

Indian English Poetry:A Survey

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Abstract: *The present paper is a comprehensive survey of Indian English poetry. The paper tries to see :1) how Indian English poetry emerged as a result of contact with different foreign cultures and 2) how it went developed as an independent variety of English literature with the passage of time. The paper shows the emergence and development of Indian English poetry through its survey of different phases and so the author has provided samples from the writings of different important phases with due regard to the themes that they have touched on.*

Key words: *Indian English Poetry, origin, development, imitation, adaptation, adeptation*

In order to develop a historical overview of the genre called Indian English Poetry, it would be in place to, first of all, try to build a rudimentary understanding of the nature and scope of Indian English literature of which Indian English poetry happens to be an essential part. Historically speaking, Indian English Literature began its journey as a “by-product of an eventful encounter in the late eighteenth century between a vigorous and enterprising Britain and a stagnant and chaotic India” (Naik, 1982, p.1). As a result of this eventful encounter between Britain and India, Indian English was born as a hybrid which enabled communication between the English masters and their Indian subjects so much so that with the passage of time, it gave birth to a variety of English literature now recognized as Indian English Literature. One is reminded of what F.W. Bain had forecasted about English and its proliferation the world over “India, a withered trunk suddenly shot out with foreign foliage” (Naik, 1982, p.1); in fact, one form of this foreign foliage is Indian English Literature in all of its different vibrant forms like poetry, prose, drama, short story and novel.

While documenting the history of genesis and evolution of Indian English Literature, historians have designated it variously for example, “Indo-Anglian Literature”, “Indian writing in English”, and “Indo-English Literature” which at times would even create certain confusions also with regard to nature and scope of the same. According to M.K. Naik:

“Thus, in his *A Sketch of Anglo-Indian Literature* (1908), E.F. Oaten considers the poetry of Henry Derozio as part of ‘Anglo-Indian Literature’. The same critic in his essay on Anglo-Indian Literature in *The Cambridge History of English Literature* (Vol.14, Ch.10) includes Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Rabindranath Tagore and Aravindo Ghosh among “Anglo-Indian” writers along with F.W. Bain and F.A. Steel. Similarly, Bhupal Singh’s *Survey of Anglo-Indian Fiction* (1934) deals with both British and Indian writers on Indian subjects. V.K. Gokak, in his book, *English in India: Its Present and Future* (1964) interprets the term “Indo-Anglian Literature” as comprising “the work of Indian writers in English” and “Indo-Anglian Literature” as consisting of “translations by Indians from Indian Literature into English”. In his massive survey, *Indian Writing in English* (1962), K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar includes English translations of Tagore’s novels and plays done by others in his history of Indian creative writing in English, while H.M. Williams excludes these from his *Indo-Anglian Literature 1800-*

1970:A Survey(1976).John B. Alphonso Karkala (Indo-English Literature in the Nineteenth Century 1970) uses the term “Indo-English Literature” to mean “Literature produced by Indian in English”. (Naik, 1982,p.2-3)

Nevertheless,the fact is that Indian English Literature may be defined as a variety of English Literature written originally by the authors of Indian origin; in other words, who are by birth,ancestry or nationality Indians.Such a definition makes it quite clear that Anglo-Indian Literature does not form part of this literature as in case of the same the writers and authors happen to be of the English origin by birth, ancestry and nationality as, for example, Kipling, Forster,F.W.Bain, Sir Edwin Arnold, F.A Steel, John Masters,Paul Scott,M.M.Kaye and many others who have written about India but their works actually belong to British Literature. Similarly, translations from Indian Literature into English may again not be treated as a part of Indian English Literature except if somebody has made a creative translations of the same in English.(Naik,1982, p.3)

As to the question why it is called Indian Literature in English has a simple answer. The authors in case of this literature do of course write in a foreign language like English but their style of expression,way of thinking and sensibility are all the way Indian in nature so their writings would be categorized as Indian English Literature, as for example,if one examines the writings of Henry Derozio, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K Narayan,Raja Rao,Kamala Das and many others who originally hail from India but write in English,their Indianness would be quite explicit from their use of English language and the sensibility they embed to their expressions. With this small introduction of what actually Indian English Literature is and who qualifies to be enlisted and studied under this particular category of literature, it would be now quite relevant and smooth also for us to proceed to document an overview of the genesis and evolution of Indian English Poetry as a very important part of Indian English Literature.

While talking about the historical growth and development of Indian English Literature in general, one cannot do the same without referring to how English language and literature got introduced in India; and related to the arrival of English literature and language in India would be the questions on how Britishers landed in India? ; How they with the passage of time established their control on Indian business and Indian education?,and how finally they managed and controlled as one its largest colonies the world over? M.K.Naik has thus summarized the answers to these questions with reference to how English people landed in India:

“The British connection with India was effectively established in the beginning of the seventeenth century,though the first English man ever to visit India did so as early as A.D.883,when one Sigelm,as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* notes, was sent there by King Alferd on a pilgrimage,in fulfillment of a vow.The discovery of the sea route to India by Vasco da Gama in 1498 brought the Portuguese and the Dutch to India long before the British.In early and mid-sixteenth century,British interest in India mostly remained in the formative stage.A petition addressed to King Henry V111 in 1511 reads: ‘The Indies are discovered and vast treasures brought from thence every day. Let us therefore bend our endeavors thitherward.’Finally, the East India Company which was to link India’s destiny firmly with Britain for almost two centuries was granted its first charter by Queen Elizabeth 1 on the last day of the lastyear of the sixteenth century,as if to usher in a new era in the East-West relationship with the dawn of the new century.”(Naik,1982, p.7)

Initially,the East India Company aimed at promoting its business and commercial relationship with the Indian market; but,the slow disintegration of the Mughal Empire encouraged it to go for the conquest of India thereby

converting it into a colony of the British Empire. Many postcolonial thinkers and analysts are of the opinion that the British colonialists came to India under the guise of East India Company and Christian Missionaries in order to get their target of conquest served with a meticulous and well planned strategy. One of famous Anglo-India novelists and poets, Rudyard Kipling has a very important point to make in this regard:

“Once two hundred years ago, the trader came/Meek and tame/Where his timid foot halted,there he stayed/Till mere trade /grew to empire/And he sent his armies forth /South and North /Till the country from Peshawar to Ceylon/Was his own.” (Naik, 1982, p.8)

In fact, those people who had come to sell and purchase goods in the Indian market stayed back to rule and master India for the coming two hundred years. The Mughal empire slowly lost its power and glow from the Indian landscape, and the last nail in its coffin was fixed by the English in 1857. During this interaction between the English colonizer and the Indian people through various institutions created and developed by the English colonizer, English language developed in India as a natural development as English people introduced it as a medium of instruction in schools and colleges, and also taught Indian people English culture and civilization through the primary texts of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Milton, Shelley and Keats. This was a significant development as in the coming days the same new development was going to give birth a new variety of English in India called and acknowledged now as Indian English Literature of which Indian English poetry happens to be very important part. When we talk about Indian English and the contribution of Indian writers to the development of Indian English language and literature, naturally we come to talk about three very important concepts: adoption, adaptation and adeption. It is through these very important concepts that one can actually gauge and discern the genesis and evolution of Indian English literature. With the help of these three concepts and techniques of writing in English used by the Indian English poetry, one could, broadly speaking, divide Indian English poetry into two periods: Pre-Independence and Post-Independence; and while discussing the different phases in the evolution and growth of the same, one may refer to the phase of imitation, experimentation and, of course, finally the write back by the empire. The present research project aims at underlining and evaluating the manifestation of different cultural and philosophical transitions and shifts in the poetry written in English by Indian poets so that one may assess how much this poetry is rooted in Indian ethos and sensibility.

As for as the Pre-Independence Indian English poetry is concerned, there are comments from critics like Parthasarthy who rejected the Indian English poetry through a sweeping remark like: “In examining the phenomenon of Indian verse in English, one comes up, first of all, against the paradox that it did not seriously begin to exist till after the withdrawal of the British from India” (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.1). Daruwalla also seems to follow Parthasarthy when he without having read in depth the texts of poems of early Pre-Independence poets condemns all the earlier poets to death. He states:

The final indictment of the earlier poets will not be on the score of their prosody or their archaic, dandified Georgianism, but they were untouched by either the reality around them, drought, famine, plague, colonial exploitation or by the reality within, namely erosion of faith and the disintegration of the modern consciousness. (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.2)

Contrary to Parthasarthy and Daruwalla, there is Budhadev Bose who praises the nineteenth century English poetry produced from India, and states that:

“The best of Indian English verse belongs to the nineteenth century” (ibid).It is quite obvious that he finds Toru Dutt and Aurobindo more authentic and original than their modern day counterparts in English in India,something that again is denounced by ArvindKrishanMehrura who believes that Aurobindo wrote “a worthless epic of 24,000 lines” and that Sarojini wrote “little poetry”(Ibid).

Eunice de Souza makes a serious observation in her review of early Indian English poetry after paging through the primary sources when she states that “Nineteenth –century Indian poetry in English has generally received bad press. It has been dismissed as imitative, tepid, un-Indian, unpatriotic, and interesting only as sociology” (Ibid). She finds early Indian English poetry rich in form and content, and quite contrary to Daruwalla who finds it lacking in content particularly of the scenario of that time. She further states that:

Going back to primary texts was a revelation. There is a much wider range of subjects and tones than I thought existed. There are varied political views, ranging from laments for the lost glories of India, to appeals to the English to treat Indian like a younger but equal sister, to angry denunciation of imperialism, both English and European, and anger about specific political events. (Ibid, p.3)

That early texts of Indian English poetry were imitative is beyond doubt; but to say that these early Indian poets were mentally slave to the extent that they did not raise voice against the different forms of injustice and oppression of colonial institutions in India is also not true. There might be some poets who might have appreciated and praised the British rule in India; but there are many also who not only questioned it but directly spoke against the same also. An example of an Indian English poet’s disdain of the colonial culture and way of thinking could be explicitly marked in these lines taken from Cowasji Nowrosji Vesuwala’s collection of poetry *Courting the Muse* (1879) which presents a chaos in the whole operative administrative system:

*There Devil’s great and God is all unknown
There Virtue hissed and Truth has little sway
There Modesty is but feigned, and Vice alone
Shines out all foremost in glittering array
There men and women adulteries atone
And sins confess, so awkward to essay*

(Mapping 108)

Similarly, one would hear the voice of protest and tones of resistance against the foreign occupation in the verses of Chattopadhyaya who does not hesitate to declare “That no existing government/ based upon war is permanent” and goes on to offer his own opinion saying that “Whatever men might say in song/ to conquer others land is wrong” (Early 149). There are poets like G Annaji Rao who reveal and expose the reality behind “White men’s burden” and lay bare the real intent behind introducing English language and literature in Indian schools and colleges, construction of a new breed of clerks that would serve the purpose of English people. Here one’s attention would straight away go to the following lines from *Congress Ditties and Other Rhymes* (1928):

*They open schools and teach us English
And lots of worthless things besides:
For why? They want us all for clerks
And over us they want to ride.*

(Early 181)

There are poets like S.H Jhabwala who tirelessly urge all Indians to stand united for the common good and sacrifice heart,soul and blood for the sake of country,thereby setting the country free from the clutches of colonial slavery.One could hear such exhortations from his poem *Malini,the Daughter of Punjab or A Tale of Sacrifice* (1924) in these words:

*Ye Hindus! Muslims! Parsees!Christians! Jews!
This land is yours;or you have made or marred
This land; it is for you to make or mar!
Ye builders or ye spoilers of its fate!
Unite in common good; you live,you die
But what do you live on for aye and does
From father unto son descend.Ye sons
Of India!Ye have eaten of her slat
Drunk deep her milk and ploughed her soil and lived
Unite to set her barque along the sea
Of freedom*

(Early 171)

One could never forget a poet like FredoonKabraji who shows his modern tendencies through his expressions and words that are full of anxiety,tension and pressure but very much rooted in the soil of India.These verses quoted below are from his poem *A Minor Georgian's Swan Song*(1944):

*Now at this lunch hour
Unlunching,
Sitting on gracious wooden benches
I am rested, I am enthralled,
I have company of silent,
Unwashed, idle-labouring men
Who flutter their 'Midday Stars'
And 'Standards'-
Nod and numble and jerk a twitching nerve,
Bite upon air or a sandwich morsel.....*

(Early 219)

In early Indian poetry,one could also see that the poets were not only well aware of natural calamities,but they were also conscious of the strong grip of outdated beliefs and superstitions among Indian people.Some verses quoted below from *Rationalistic and Other Poems* (1917) explicitly demonstrate the poet's,PeshotonSorabjiGoolbaiDubash, frank articulation regarding the lack of education and communal harmony among the Indian people:

*But why the women? Even all men are not
As yet educated, and believe
In superstitious and beliefs of all
The harmful kinds and by distinctions doomed
Into a chaos of differences of faiths.*

(Mapping 409)

Some anthologists like Parthasarthy, A.K. Mehrotra and Daruwalla are of the opinion that the true modern poetry begins with Nissim Ezekiel while as the fact is otherwise. There is one poet Joseph Furtado whose poetry is fully of experimentation in content and form, and could be referred to as the predecessor of Nissim Ezekiel in making it new in Indian English poetry. Furtado's first collection in English appeared in 1895 by the title *Primerics Versos*. One of his poems "Lakshmi" is in the form of dialogue having Indian theme and of course Indian expression also. The reader of this poem could find himself/herself in an Indian atmosphere because of the tone, content and words of the poem. The following lines from his collection of poems *Selected Poems* (1942) could be taken as example for the argument made above:

Goan Fiddler: O merirani, amkudeotorapani

Lakshmi: I speaking English, saib.

Goan Fiddler: Very well, my English speaking daughter, give me then a little water.

Lakshmi: Why little? Drink plenty much. All peoples liking water of this well.

Goan Fiddler. Many thanks. Never expected to find in this out-of-the-way village a Hindu girl speaking English. And nice English too you speak, my daughter.

(Early 136)

In another poem "The Neglected Wife", Furtado, again, seems modern enough to treat his subject matter in a profound psychological manner, and so he voices the plight of the wife neglected by her husband who has not met his wife since the day he has been to Bombay. The husband neither meets her nor even writes to her, thereby leaving her in a perfect state of despair, unending longing and heart-burning on account of her husband's absence. To this young lady who is past eighteen, beauty in the absence of love and liberty is just useless as could be illustrated from these lines of the poem:

While all declare I'm young and fair;

But what is beauty, youth to me

Deprived of love and liberty?

(Early 130)

Some critics would say that the early Indian English poets were lost in Romance and nostalgia only, and were quite careless and unaware of the scenario of their times. Such sweeping comments are out of place as they show immaturity of judgment and lack of a real critical appreciation of the texts mentioned. An illustrating example could be found in the lines quoted below from the poetry of Lala Prasanna Kumar Dey's collection *Indian Bouquet* (1906):

A Budha, Christ or Chaitanya

Despatch, O God, to Earth again

To teach man how to love in deed,

And work the end of Satan's reign.

(Mapping 40)

In the light of the brief review of some of the samples of early Indian English poetry, one could, therefore, assert that Daruwalla's comment that early Indian English poets "were either untouched by reality around them,

drought, famine, plague, colonial exploitation or by the reality within, namely erosion of faith and the disintegration of the modern consciousness” (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.7) is baseless and illogical; similarly, Parthasarthy’s outright rejection of Indian English poetry could be termed as his stubbornness lack of an in-depth study of the texts that he was trying to evaluate and judge. To the same league of stubborn and unjust critics belongs A.K. Mehrotra who offends a lot the early Indian English poet, particularly Aurobindo and Sarojini Naido; while as he is never so harsh and offending to the modern Indian English poet like Dillip Chitre, Adil Jussawalla, Arun Kolatkar and Eunice de Souza.

The fact of the matter is that the history of Indian English poetry reveals that even though it was imitative and romantic in its early phase, it was still a mature and responsible development in the literary landscape of India. There is the stigma that Indian English poetry is derivative in nature as English is not the native language of the concerned poets and writers. It is true that when Indians started writing poetry in the English language, they found their source of influence in the British Romantic poetry; and the imitative phase of Indian English poetry was deeply immersed in the Romantic colour and sensibility. One may very well assert that Romanticism became the model/proto-type for the Indian English poet, which was, in other words, the trend of the times. In this connection, Gokak makes a remarkable comment:

“It (Indo-Anglian poetry) starts as romantic poetry simply because it was born under Romantic influences. It becomes Victorian because English Romantic poetry became Victorian. It decided to go through a period of ‘Decadence’ because the nineties were a period of ‘Decadence’ in English poetry. After Decadence came the period of Georgianism and Indo-Anglian poetry, loyal as always, suddenly became Georgian. When English poetry became modernist, Indo-Anglian poetry had no alternative but to do the same.” (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.13)

Indeed, in its imitative phase, Indian English poetry found its model in the British Romantic poetry as there was no other model available just around; however, it never means that the Indian English poet borrowed/copied the content from the English poetry, rather the imitation was confined to the extent of form only. The content was Indian always as could be gauged/understood from the poetry of many Indian English poets like Toru Dutt, Aurobindo or Sarojini, etc. Initially, they wrote in the English form and went to mature and grow to the stage when they developed an idiom of their own and an independent variety of English called the Indian English. V.K. Gokak makes these remarks in the defense of Indian English poetry:

Indo-Anglian poetry, like the rest of modern Indian poetry, is Indian first and everything else afterwards. It has voiced the aspirations, the joys and sorrows of the Indian people. It has been sensitive to the changes in the national climate and striven increasingly to express the soul of India, the personality which distinguishes her from other nations. At the same time, its constant endeavor is to delineate the essential humanity and universality which make the whole world her kith and kin. (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.13)

There are no two opinions about the fact that Indian poets have also developed their own poetic forms and have employed various and different styles ranging from simple to compact via colloquial to suit the themes which they wanted to highlight through ideas and images that evolved to be picturesque thereby offering a fusion of feelings and thoughts. It is evolution and growth in the Indian English poetry that made the pre-independence poets throw away the Romantic imitation and adopt an independent and Indian style and form which of course

is very clearly marked by the post-independence experimental and adaptive phase of Indian English poetry. V.K Gokak further explains the story of Indian English poetry in these words:

“A particular verbal mode of expressing romantic sensibility may have ended with Sarojini Naidu and her generation. But it does not mean that romantic sensibility itself came to an end with her. The fireflies are as much a part of our experience as the din and hubbub and they will continue to be so. Given a certain comprehensiveness of soul, a poet is bound to respond to the din as well as the fireflies. In any case, the neo-symbolists have evolved their own characteristic idiom for expressing ‘romantic’ sensibility.” (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.14)

A thorough review of Indian English poetry starting from Derozio to the present would reveal that a multiple number of themes like “Nature, Love, Man and the Heritage of man consisting of myth, legend, history and the fine arts” (Gokak, 1970) could be found in the same along with a number of many others like metaphysical longing, devotion, mystical contemplation and spiritual illumination, which clearly shows that Indian English poetry is deeply rooted in Indian ethos and mythos with all those universal elements and ingredients that make a people part of the vast Universe. In Gokak’s estimate the poetry being written in the present time is quite reflective and introspective which of course springs from the internal and external engagements of the poet as, for example, if the poet is engaged with the external world, ponders over it and responds to it very seriously, he is bound to produce a reflective poetry; while as if the poet is engaged with his own self, memories, hopes, dreams and aspirations, the poet may end up producing an introspective kind of poetry. Indian English poetry is full of both kinds of poetry. In fact, this could be true about poetry the world over as there are always either inward journeys or outward journeys based on the engagements of the poet. Trends may go on changing from time to time, and there happens to be the space and scope for carrying out studies that may try to locate the changing and shifting socio-cultural dynamics in the literature of a people. Before the Indian Independence, patriotism, spiritual longings and love for the landscape of the country might have been the chief concern of the poet, but with the coming of freedom and independence for the country, the concerns might have changed with the passage of time.

It could be realized from the readings of Indian English poetry that post-independence poets give much importance to the Individual and most of the themes are, thus, individual-centric so to speak. While some poets might be interested in writing about the social subjects, others may just confine their interests to highlighting the urban awareness that has somehow entered life. Similarly, there might be people writing resistance or protest poetry, thereby questioning the working mechanism of the establishment and government system; while as some others may just produce a poetry that may show their spiritual consciousness and could be devoted to the God or different gods or goddesses in his/her religion. It could be realized that modern poets would love to make experiments with different subjects and themes in their verses. In fact, there are many poets who explore the theme of sexuality and eros and thus, like Sigmund Freud, would associate all the hungers of man with the hunger of sex.

There could be no two opinions about the fact that a much better poetry is being written in contemporary times; however, such a comparison would never mean that the earliest Indian English poetry could be outrightly rejected by critics like Parthasarth and Daruwalla. One would say that the genre has been evolving and growing, thereby portraying the India and the world of its own times and temperament.

Before a brief review of some great poets of Indian English literature is presented here, it would in place to briefly see how it is actually classified by historians and critics of the genre. According to Keki N Daruwalla, “The best thing about Indian poetry in English is that there are no schools, no poetic congeries, no Gurus and no disciple’s” (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.17). He could be right in his own way though a cursory glance over the subject shows a different story. The history of Indian English poetry bears witness to the fact that many Indian English poets wrote under the influence of Tagore and Aurobindo. Among the modernist, many would emulate Nissim Ezekiel and Ramanujan. Many women poets could be found emulating Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Kamla Das. It could be very difficult to a period-wise division of Indian English poetry though V.K Gokak’s classification spans over 25 years and M.K. Naik’s into four schools of thought, namely “From the Beginnings to 1857”; “1857 to 1920”; “1920 to 1947” and “Independence and After” (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.17) are good attempts. There is a division made by Makarand Paranjape whose classification and division goes something like this: “Colonialism” (1825-1900); “Nationalism” (1900-1950); “Modernism” (1950-1980) and “Post-Modernism” (1980-present time). There is one division that sees Indian English poetry simply in terms of “Romantics” and “Modernists”, something which could not be taken as an authentic fact about such a vast and heterogeneous body of poetry. Nevertheless, the fact is that such divisions are not water-tight compartments, rather they could be treated and taken as simply matters of “approximate and provisional” and simply devices of convenience (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.17).

The history of Indian English Poetry generally considers Henry Louis Vivian Derozio as the first Indian English poet. Among the many early English poets in India, figures like Kashiprasad Ghose, Shoshee Chunder Dutt, Michaael Madhusudan Dutt, Govin Chunder, Hur Chunder and Greece Chunder could be counted as the early pilgrims of this journey. Toru Dutt inherited the same spirit and spread the fragrance of Indian ethos and cultural sensibility throughout the globe through collections like *Ancient Ballads* and *Legends of Hindustan*. Sri Aurobindo Ghosh introduces philosophical reflections to the Indian English Poetry and shares with the world his vision of reforming the world through his internal yoga which he recommends through his collection of poetry *Savitri*. Joseph Furtado, a poet from Goa, may be rightly called the predecessor of Nissim Ezekiel in writing Indian poems in English. Romesh Chunder Dutt might not have written much original poetry in English except in his collection *Reminiscences*; nevertheless, nobody can take away this credit from him that he introduced Indian culture to the West through his translations. Sarojini Naidu offers to the West what she sees around her—the Indian landscapes with people and things without going into the depth. She simply shows to the reader what Indian landscape is all about. In the league of these extraordinary creative geniuses could be found one more name Hasan Shahid Suhrawardy who wrote in modern strains at a time when romanticism was in air and nationalism was at its peak. Similarly, G. Annaji Rao depicted the scenario of his times realistically and would reveal the truth in a candid manner. Among the greatest for all the times in Indian English poetry could be counted the name of Rabindranath Tagore whose poetry offers vision—a vision of life that shows the path of love, joy and peace which one realizes by living with world not simply in the world. He humanizes spirituality and presents to the world some of the best visionary statements through his poetry. In the same vein could be counted the poetry of Swami Vivekananda whose poetry is full of love, wisdom, philosophical reflections, message of tolerance and spirituality. Further, his poetry conveys the message of oneness and unity; it condemns fanaticism and bigotry thereby favoring the fusion of East and West through the harmony among all the religions of the world and the resultant cosmopolitanism.

Contributing the essence of India to world thought and culture, Harindranath Chattopadhyaya could be seen singing the songs of composite culture thereby respecting every religion and recommending the mantra of tolerance, coexistence and mutual harmony among the people. The most attracting and appealing thing about his poetry is his Marxist revolutionary zeal. Continuing the same legacy of composite thought and culture, one could see Swami Ananda Acharya, a Professor of Philosophy, spreading the message of peace, love, brotherhood and coexistence among the people through his English poetry. Amidst the diversity of colours, castes and creeds of men, he would see that “one heart moves them all” and also believes that “there is a hidden light in man”. Writing on mystic leanings and his devotion to Sikh faith and religion, Puran Singh too is like most of the Indian poets in English devoid of fanaticism and narrow minded bigotry. His poetry may in fact present him as the reincarnation of Tagore.

Ram Tirtha could be discussed as the poet of hope—a hope for the better future for human beings who can initiate transformation of the society beginning with themselves. Again, like most of his predecessors and contemporaries, his poetry is rich in Indian ethos, sensibility and myths. S.H. Jhabwala, on the other side of the spectrum, has a political bent of mind which forces him to think about the state of affairs of his country, with the result, making his jail period a blessing in disguise in the company of poetry writing.

Another momentous contribution to world thought and spirituality in Indian English poetry comes from the pen of Sri Paramahansa Yogananda who attempts to harmonize the East-West binary through Holy Scriptures and holy thoughts in his poetry. The essential idea emanating from his poetry is that all human beings are equal simply because all of them possess the Divine Consciousness. Similarly, Jiddu Krishnamurthi searches for God and like the birds of *The Conference of Birds* finds Him in himself. Since he had a teaching and a philosopher's background, his poetry most of the times appears quite didactic. Humayun Kabir seems to be “an important link between the poets of the nationalistic phase and the modernists who followed”.

Poets like these mentioned above could be stated to have left an indelible mark on the literary landscape of India before it was actually overtaken by the new generation that tried to experiment with new forms, dictions, images, idioms and themes in order to welcome the modernist trends and techniques in India. This is the time when the modern poets from India writing in English attempt new and innovative forms and techniques in his/her poetic expressions and in the choice of the subject matter and themes as well. Among the great modernists from Indian English poetry, one would find Nissim Ezekiel identifying himself with his environment, thus becoming a representative poet of metropolis and modern Indian city, Bombay, a microcosm of India. What makes him fresh, appealing and interesting for readers is his marked objectivity, use of irony and paradoxes in his poetry.

In the league of extraordinarily amazing modernist Indian English poets figures the legendary revolutionary poetess, Kamla Das, who gives vent to her anguish against the male hegemony and expresses to the best the female sensibility as she felt it to be. One could find that her true “self” that remains disconnected with corporeal encounters oscillates like a pendulum and, finally, takes rest in the ideal love of Ghanshyam. Similarly, A.K. Ramanujan, an expatriate and a poet of cultural consciousness, successfully brings family, history and myths into the texture of his poetry. He might be found mingling his native surges with his American experiences but he seeks his identity in his mythical and literary past. Similarly, there is R. Parthasarthy with the collection of poetry *Rough Passage* which proves his poetry to be voyage within. If he criticizes the Tamil culture, he doesn't criticize it because he is against it but because he longs for the revival and restoration of the

same. Similarly, Shiv K Kumar revives through his verses the cultural identity of India mutilated by colonial experience and assimilates foreign culture into his native culture. One may find his poetry full of an unconventional morality; he, therefore, exposes hypocrisy of the people in his poetry. Coming to Keki N Daruwala, he has a forceful poetic voice as he paints the Indian landscape through an idiom and language that reflects quotidian experience of the culture and mythical consciousness. Jayanta Mahapatra portrays the Orissan landscape of his poetic collections with the colours of myths, symbols and metaphors. In Arun Kolatkar, one may find that he is against the way religion is being misused by the people and he shows the reader how the common masses become the victims of their own beliefs because of their superstitiousness. His poetic journey from *Jejuri* to *Sarpa Satrais* full of quotidian experiences articulated in day-to-day language and idiom. These are some of the very important landmarks in the history of modern Indian English poetry which set the standards and points of departure for the next generation in the said field.

While talking of the poetry in English of the very recent times in Indian history, one may think of great icons like P. Lal, Dom Moraes, Adil Jussawala, Agha Shahid Ali, Meena Alexandar, Manohar Shetty, Vikram Seth, Imtiaz Dharker, Eunice de Souza, Saleem Peeradina, O.P Bhatnagar, Keshav Malik, Krishna Srinivas, Niranjan Mohanty, Mohanand Sharma, etc., who too have enriched the Indian English poetry by virtue of their innovations and experimentations in form as well as content. In our own contemporary era, poets like Gopikrishnan Kootor, R.C Shukla and many others have been writing some meaningful poetry which is truly Indian in form and content. Hoshang Merchant, Makarand Paranjape, Sudeep Sen, Jeet Thayil, Bhibhu Padhi, Shanta Acharya, Sujata Bhat, Suniti Namjoshi, C.P. Surendram, Ranjit Hoskote, Dwarkanath H. Kabadi, I.K. Sharma, R.K. Singh, P.C.K. Prem, I.H. Rizvi, D.C. Chambial, C.S. Singh, Susheel Kumar Sharma, R.K. Bhushan, C.L. Khatri, S. Parida, Vijay Nambhisan, Prabhanjan K. Mishra, Akhil Katyal, Anand Thakore, Anu Kumar, Jasim Hamid Malik, Lakashmi Kannan, Meena Kandasamy, Menka Shivdasani, Nabina das, Nitoo das, Priya Sarukai Chabria, Rizio Yohannan Raj, Sukrita Paul Kumar, Tabish Khair Tamsula Ao, Robin Ngongom, Usha Kishore, P.K. Padhy, Vihang Naik, Nandni Sahu, Asha Viswas, Jaydeep Satrangi, Binod Mishra, Sunil Sharma, Sanjukta das Gupta, K. Sony Dalia, etc., too have been enriching the contemporary Indian English poetry with their multicultural and global experiences of thought and imagination in terms of ethos, identity and landscape. With such a vast and diverse community of people from India actively contributing, Indian English poetry is now one of the established genres having its own distinctive identity and impressions in the history of world literature. (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.24-25)

A brief review of the poetry produced by some of the major Indian English poetry would definitely bring home the point that it is really a great contribution to the world of literature.

Henry Loius Vivian Derozio (1890-1831) was influenced by Byron, Scot, Moore, Shelley and Keats and was, of course, a great romantic in spirit under the influence of all the above-mentioned Western Romantics. He has tried his hand at writing lyrics, short poems, narrative poems, ballads and some sonnets that reveal his poetic personality which is a fusion of his reflective strain, melancholic nature and reformative attitude.

In Derozio's poetry, one would always find his deep love for country and his deep anguish at the fact that India has been enslaved. He would glorify the richness of Indian culture and civilization in the past and would express his deep anguish over the corrupt traditions that bind India. He would love to revive the native Indian tradition thereby instilling the sense of patriotism among Indians and the sense of freedom also. To him, freedom gives life to a man; slavery gives death. He says in one of his poems:

*And glory to the breast that bleeds
Bleeds nobly to be free!
Blest be the generous hand that breaks
The chain a tyrant gave.*

(Derozio in Arora, Vol. 1 27)

Similarly, one could feel his anguish and deeply felt pain over the present status of India and how it used to be a great country and civilization in the past. He, in fact, grieves and mourns over this change. In other words, one could see that he pained to see the golden eagle in the chain and this pain is felt to the extent that he wishes it to be free. This is how he recalls the Indian past:

*My country! in thy day of glory past
A beautiful halo circles round thy brow,
And worshipped as a deity thou wast-
Where is that glory, where that reverence now?*

(Derozio in Arora, Vol. 1 27)

Turning to Kashiprasad Ghose (1809-1873), he was a bilingual poet writing in his mother tongue, Bengali, and English. His maiden contribution to Indian English poetry is his collection *The Shair and other Poems* (1830). A cursory reading of this collection of poetry would reveal to any reader that he was deeply influenced by Sir Walter Scott though many poems in this collection are about Indian festivals. There are reflections of despair, despondence and melancholy also in his poetry. In one of his poems, "To a Young Hindu Widow", he would thus see and lament the status of widows in India:

*Ah, fair one! lone as desert flower,
Whose bloom and beauty are in vain;
How dark was that fatal hour
Which brought thee lasting grief and pain!*

(To a Young Hindu Widow)

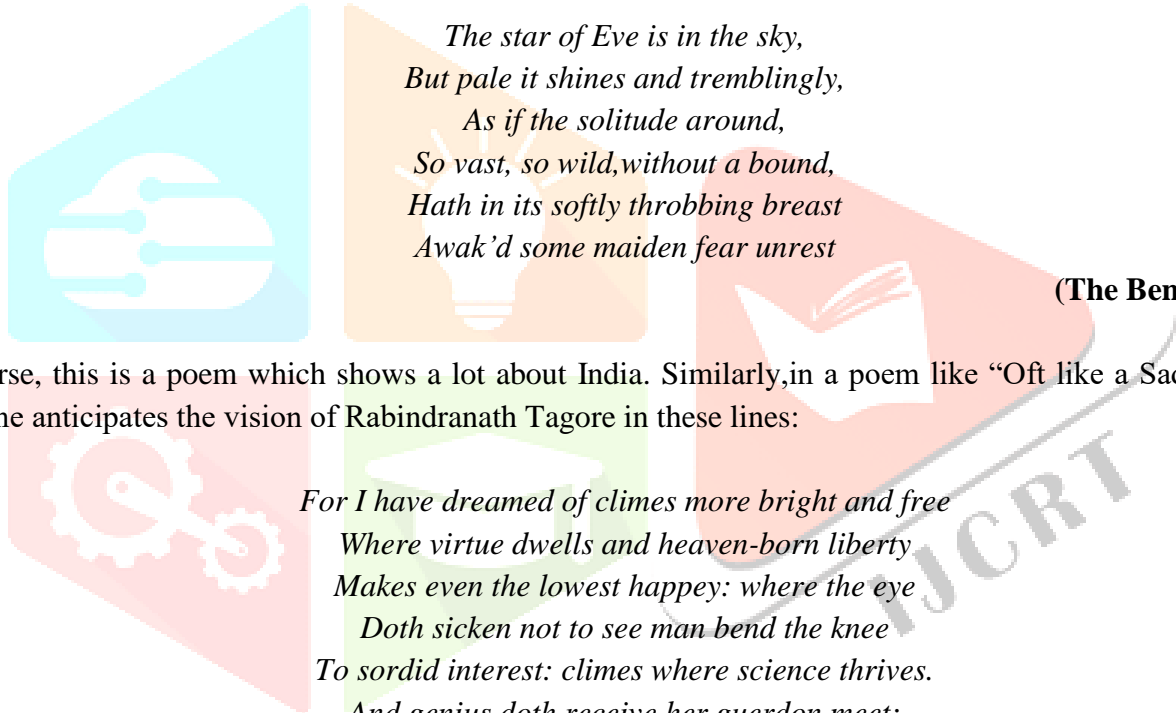
While assessing Kashiprasad Ghose's poetry, K.R. Srinivas Iyengar comments that "His was derivative and imitative poetry, made up mainly of conventional descriptions and tedious moralizing, but it is a tedium brightened by odd flashes of originality, and thus a bright poetic phrase or line occasionally glistens amidst the heap of utterly prosaic and inane" (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.33)

There is one poet by the name of Soshee Chunder Dutt (1825-1886) who published his collections like *Miscellaneous Verses* in 1848 from Calcutta thereby showing in a foreign language a deep sensibility of Indian ethos and culture. In this collection of poems, there are poems about India: Indian rivers like Ganga, the Indian gods and also about some historical and legendary themes. He loves his nation to the extent that dreams the dream of its freedom and wishes in all the earnestness that this dream should be translated into a reality. He understands fully well that the future is highly uncertain but he is sure of the mysterious ways in which the power and glory of the God reveals itself to the people. Here are a few lines from one of his poems:

*And shall I to the future turn my gaze?
The future is a sealed book to man,
And none so high presumes his sight to raise;
God's mystic secrets who shall dare to scan?*

(The Golden Treasury 71)

One can understand the early rise and evolution of Indian poetry from the great compositions of these poets, though they were at the early stages of Indian English poetry deeply indebted to European Romanticism. In English, poets like Michael Madhusudan Dutt (1824-1873) have left impressions through his works like *The Captive Ladie* (1849), *Vision of the Past in Blank Verse* (1849), *Ratnavali* (1858), translation of *Sarmista* (1859), *Is this Called Civilization?* (a farce published in 1871) in which he has proved his Indian stance and thus compose a blend of Western form and Indian content. His poem "Captive Ladie", having a marked influence of Romantics like Scott and Byron opens like this:



*The star of Eve is in the sky,
But pale it shines and tremblingly,
As if the solitude around,
So vast, so wild, without a bound,
Hath in its softly throbbing breast
Awak'd some maiden fear unrest*

(The Bengali Book 9)

Of course, this is a poem which shows a lot about India. Similarly, in a poem like "Oft like a Sad Imprisoned Bird", he anticipates the vision of Rabindranath Tagore in these lines:

*For I have dreamed of climes more bright and free
Where virtue dwells and heaven-born liberty
Makes even the lowest happy: where the eye
Doth sicken not to see man bend the knee
To sordid interest: climes where science thrives.
And genius doth receive her guerdon meet;
Where man in all his truest glory lives,
And nature's face is exquisitely sweet:
For those fair climes I heave the impatient sigh,
There let me live and let me die.*

(Gathering Grace 13)

The talent that this poet showed in English in a poem like *The Captive Ladie*; and in Bengali, by writing the great Bengali epic *MaghanandBadha*, is undoubtedly immense.

The maturity and immensity of contributions of Indian poets in English language could be reflected by the publication of *The Dutt Family Album* by Govin Chunder, Hur Chunder, Greece Chunder and Omesh Chunder in 1870 at Messrs Longmans Green and Co. In this album, one could find the contributions of the three brothers (Goven Chunder, Hur Chunder and Greece Chunder) and their nephew Omesh Chunder who contributed 66, 11, 47

and 73 poems respectively to this album. In this album, the four authors, who had had their education from outside India, realize their roots in India and what, in fact, made their realization deeper and sharper, was their conversion to Christianity. This conversion, of course, made them conscious of their Indian identity. In order to fill their spiritual void and the emptiness created by their out of place exile like condition in a foreign country where they never belonged, they started composing poetry related to Indian themes, myth, landscape, history and legends, thus retrieving their lost identity and self. One may notice the same feelings in these lines of GovinChunder:

*And I am left heart-broken and alone
With weary mind to count the weary days.*

(Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.49)

HurChunderDutt would express his boundless love for the land of his birth. He would recall the past days of India's glory when the soldiers would live for her with the patriotic feelings. But, there is some optimism also about the future of India that will definitely see a brighter day. His optimism could be noticed in his poem "India" in these words:

*The days of glory memory recalls
And castles rise, and towers, and flanking walls,
And soldiers live, for the dear land who fell;
But as from dreams of bliss men wake to mourn,
So mourn I when that vision is no more,
And in poor lays thy widowed fate deplore,
Thy trophies gone, thy beauteous laurels torn,
But Time shall yet be mocked; chough these decay,
I see broad streaks of a still brighter day.*

(The Bengali Book 27)

Continuing with the legacy of all the early Indian English poets, one may notice in Greece ChunderDutt a noteworthy poet who, besides contributing to the *Dutt Family Album*, published collections of poetry like *Cherry Stones* (1879) and *Cherry Blossoms*. Like his brothers, he also tried his hand at writing poems on historical and legendary themes in sonnet and blank verse. He shows immense love for nature, a fact which is clear from his poems like "The Soondurbuns", "The Neem Tree", and "Water Fowl". The following lines from his poem "The Soondurbuns" may illustrate this fact very clearly:

*In the wild district where the Ganges pours
Its lavish waters by a hundred mouths
Into the bosom of the sounding sea,
Are plains, like prairies, of enormous length,
Adorned with ancient trees of stately growth*

(Early 55)

Another contributor to the *Dutt Album* is OmeshChunder who was a talented poet but could not get necessary recognition and appreciation from the public in his times. His contribution to the *Dutt Family Album* was the

highest in the form of some 73 poems. Like other early Indian English poets, he too had keen interest in Indian myths and legends but could not exploit his talent of narrative art in turning the raw material into the poetic one. He too is attracted by the charms of nature, and he writes sonnets to present his feelings about war and peace as could be very well illustrated and reflected from the lines quoted below:

*O Peace, our guardian angel, may thy throne
Be fixed and steadfast on our fertile shore
And may we never thy sovereignty do down,
But love and worship thee for evermore;
The crown, the laurel wreath are meet for thee,
Thine is the triumph, thine victory.*

(The Bengali Book 48)

Another very important poet from the early period is Nobe Kissen Ghose (1837-1918) who wrote under the pen name 'Ram Sharma'. He might be found neither too extremist nor too moderate vis-à-vis his attitude towards the British rule though at a later stage in his life he did not mind advocating and pleading the rights of Indian people whom he advised not to use the British goods. He wrote prose as well as poetry. Some of his famous and noteworthy collections of poetry are *Willow Drops* (183-74), *The Last Day* (1886) and *Shivratri, Bhagwat Gita and Miscellaneous Poems* (1903). He tried his hand at blank verse in imitation of John Milton and ballad form which he used in 'Daksha Yagna'.

In the lines quoted below, Nobe draws the pen-portrait of Vivekananda in these beautiful words :

*In flower of life, when full of fragrance sweet
Vivekanand, Bengala's gifted son,
Vivekanand, all India's pride, is gone
....His soul was one
Of rarest grace, and like a star it shone
Whose splendor East and West did warmly greet
Though brief his life on earth, 'it was yet replete'
With noble work.*

(The Golden Treasury 84)

His poetry has marks and impressions of resistance and protest against oppression and hegemony of all sorts. Here is how he criticizes the dual policy of the British colonizers in these lines:

*"It was by Onley's bard and sage-
"We have no slaves at home-then why abroad?"
Is England's scepter, then a tyrant's rod?
No! we repel the charge with honest rage!
Still, England! there are rivets in our chains.
Which, thou wilt own, had better not remain;
Remove them; and make it thy duteous care
To mete thy weaker Sister measure fair.*

(Early 82)

In Nobe's words, India is a golden bird whose wings have been clipped by the foreign colonizer thereby forcing her to submission. He also describes her as a *Kama Dhenu*, a cow whose udders are being squeezed unnaturally for the selfish interests of the colonizers. The poet would offer the case of three baggers who have nothing to do with the nation but are only interested in fulfilling their own desires and motives through cheap tactics. In his poem "The Jolly Beggars", Nobe shares his insight in these words:

*India is our milk cow, let us milk her well
Her udder's rich like KamDhenu's in heaven
Squeeze, we her teats, fill we our merry pail,
While unto us her mastership is given.
Kuchparwanahi! Kuchparwanahi!
Our meat and wine's secure!
In spite of our every hostile cry,
Our compensation is sure!
For ours the clearest right divine
To thrive, tho' silver fall-
Tho' peasants starve, or tradesmen pine,
And taxes grind them all!*

(Early 86)

In 1853, Behramji Merwanji Malabari was born only to rise as one of the many great stars of Indian English poetry. He has one collection of poetry to his credit - *Indian Muse in English Garb* (1876). In his poetry, one may find him highly concerned about child marriage and widowhood. He might be praising the British but his love for India is unbounded. This poet in his poem "The Dream of My Youth" traces and finds his roots in the soil of Hindustan and he is all thankful to the God for all the gifts:

*This wondrous land is mine
And all its fertile banks,
For this Thy gift divine,
O Lord! I give thee thanks.*

(Mapping 95)

Similarly, the Indian English Poetry has the honor of having received the wisdom of one of the greatest legends of Indian soil who was really the daughter of the soil and had the nerve and talent for promoting the Indian ethos and mythos across the globe through her English poetry. Toru Dutt (1856-1877) was the daughter of Govin Chunder Dutt, and was nourished on the Indian literary heritage of works like the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Vishnu Purana* and the *Bhagavata*. Her poetry is full of reflections on Indian ethos and mythos as would be latter on commented on separately about her poetry in this work of research on Indian poetry.

Toru flashed into limelight when she published *A Sheaf Gleaned in French Field* (1876) which is an English translation of French poetry containing some 165 poems including eight by her elder sister Aru. In 1882, her *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan* was posthumously published and it was a big surprise for even the English world.

In her poetry, one may find the poetic representation of the well-known theory of fate and Karma, something that she has borrowed from ancient Indian philosophy. In one of her ballads, she would go on presenting the same in these words:

*Between humanity and fate;
None have on earth what they desire?
Death comes to all soon or late
And peace is but a wandering fire.*

(Ancient Ballads 47)

One would hear the echoes of English Romantic poetry in her poem “Our Casurina Tree” which is rooted in memory and personal feelings dressed in images, symbols and figures. The poet does not love the tree because of its magnificence but because of the memory of the days and the things that he spent/with under the shade of this tree. It of course evokes the images of her friends whom she loved with love intense. The tree is de-familiarized by the poet in such a way that with it are associated the memories of many things, ideas, people and activities that are a past now for the poet. This is how she describes the same:

*O sweet companions, loved with intense love,
For your sakes shall the tree be ever dear!
Blends with your images, it shall arise
In memory, till the hot tears blind mine eyes!*

(Ancient Ballads 174)

If one would be asked about the contributions of Toru Dutt to the world thought through her English poetry, one could say that she contributed the Indian traditions and values to the world thought and brought home to the Western readers the Eastern values of devotion, sacrifice, selflessness and love—something that make Indian ethos strong, firm and timeless.

The author of *Courting the Muse: Being a collection of Poems* (1879), Cowasji Nowrosji Vesuvala, is a staunch critic of the colonial administration and an ardent lover of India and Indian ethos. For him, India is country dotted with rivers, mountains, temples, churches, masjids and, of course, it is a land of multitudes. Hundreds of godheads are being worshipped in India and dozens of religions are being followed by a diversity of people. He is proud of his Parsi background but that doesn't stop him from being a staunch Indian in ethos and sensibility. This is how he expresses the same feelings about his own background:

*Let Christians prove their superiority boast,
Let fanatic Mahomedians indulge in gups,
Let Hindoos worship idols at the most,
Or Jews enshrine but golden silver cups;
Let Buddhist bigots their religion roast,
Or Chinese heathens claim to be the ups,
We care not: ours was the first empire on earth
Whence Freedom, Arts, Philosophy had their birth.*

(Mapping 121)

Since the early batch of Indian English poetry is associated with the imitation of the Western Romantic ideals and form, one may, in this connection; notice a great Indian Romantic in English in a poet like Joteendro Mohun Tagore (1831-1908). He published his flight of fancy in his collection *Flights of Fancy in Prose and Verse* in 1881 from Calcutta. He was deeply involved and interested in music and theatre. His poem "The Rajpootnee's Song" celebrates the occasion of the Festival of Camdev so that their husbands would continue to love to them as Camdev with his arrows of sweet flowers is able to create love in anybody's heart. Such supernatural elements in his poetry fill him with myth and legend. These lines from the poem would illustrate the fact very clearly:

*We are but women, by nature made weak
It is therefore thus hubly thy favour we seek;
Grant us this boon, that our loved lords may never
Regard us unkindly, but love us forever.*

(Mapping 14)

Following the model of great Romantic poets of England like Shelley and Keats, Mohun Tagore wrote poems in the praise of Kokils and the world of nature. In his "Sonnet to the Kokil", one may hear his Romantic tones in the following lines:

*Sweet bird, thy songs invite
The timid loving maidens from their home
To meet fond lovers by the pale moon's light
In bliss supreme, to chase dull care away.
Thrice happy bird! for these we love thee well,
Oh! may'st thou ever in these green groves dwell
And tune thy lays of love all night and day.*

(Mapping 15)

Similarly, his poetry does also reflect the impressions of Indian ethos and mythos to its fullest. In the poem "Song: Radha's Anxiety for the Absence of Krishna", one is reminded of Sarojini Naidu's poem "The Flute Player" and many other folk songs of India. The myth of Krishna and Radha is the subject of the folk songs that he develops in his poetry. Radha is shown to be anxious for the lost Krishna as she assumes that he might be in the company of some other nymph. Such an apprehension creates a sense of fear and insecurity in Radha. In the lines quoted below, one may notice how her fears, insecurities and apprehensions have been portrayed by this poet:

*Where roves the youth whose beaming eye
My maiden heart hath stole?
He cometh not, the night is nigh,
Ah! what shall cheer my soul.*

...

*Perchance some other nymph, whose lot
Is happier than my own,
Doth now engross my lover's thought
While thus I weep alone.*

(Mapping 15)

In the same manner, one could realize that the myth of Radha and Krishna is so popular among the Hindus that it is used to express the feelings of love as well as the union of Soul and Supreme Soul. The festival of Dewali is celebrated in India for different reasons of which the return of Rama to Ayodha is the chief reason. In his poem, "The Dewali or the Feast of Light", he thus describes the scenes of placing of love-lamps on the surface of the river Ganga:

*On the River's smooth bosom, maids graceful and fair
Are launching their love-lamps with tenderest care;
And are swayed, or with fear, or with hope's ardent glow,
As flickering like fire flies, the barks onward flows.*

(Mapping 16)

Manmohan Ghose (1869-1924) suffered from typical in-betweenness vis-à-vis India and England as in India he remembered England; and in England, he remembered India. In 1890, he published *Primavera* which marked his friendship with Laurence Binyon, Athur Cripps and Stephen Philips. He contributed another collection by the title *Love Songs and Elegies* in 1898. This collection has 75 poems on a diversity of themes like love, death, nature and emotional predicament of life. One more collection *Songs of Love and Death* was published posthumously in 1929 with an introductory memoir by Laurence Binyon. The influence of English Romantic poets on this Indian poet is quite obvious and could be manifestly observed in his poem "London" and many others also:

*How sweet only to be an unknown leaf that sings
In the forest of life! Cease, nature, thy whisperings,
Can I talk with leaves, or fall in love with breezes?
Beautiful boughs, your shade not a human pang appeases,
This is London. I lie, and twine in the roots of things.*

(The Bengali Book 111)

In the history of Indian English poetry, there is a genius like Sri Aurobindo who again like many other great Indian poets in English introduced Indian culture, sensibility and philosophical thought to the world through his poetry in English. He is alive even today among us through his monumental works like *The Life Divine*, *Essays on the Gita*, *The Synthesis of Yoga*, *The Human Cycle*, *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *Savitri*. One could very clearly sense the impact of religious books like the *Gita*, the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* on the poetry of Aurobindo as, for example:

*All the world's possibilities in man
Are waiting as the tree waits in its seed:
His past lives in him; it drives his future's pace;
His present's acts fashion his coming fate.
The unborn gods hide in his house of Life.*

(Savitri 482)

One is surprised to read a Nissim Ezekiel of Indian English poetry long before the actual Nissim Ezekiel in Joseph Furtado who has made some substantial contribution to the Indian English literature through his collections like *Primerics Verses* (1895), *Poems*(1901),*Lays of Old Goa and Lyrics of Goan:A Souvenir of the Exposition of St.Francis Xavier* (1922),*A Goan Fiddler* (1927),*The Desterado* (1929),*Songs in Exile* (1938) and *Selected Poems* (1942-47).He wrote under the influence of Goldsmith and had a realistic touch in his musings in a very simple and musical language.His poem “The Goan Fiddler”, for example, is very simple,musical and soothing having all the characteristic features of children’s favorites as it goes like this:

*Come, dear little children
Come and list to me,
List to the poor old fiddler
From the strange countree.
Baba riding the donkey,
Little baby with ayah,
Come, I will play little money
Or the great Ali Baba.*

(Early 125-26)

In one of his poems “Brahmin Girls”, he celebrates Indian beauty and finds it fairer than Laurs, Kates and Jeans of the West as, for example, he says:

*Mohini sweet, a girl as sweet
I never shall behold:
Mohini sweet, Mohini neat,
So maddening to behold,
With, kinning chinning round her feet
And fashis of the fold.*

(Early 127)

In the history of Indian English poetry, there is an illustrious intellectual by the name of Romesh Chunder Dutt (1848-1909) who despite joining Indian civil service spared time for his scholarly pursuits and writing of poetry. His contributions in prose include *History of Civilization in Ancient India* and *Economic History of India* and *Indian in Victorian Age*. In poetry, he published *Reminisces of a Workman’s Life* in 1896. Some other works that he contributed are: *Lays of Ancient India: Selection from Indian Poetry Rendered into English Verse* (1894) and *The Mahabhartas: Epic of the Bhartas, Condensed into English Verse* (1898) and *The Ramayana: The Epic of Ram, Prince of India, Condensed into English Verse* (1899).

Again, like many other Indian English poets, Romesh Chunder Dutt too has a strong sense of Indianess and Indian sensibility and he too would feel for the losses that India suffered as result of the foreign occupation. Every place in India tells him a story of the glorious Indian past and would reflect that lost pride. His love for one of the oldest civilizations of the world could be felt and sensed from these lines:

*Enough!Enough! What boots it then
To sing of days now passed away,
In halting verse why call again
The glories which have had their day?
Because I can't ever forget
My ancient country once was great.*

(Mapping 30)

It would be in place to mention that Romesh introduced Indian culture to the West through his translations of epics like the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, select areas from the *Rig Veda*, the *Upanishidas*, Kalidasa's *Kumarasbhava* and Bharavi's *Kiratarjuniya*, etc. His translation work of these great epics of Indian civilization could be considered one of the best works vis-à-vis diction, meter and precision that he employed for bringing out maximum effect and literary colour.

This journey of Indian English poetry reaches to a magnificent height with the arrival of the nightingale of India, Sarojini Naidu, who, in Paranjape's words is "a minor figure in major mode" (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.115). Sarojini was like many other pre-independence Indian English poets influenced by Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, Rossette and Swinburne; however, she used Indian themes in place of foreign ones thereby introducing Indian culture, ethos and sensibility to the West. Her poetic contributions include *The Golden Threshold* (1905), *The Bird of Time* (1912), *The Broken Wing* (1917) and *The Feather of Dawn*. She has been appreciated in the West by many people like Edmund Gosse, Arthur Symonds and Mary C. Strutgeon for her melody, beauty and Indian content. In her poetry, one may hear the songs hailing the beauty of life, love and nature springing quite spontaneously. One may also sense Keats's features like humanism and sensuousness in her poetic works. Her folk songs show her devotion to the God as, for example, Krishna could be seen becoming an iconic figure for gopis or maidens. Some lines from a song may very well explain the nature of Naidu's poetry:

*O!if the storm breaks ,what will betide me?
Safe from the lightning where shall I hide me?
Unless Thou succor my footsteps and guide me,
Ram e Ram ! I shall die.*

(The Sceptered Flute 103)

One may very well say that her songs are the songs of India that are rooted in love, sacrifice and devotion to the God. India is a mother for Sarojini and she is all love and devotion for this mother as she explains in these lines:

*MotherMother, wherefore dost thou sleep?
Arise and answer for thy children's sake!
Thy future calls thee for thy children's sake!
To crescent honors, splendours, victories vast;
Waken, O slumbering mother, and be crowned,
Who once wert empress of the sovereign Past.*

(The Sceptered Flute 58)

Her songs are full of the aroma of Indianness and the Indian landscape which is dotted with Indian people and the signposts and markers of Indian identity, culture and ethos like weavers, palanquin bearers, corn-grinders, wandering beggars and singers, snake charmers, bangle-sellers, village folks singing the hymns, the purdah-nisheen maidens, widows, old women, priests, festivals, Indian customs and traditions, spiritual heritage in meditation and chanting of mantras, birds, flowers, rivers, meadows and mountains of India (Arora, 2016, Vol. I, p.117). It could be ascertained that she paints the picture and landscape/mindscape of India with all its diversity and colorfulness which the Western reader of her poetry and other English poets of India find unique about Indian culture and sensibility as in everything that Indian culture has is bubbling with immense spirituality.

After Sarojini, one may want to make a brief mention of other Indian English poets who make the canon. There is Rustam B. Paymaster who was lawyer by profession and a poet by passion. His poetic contributions in English include: *The Nazrana: Or, Inida's Offerings to Her King Emperor on His Coronation, Sunset and Sunrise, Midnight and Dawn, The Voice of the East on the Great War, Navroziana*; or, *The Dawn of the New Era and Poems on Dadabhai Noorji and other Friends of India*.

Rustam was perfect humanist who hated and disliked all forms of wars and oppressions among human beings. He sees in modern civilization all the symptoms of destruction and disaster as it the machine in modernity that rules the man and not the vice-verse. A few lines from one of his poems may explain the mind that Rustam had:

*The war of modern times is of machines
Of Zeppelines, aeroplanes and submarines.
What needless havoc have the foes thus wrought,
And even the lives of neutrals have they sought
From rape and murder, too, they do not shrink,
But for the blood of babes and women swink.
Fie, fie on your rank militarism,
Your boasted Kultur, wild Kaiserism!*

(Early 158)

Among many other early Indian English poets, one many mention here a name like G. Annaji who has to his credit two collections of poetry: *The Light House* (1912) and *Congress Ditties and other Rhymes* (1928).

While all these names mentioned so far are great milestones in the history of Indian English literature by themselves, however, Indian English literature got the highest honor and recognition through one of its towering figures, Rabindranath Tagore who became a cause for International recognition of Indian English poetry. Iyengar would introduce Tagore in these words to establish his status in the world of literature:

Tagore belongs unquestionably to Bengali literature, but he belongs to Indo-Anglian literature too—indeed, he belongs to all India and the whole world... he was a darling of versatility, and still he was the same man; he was an integral whole, the Rishi, the Gurudev. (Iyengar, 2014, p.99).

Tagore was the bard of India who sang the songs of beauty, love, harmony, humanism and unity under the influence of Kabir, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Upanishidas* and many other eastern and Western sources of thought. All the collections of poetry that Gurudev published are the storehouses of love and spirituality. He has to his credit collections like: *Gitanjali*, *The Crescent Moon*, *Fruit Gathering*, *Lover's Gift*, *Crossing*, *Stray Birds* and *The Fugitive and other Poems*. In all these collections of poetry, one may find glittering pearls of wisdom, lyricism, mysticism, humanism and beauty of thought and feeling at its best. If one would say that Tagore's poetry is an act of emancipation and a revolution in itself, one would not be wrong; rather, after reading Tagore, one develops this feelings also that he is one such man in India who emancipated the Hindu mind from many false constructions that prevailed among them and thus liberated them from their own prisons of mind. He would find the God among common men who do their duties of life without asking for fruits as appears to be the case in these lines:

*He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where
The path maker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and
In shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy
Holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil!*

(Arora, 2016, Vol.I, p.134)

In his poetry, Tagore follows the *Bhakti Marg*. He reaches the God through music as feels the mystic bliss upon getting inspired from Him. He loses himself in singing the hymns for the God and appears all the way a servant of the God. He calls the God His friend and sings the songs of mystic love for Him as appears the case in these lines:

*I know thou takest pleasure in my singing. I know that only as a singer I come before thy presence.
I touch by the edge of the far-spreading wing of my song thy
Feet which I could never aspire to reach.
Drunk with the joy of singing I forget myself and call thee
Friend who art my lord.*

(Arora, 2016, Vol.1, p.135)

Under the influence of Hindu philosophy of life, Tagore believes in the theory of incarnation which suggests that man comes in this world and leaves it as soon as his role is over appearing again and again in a new form. The influence of the theory of incarnation could be marked in the lines quoted below:

*Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure. This frail
Vessel thou emptiest again and again, and fillest it ever with fresh life.*

(Arora, 2016, Vol.1, p.135)

His vision of freedom is quite philosophical and far-reaching about his country that was fighting against the colonial onslaught. This vision is marked in one of his famous poems quoted below:

*Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
 Where knowledge is free;
 Where the world hasnot been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;
 Where words come out from the depths of truth;
 Where tireless striving stretches its arms toward perfection;
 Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
 Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action-
 Into that heaven of freedom, myFather, let my country awake.*

(CP 16)

Tagore, thus,not only offers a vision of life but also gives a clear definition of human freedom and progress.With this vision of life and freedom,the journey of Indian English poetry moves to new depths and heights in the form of ethos and sensibility that Swami Vivekananda shares through the same medium where Indian philosophy offers great depths of life and human thought. In his poetry, one finds the fusion of four ingredients, namely, renunciation, dedication, service to humanity and worship of motherland, something that is typical of Indian ethos and sensibility. He was deeply interested in Hindu classics like the *Ramayana*,the *Mahabhart*,and was equally drawn to the readings of the poetry of Wordsworth and Shelley for their romanticism,mysticism and freedom. He is one of those Indian intellectual poets who popularized Indian thought and sensibility among the Western people as he could very nicely blend his Indian spiritualism with the Western learning.Vivekananda is one such Indian poets whose poetry encompass varied experiences-philosophical,devotional and social-in life.It is full of religious and mystical outpourings about goddess Kali, Lord Shiva,renunciation, transcendence, creation and its mystery, Brahma, deep meditation, search for God,pantheism and the practical Vedanta.One would find reflections of the fundamental values of Indian ethos and sensibility in his poetry as they are in the *Vedas*,the *Upanishidas* and the *Bhagvad Gita*.Such reflections could be noticed in the lines quoted below from his collections of verses *In Search of God*:

*Truth never comes where lust and fame and greed
 Of gain reside.No men who thinks of women
 As his wife can never be perfect be;
 Nor he owns the least of things, nor he
 Whom anger chains, can ever pass through Maya's gates.
 So give up, Sanyasinbold! Say-
 'Om Tat Sat.Om!*

(In Search of God 18)

These lines would be enough for a modern reader to feel and understand the glimpses of Indian sensibility and thought as poured out Swami in his poetry.Moving in forward direction, the Indian English poetry got genius after genius. There comes after Swami a poet like PundiSeshadri (1887-1942) who contributed works like: *Bilhana:An Indian Romance* (1914),*Champak Leaves* (1923) and *Vanish Hours*(1925) and *Sonnets* (1914) all of which make him a poet full of tranquility and craftsmanship.In *Bilhana:An Indian Romance*,an adaptation from Sanskrit and full of feelings,myths and legends, the poet narrates the tale of love between Bilhana, the bard, and YaminiThilaka,the daughter of King Madan and Queen Mandara and is all the way replete with mythological

references and Indian gods and goddesses like “Meru, the abode of Gods”, “Lakshmi, the deity lotus born”, “Surya, chief of heavenly orbs” and “Saraswati, who rules the world of speech.”

One thing is quite sure that Indian English poetry is dotted with glimpses of Indian culture and sensibility as has been shown so far from samples of early English poetry. The same continues to be the case with others also. Dhan Gopal Mukerji (1890-1936) is one such poet from India who proved his prolificacy in all the major genres of writing like prose, plays, poetry and fiction. His contributions in English language are: *Layla-Majnoon* (1916), *Rajnini: Songs of the Night* (1916) and *Sandhya: Songs of the Twilight* (1917). In all of his major and minor works, one may notice that the writer is conscious of Indian culture and sensibility as these lines from one of his poems would go on showing:

*I have foresworn Brahma who makes
I have done with Vishnu, the preserver:
All has been poisoned with life:
Save me from deathlessness!
Come, Black Lord, come Kala,
Take me though my sorrow is young,
And laughter has the strength of tigers.*

(Early 144)

One may quite often notice how there is a Bengali flavor in his English poetry as if he were translating the same. His poetry seems to be brimming with Romantic joy revealed through Bengali music embedded to his poetry. Life looks like a song sung by man in his poetry. This is how he sings out this joy and music of life:

*It is but coming and going;
Laughing or weeping;
In dark or day!
Life is but a lay:
Rings sad or gay.
Depending on our singing.*

(Rajini 39)

In this way, Indian English Poetry was further developed and contributed to by one genius after another from India. Many more names of poets could be mentioned here to show what a great legacy Indian English poetry has and what great legends and geniuses have been contributing to its development and growth on the soil of India. In order to cut this review/overview short, it would be more apt to mention the names and works of the remaining poets. Harindranath Chattopadhyaya (1898-1990) had a promising talent and contributed a collection like *The Feast of Youth* (1918), *The Colored Garden* (1919), *Poems and Plays* (1927), *The Dark Well* (1939), *Lyrics* (1944), *Freedom Come* (1947), *Map of the World* (1939), *Masks and Farewells* (1961) and *Virgins and Vineyards* (1967). Similarly, Feroz Khan Noon (1897-1986) has enriched Indian English poetry by his contributions like: *Raindrops: Brief Sketches in Prose and Verse* (1920), *A Minor Georgian's Swan Song: Fifty one Poems* (1944), *The Cold Flame: Poems* (1956) and one edited anthology titled *This Strange Adventure: An Anthology of Poems in English by Indians, 1826-1946* (1947). This unbounded ocean of creativity continued its journey and went on attracting contributors like Jehangir Rustomji Patel whose poem *The World War* (1921) has

been a mega hit in Indian English poetry. There is Ram Tirtha (1873-1906) who contributed works like *Woods of God-Realization* in five volumes which reflect his devotion to the God and his mystical tendencies. He has also contributed a collection of poems by the title *Poems of Rama* which again contains poems full of devotion and themes reflecting self-realization. S.H. Jhabvala (1884-1971) has enriched Indian English literature with his magnificent contributions like: *Malini, The Daughter of Punjab or A Talk of India's Sacrifice Written in Blank Verse*. His other contributions include *Beads of Amber* (1932), *Poems Written in Prison* (1933) and *Prince of Light* (1945).

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