which is typical of a transitional period in the history of Indian literature was the first attempt made by an Indian to produce a novel in English. Later the novelists like Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan, Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Manohar Malgonkar, Ruth Prawar Jhabvala, Anita Desai, Chaman Nahal, Arun Joshi, Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Kamala Markendeya, Nayanatara Sahgal, Arundhati Roy, and several others have made their contribution for the flourishing of Indian English fiction.

-----X-----

INTRODUCTION

The Indian English literature has achieved far reaching importance both in India and abroad in the recent decades. Indian English literature has been called “a Janus-faced literature” born of “a cross fertilization of two faithful cultures” - Indian and European. The Indian fiction in English is now living, developing and evolving literary force. It is also accepted as a significant part of third world or new literatures. Though the Indian novel in English has begun as a ‘hot- house- plant’, it establishes firm roots in Indian soil.

It has attained a rich growth, mounting extraordinary heights in the context of the contemporary Indian literature scene. The early decades of the twentieth century witnessed the rise of many writers whose literary manifesto was to write for social, political and economic purpose. The purpose was not only to throw light upon the social evils and malpractices prevailing in the society in those days but also to employ fiction to the cause of social amelioration.

The proliferation of novel in Indian English manifests itself multifariously encompassing almost every aspect of Indian social life. In the last one hundred years or so, this staggering branch of literature has blossomed like a fragrant flower and has become golden gate for the world to see India through. This literary explosion or renaissance has not been quite evolutionary, but in recent years, it has caused a boom in the realism of Indian fiction writing.

The Indian novel in English began as a novel of social realism but not as a romance or historical romance. The raise of the novel in India was not purely a literary phenomenon. It was a social phenomenon, rather than a mere fulfilment of a social need or desire. It was

associated with social, political and economic conditions of the country.

Fiction is the off-shoot of the impact of Western literature on the Indian mind. The novel in India was purely a foreign import. The English novelists Henry Fielding, Daniel Defoe and Sir Walter Scott and the English translations of the illustrious European novelists Leo Tolstoy, Honor’Re de Balzac, Fyodor Mikhail, Ovich, Dostoevsky, Victor Hugo and many others apprised the Indian writer with the theme and technique of fiction. Indian writers became aware of the latest achievements of their contemporaries in foreign tongues and produced work of a technically high standard after reading the world’s classics in their own language. The literary stature of Indian Novel in English has steadily grown with each successive work of fiction. Indisputably, it has achieved global recognition as a significant genre.

The next important figure on the literary scene was Rabindranath Tagore, a multifaceted genius. He came like a colossus on the Indian literary scene. He exerted a tremendous influence on the minds of the people with the choice of his themes. Tagore started by first imitating Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, till he found his own choice with *Choker Bali* (1908). To Tagore goes the credit of nurturing the infant genre at its most important stage of growth. He brought a new force into the form as embodied in *Gora* (1923), *The Home and The World* (1919), *Binodini* (1959), *The Wreck* (1919), *Four Chapters* (1950) and *Farewell My Friend* (1956). A significant fact of the period was that with Tagore, the growth of the Indian English novel and the novels in regional languages in India developed almost on parallel lines. Tagore’s novels helped the Indians to rediscover themselves and also created a new awareness about their culture. Tagore translated some of his Bengali works into English

which helped in laying the foundations of the Indian English novel. His novels are mostly novels of ideas.

He adopted the novel genre to depict the inner changes in the lives of characters in relation to time and space. Tagore's influence is all pervading, as seen in the novels of his successors Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and score of others. Sarath Chandra and Prem Chand carried the novel a little further by extending its range. Their pre occupation was with the downtrodden and the destitute. Their realistic and bold depiction of the misery of the lower classes, foreshadows the best fiction of Mulk Raj Anand in English.

The novels of the 1930's reflected the progressive philosophy of the writers. They were vocal about injustice, cruelty and exploitation that the masses faced. Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936) and *Two Leaves and Bud* (1938) took the creative imagination from historical romances to social realism. G.V. Desani's *All about H. Hatterr* (1948) to it further to the psychological probing into individual personality.

The Fifties was a period of socially conscious novels such as Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954), K.A. Abbas's *Inquilab* (1955) and R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* (1958) which were imbued with didactic rumblings in the agonized psyche of the characters. Nayanatara Sahgal's *A Time to be Happy* (1958) traced the development of nationalist movement and the contrast offered by the old devoted nationalists with young pragmatic mercenaries.

The Sixties showed the development of psychological novels which highlighted the Indian identity under the onslaught of the cultural influences of the west, while Manohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* (1964) was an attempt on the terrorist movement in India. Bhabani Bhattacharya's *shadow from Ladakh* (1966) and R.K. Narayan's *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967) gave a perspective analysis of the historical process of social changes in India after Independence. Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner* (1968), on the other hand, rendered the alienation of Indian expatriates in the quagmire of inter-cultural flux.

The nineteen eighties was a fruitful period with Salman Rushdie getting the Booker Award for *Midnight's Children* and Vikram Seth stirring the Indian mind with the publication of *A Suitable Boy*. Alongside the richness, variety and abundance of ideas in the work of the old stalwarts, there existed a plethora of works by younger novelists illuminating the milky way of Indian fiction in English. It was an epoch-making and trend-setting era for Indian novel in English opening new vistas and showing possibilities of new avenue for fiction- writing.

The decade of the Nineties was the harbinger of more profitable business to the Western publishers and it gave a special niche to Vikram Seth, Shobha De,

Amitav Ghosh, Upamanyu Chatterjee and they made quick bucks. The Western readers suffering from the angst of depression and melancholia needing some kind of diversion have turned to Indian novel in English for getting spiritual solace. Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and *Shame*, Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel*, Rohinton Mistry's *Such a Long Journey* and Balraj Khanna's *A Nation of Fools* highlighted their divine propensities. Mistry was a runner up for Booker Award in 1991. Githa Hariharan too hit the buzzer with her novel *The Thousand Faces of Night*.

Amitav Ghosh won acclaim for both his fiction and non-fiction. Feminism has grown from Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, R.P. Jhabvala and Nayanatara Sahgal to pave way for Shobha De, Shashi Deshpande, Nina Sibal, Anees Jung, Raji Narsimhan, Bharati Mukharjee and others. These newer female voices have highlighted the interior landscape of the emancipated woman's sensibility and her psychological pragmatism.

This changing scenario in Indian fiction in English has witnessed change in tone, temperament and thought-content as a result of the novelist's newly acquired conviction and maturity. Modern woman has now acquired substance and an unconventional character and has paved way for a new dimension of the Indian novel in English. The novelists of today have begun to delineate the psychology of the characters and the complex environs which has greatly affected them.

Many Indian novelists have based their fiction on the raw material of history. This is true in the case of novels like Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel*, Chaman Nahal's *Azadi*, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* and *Delhi*. Again, Salman Rushdie mingled history and fiction in his newly-released novel *Shalimar the Crown*. Set in the age of hyperbole and bloodshed, Rushdie's new work is inspired by Indian mythology, Los Angeles fakery and Hindu culture.

There is yet another category of novels with a focus on a particular city, viz. Mistry's *Such a Long Journey*, Anita Desai's *Baumgartner's Bombay* and Nayanatara Sahgal's *A Situation in New Delhi*. In Suketu Mehta's first book *Maximum City: Bombay Lost & Found*, the city has finally found its restless chronicler. R.K. Narayan is the conspicuous star in the galaxy of fictionists, by virtue of his achievement. It is certified by the fact that his novels are translated into the major languages of the world, which also indicates his wide popularity the world over. He is one of the founding fathers of Indian English fiction. There is no 'good' and 'bad' characters in Narayan's novels. Human nature is presented veraciously and interestingly and memorably. 'Malgudi' is Narayan's "Casterbridge". In fact, Narayan's main characters take life so seriously that they appear little spiritual and mostly secular. He is a species by himself. He has immortalized himself by the creation of Malgudi, a real life character

provided him with the original of *The Guide*, the most popular of his novels.

RESEARCH STUDY:

Narayan is a master of realism and angst. His characters and situations, incidents and episodes, are real and true to daily life. Man appears, passes through self-made travails of life, and vanishes into life. That is the central theme of Narayan's fiction. He portrays life as a mighty force to which man has to bow, willingly or unwillingly, his head ultimately and accept it. The achievement of Narayan is that he effortlessly sustains below the selfish current of the clownish an undercurrent of stainless splendour. The third of the trio, Raja Rao is the most individualistic of Indian creative writers in English and the most conscious of the dignity of his vocation. His first novel *Kanthapura* (1938) was hailed by E.M. Forster as the finest of its kind about India that had appeared till then. It deals with the problem of untouchability, along with other issues like freedom struggle, toddy drinking and labour wages. Inspired by Gandhian ideals, Moorthy and his supporters work for the betterment of the untouchables at the social and economic level. The reactionary forces also seem to be active to sabotage their progressive work. But, as the untouchables join hands with Gandhians, the reactionary forces do not succeed in their attempt. As the narrator is able to recollect the past and the present and to visualize the charge in the future, there is a suggestion of social change as a probable remedy for the problem of untouchability. His novels have mythical background and metaphysical treatment of characters. Through his experiments with languages and form, has given the Indo-Anglian novel a distinctly Indian preoccupation with metaphysical question.

Bhabani Bhattacharya is a major voice among the Indian English novelists of our times. Social realism is the most important feature of Bhattacharya as a novelist. He is a humanist and a novelist with a purpose. He is interested in the happiness and well-being of humanity. He is also a conscious artist who occupies a prominent place among the Indian English novelists.

REFERENCES:

- Anand, Mulk Raj. *Untouchable*, Penguin Books, 2001. 39. ---. *Two Leaves and a Bud* New Delhi, Arnold Heineman. Ed. Rashmi Gaur, Prestige Books, New Delhi, 1983. 113.
- Cowley, Jason. "Why we chose Arundhati," India Today, 27th October, 1997. 28.
- Figuiera, Dorothy. *Anand's war novel* – An essay The Journal of Indian Writings in English,
- Editor G.S. Bala rama Gupta, vol.28, July 2000. 41.
- Henke, Suzettle. "A Women's Life –Writing and the Minority Voice" Maya Angelou, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Alice Walker," *Tradition voices and Dreams; the American Novel Since the 1960's*, Ed. Malvin J.Fried man and Bel Siegel, Newyork: University of Delaware Press, 1976. 210-11.
- Iyengar, Srinivasa. *Indian Writing in English*, Bombay Asia Publishing House, 1962. 126. Lahiri, Rajashree Khushu. 'Broken Laws, Shattered Lives,' A study of The God of Small Things, Arundhati Roy, The Novelist Extraordinary Ed. R.K. Dhawan, published by Prestige Books, 1999. 112.
- Mitra, Reena. *Mulk Raj Anand and the Human Predicament*, Mulk Raj Anand Ed. B.R. Agrawal, 2006. 55-56.
- Naik, M.K. *The Ironic Vision*, Sterling Publication, New Delhi, 1962. 1.
- Nigam, N.M. *Mulk Raj Anand*, Ed, B.R.Argawal, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2006. 41.
- Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things*, Indian Ink, New Delhi, 1997. 31.
- Sinha, K.N. *Mulk Raj Anand*, Kalyani publishers, New Delhi, 1995. 28.
- Sonia, N. *Samskara, A Window on Brahminic Orthodoxy*, Samskara Ed. Rashmi Gaur, Prestige Books, New Delhi, 2006. 143.