

Indian Writing in English

Dr.P Ramachandra Rao

Assistant Professor

Department of English,

GITAM Institute of Technology

GITAM (Deemed to be university)

Visakhapatnam-45, Andhra Pradesh, India

Abstract : There is a unity and variety in India. Many writers contribute for Indian writing in English. It has been originated from Anglo-Indian Literature, which is a product of Indo-Anglian relations. As a result Indian writing in English is greatly influenced by writing in England. It led to the creation of a new nation and new people. It causes privileges, responsibilities, advantages and dangers. There was a rapid growth of the usage of English language in all the fields. It causes Indian Writing in English as a distinctive literature. Both the advantages and disadvantages are balanced by seeing more English and English men in India. Indians tried to habituate western culture which led to sustained and stimulated life. Initially Indians focused on reading, speaking and listening. Later they started writing in English. As a bridge between India and England, Raja Rammohan Roy caused the renaissance in modern Indian literature. He opined Indians must have traditional strength with the new scientific disciplines. Rammohan Roy as well as others took part for Indian writing in English. New life is seen by starting Hindu or native schools. This new situation challenges the west. Ramakrishna Paramahansa from Bengal tried to protect Indian culture. Actually he was an ignorant of English. After the death of Ramakrishna Paramahansa his chief disciple Swami Vivekananda started the Ramakrishna Mission. He made some of the verse renderings from his own Bengali. One English journal has been started at the Mission. A large number of Indians have been writing in English to protect Indian culture and adopt western culture since the recognition of English language.

I. INTRODUCTION

We always feel that we are one nation, though actually we speak a dozen different languages. To get the common wealth we have common aims, common ideas and common heritage. The whole world kith and kin are possible through the touch of nature but in literature the heart-beats of a nation are heard. Really it is possible through the medium of a commonly inspired and shared literature. It discusses some writers' contribution for Indian writing in English

II. RESUTLS AND DISCUSSION

A young man named E.F.Oaten won a prize at Cambridge with an essay on Anglo- Indian Literature. Mainly he confined himself to the writings of English men in India on Indian themes. Later Prof. Seshadri gave a lecture at the Osmania University on Anglo-Indian Poetry and included both English writers on Indian subjects and Indian writing in English. Dr. Bhupal Singh did the same in his Indo-Anglian Fiction. In his concise Cambridge History of English Literature, Mr. George Sampson wrote one section on Anglo –Indian Literature that mentioned Indian writers of English. It indicates literature is a product of Indo-English relations.

There is no difference between Indo-Anglian Literature and Indian Literature. Indian literature is commencing from the Vedas. It has continued to speak its smooth and pleasant light. It is now with greater and now with lesser brilliance under the relentless changes and problems of time and history, ever increasingly up to the present time of Tagore, Iqbal and Aurobindo Ghose. It bids fair to expand with our and humanity's expanding future. To be Indian in thought, feeling, emotion and experience is a novel experiment in creative mutation. There are successes and failures but the failures are more numerous than the successes. Men and women who have bravely run the race and reached the goal and they deserve due recognition.

Indian writing in English is greatly influenced by writing in England. We have had our own Romantics, Victorians, Georgians and Modernists. Indian writing in English is rather like one animal imitating the steps of another. After appearing new English literature in Johannesburg or Sidney or Vancouver or Chennai, the same influential paper carried a full- page article on the novels of R.K Narayan, who hailed from Chennai. New literature was created by the writings of Rammohan Roy and Renade, Dadabhai and Phirozeshah, Surendranath and Bepin Pal, Sankaran Nair and S.Srinivasa Iyengar, Tilak and Gokhale, Malaviya and Motilal, C.R. Das and Aurobindo. Indo-Anglian literature taught us to be a new nation and a new people. Writers like Edmund Gosse and Aurthur Symons, W.B. Yeats and E.M.Forster, Graham Green and John Hampson have extended the area of friendship and mutual esteem. As a world language English causes privileges as well as responsibilities, advantages as well as dangers.

There was a rapid growth of English education between 1857 and 1900, which was favourable for a new flowering of the creative Indian genius. It was continued till twenty years. After independence Indian writing in English has achieved a new range and power, literacy in English has been steadily growing. There were more schools, colleges and universities. A large number of newspapers and readers are seen than ever before. South Indian leader C. Rajagopalachari suggested that English should continue as Indians official language for all India and international purposes, as also as the medium of instruction in the university, and as

the medium of higher law courts and of the learned journals. Further Rajaji asserted that English was the gift of Saraswati, Hindu Goddess of Learning and the Arts. English was proved an essential tool for all India administration, interstate communication, and pursuit of knowledge at the higher levels and for maintaining and promoting international contacts. Rammohan Roy, Keshub Chander Sen, Vivekananda, Tagore, Aurobindo, Gandhi and Ramakrishan succeeded by their mastery of English language. Stalwarts like Rammohan Roy and Renade, Vivekananda and Aurobindo, Tilak and Gokhale, Tagore and Gandhi are makers of India, and what they said and wrote must therefore be cherished as our national literature. English, then, is one of our national languages, and Indo-Anglian Literature too is one of our national literatures. In this way we have reached the point where we are able to see Indian writing in English as a distinctive literature.

Contemporary significance is more than much of Indian writing in English. It meant a great deal to those for whom it was written. At the same time others might not have thought about it. The climate of thought and education in India should be favourable to permit Indo-Anglian Literature to grow more and more with the years for the good of India and the world. Indo-Anglian Literature is of more recent origin, and hence its beginnings could be treated with reasonable certitude. According to the French Literary Historian, M. Taine Literature is the creation of three factors. They are the 'race', the 'milieu', and the 'moment'. Regarding Indo-Anglian Literature, the 'race' is the mixed Indian race, a resultant of invasions, conquests and occupations extending over a period of four or five thousand years; the 'milieu', the variegated Indian sub continent, comprising extremes of every kind, heir to a geography and cultural heritage all its own; and the 'moment', the meeting of the West and India. Rammohan Roy not only wanted more English but also wanted more English men in India. He balanced the advantages and disadvantages.

There was a rapid growth of educated in English during the period between 1835 and 1855. It was the Macaulay and the Wood dispensations. At that time the number of 'private' Englishmen in India too had increased fourfold. Really 32,000 English books sold in India, as against 13,000 in Hindi, Hindustani and Bengali, and 1500 in Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic. Indians required more English books rather than Englishmen in India. In bigger towns and cities people habituated western manners, customs, dress code, eating items and salutation. It was said that Lucknow in 1824 had the look rather of a European city like Dresden. Having reduced the gap Indians used common medium of communication at the higher levels and introduced European scientific techniques. The intellectual and critical impulse was quickened into our life, and a new efflorescence was seen everywhere. The reawakening Indian spirit went forth to meet the violent change of the values of modern science and the civilization of the west. The impact of two civilizations sustained and stimulated life. It is the symbol of endurance, assimilation and integral transformation.

Firstly Indians learnt how to read, speak and understand English. Later they started writing. Indian writing in English had to range from the most utilitarian prose to the most ambitious verse epics. On the other hand it was one manifestation of the new creative urge in India that referred to as the literary renaissance in India. Native soil received new rich fertiliser from the west which led to the birth of new literature. Indo-Anglian literature had the same origin as the other modern Indian literatures, though here the foreign element may seem to be more prominent and obvious. The study of English literature stimulated literary creation in Bengali, Marathi, Telugu and Tamil. After receiving education in English some persons, became bilinguals, wrote in English and their mother tongue. There was a close association between the modern Indian literatures and English literature. This phenomenon gave an opportunity to the student of literary history and of comparative literature.

The renaissance in modern Indian literature began with Rajarammohan Roy who was destined to act as a bridge between India and England. He was master in many languages like Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic and Hindustani besides Bengali. After journeying within and outside India and some business ventures at Kolkata, Rajarammohan Roy served in the districts under the control of two British officials, Woodford and Digby. His association with the officials was more than merely official. While working with Digby, Rammohan Roy completed his mastery of the English language which he had started learning much earlier. After completing company service he returned to Calcutta in 1814 and started the Atmiya Sabha to launch himself on the consciousness of Kolkata society. Having involved in hectic activity and tireless endeavour he had often bitter controversy with Christians and Hindus alike. It was possible through the plight of the widows, the darkness of superstition, the miasma of ignorance and the general backwardness of the country. Through the Sambad Kaumudi, a weekly paper, Rammohan Roy was able to make a bolder and more sustained attack on the forces of prejudice and reaction. By 1823 he had fully matured, sharpened his dialectical instruments, tested his friends and rethought his ends and means.

Having looked under the bewildering edifices of dogma, ritual, philosophical dialectics and sought the foundations of great faiths, Rammohan Roy felt that they were identical. Then he wished to raise his Brahmo Samaj. He became a great humanitarian and social reformer. Hence he engaged the battle against the great custom of 'Sati'. He had interests and inquiries from the rights of women and the freedom of the press to English education, the revenue and judicial systems in India, religious toleration and the plight of the Indian peasantry. He wanted India to become a new and modern country, in which Indians must achieve a new integration of our traditional strength with new scientific disciplines from the west. If he had got name as the first of the Indian masters of English Prose he would have been familiar with the Indian history more than with Indo-Anglian literary history.

Rammohan Roy mastered English language, and wrote and spoke forceful English years before Macaulay wrote his Minute. The Cavalry Brothers, Derozio, Kashiprasad Ghose, Hason Ali, P. Rajagopaul, Mohan Lal were the first Indo-Anglian writers of verse and prose. They belonged to the pre-Macaulay period. Michael Madhusudan Dutt came immediately afterwards. At 14 Henry Derozio became a clerk in a firm, but he expressed his desire for writing English Verse. Having noticed the idea of

Derozio, John Grant of Kolkata appointed Derozio a teacher of English Literature in the Hindu College. A poet as well as a teacher Derozio loved India and Nature. Unfortunately he died of cholera at the age of 22. He was obviously influenced by the Romantics, notably Byron, Scott and Moore. He had an eye for Nature in its twin aspects of Beauty as well as Terror.

Khasiprasad Ghose's poems placed him in his literary history and his 'Gorboduc', or 'Ferrx and Porrex' placed him in the history of English drama. He was one of the first Indians to publish a regular volume of English Verse. He completed his education at the Hindu College and passed out in 1828. He edited an English Weekly, 'The Hindu Intelligence'. His derivative and imitative poetry made up mainly of conventional descriptions and tedious moralizing.

Michael Madhusudan Dutt was a gifted writer. A Hindu by birth, he embraced Christianity and worked on an English paper in Madras. He married a European lady, came to England and qualified for the bar, but failed to make a living as a lawyer. In his earlier days, Madhusudan essayed freely English Prose, verse and even drama. According to Bengali poets, Madhusudan is something of a poet's poet.

Really Derozio took a large view of his duties as a teacher. He used to teach English literature, make his pupils ask questions, think for themselves and not shrink from the right answers. The French Revolution with its ruling ideas and the great English Romantics with their poetry fired his imagination and he communicated this fire to the more eager among his pupils. 'The Derozio men' played the iconoclasts in many obvious ways, defied orthodoxy in terms of cheap exhibitionism, and generally like thoroughly irresponsible young men.

Through new education there were long and rapid strides in Western and South India and Christianity made deep inroads into the former preserves of Hinduism. Eventually Hindu leaders awoke to the realization of the serious danger in which they decided that the danger must be met squarely and turned back once and for all. Besides missionary, Hindu or Native Schools were started. Rabindranath Tagore's father went from house to house from morning till evening to prevent admissions in missionary institutions. This situation cut their relationships and it made a new world and a new life for its beneficiaries.

As Rajarammohan Roy was attracted by the West he had been kept away from Hindu practices and beliefs. As he was different one he used to see the truth of the things. Regarding Hinduism he went to the Vedas and the Upanishads. According to him all is Brahman. He stood alone while he was surrounded by the storms of detraction. Having held counsel from time to time with a few selected friends he founded Brahma Samaj in 1828. His work was continued by Prince Dwarakanath Tagore and his son Maharshi Debendranath Tagore. There was a significant history of the Brahma Samaj was the meeting of Debendranath and Kusub Chunder Sen in 1857. Samaj played a vital role in Bengal's cultural history during the 19th century. Rajarammohan Roy contributed a lot to the reconstruction of nation. Social reform, educational reform and religious reform went together which led to economic progress. Renade, an unsurpassed figure, Father of Modern India especially the Father of Indian Economics. The Founder of Indian National Congress, A.O.Hume called Renade his 'political guru'.

Kashinath Telang, an able lawyer at the High court Bench and the Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University. His speeches and writings are marked by simplicity and lucidity. Renade and Telang were choice spirits and educationists. Bombay and all India benefited greatly from their educative work. Telang was more intellectual and Renade more intuitive. Telang was a thinker, an advocate, a wise counsellor. Having kept all the qualities of Telang, Renade was a sage. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, Dadabhai Naoroji and Phirozeshah Mehta took part in writing. Through the new education Chennai achieved a succession of able lawyers, jurists, teachers, journalists and administrators. A great judge, Muthuswami Ayyar stated that India should assimilate western culture, science and institutions; and those who educated in English should try to modernise the languages into efficient instruments of expression. The Brahma Samaj was an Indian attempt to link the indigenous and western springs of spirituality. The Theosophical Society was a western attempt to fuse with the springs of Indian spirituality. As the president of the society Annie Besant opened branches in many cities all over India. She tried to open central Hindu college at Banaras and other educational institutions.

The face of English education and its sense power, and the face of Jesus Christ and its extremely great light of holiness were really effective to challenge the west. At the time of necessity Ramakrishna Paramahansa appeared in Bengal and saved Indian culture and set it on new foundations. In accordance with the words of Romain Rolland the soul of Ramakrishna Paramahansa animated modern India. Ramakrishna was born on 17 February 1836. He became a priest of Kali temple at Dakshineswar. He married Sarada Devi and passed away in 1886. He was an ignorant of English and especially he was an illiterate. According to Aurobindo he was a self-illuminated ecstatic and mystic without a simple trace or touch of the alien thought or education upon him. At that time intellectual aristocracy gave him chance to answer the unruly doubts and questions. People who went to see Ramakrishna felt that he was the truth. They felt that he was the living embodiment of human unity through the realization of God. The appearance of Ramakrishna Paramahansa stopped to imbibe the western culture among the Indians. After the death of Ramakrishna Paramahansa his chief disciple Swami Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Mission. It is a spiritual and humanitarian movement that has been doing a notable work. Without giving up the spiritual heritage of his forefathers Vivekananda made it possible for the Indian intellectual to take the best that west had to give him. The writings and speeches of Vivekananda are spread over many volumes. His speech consists of knowledge, conviction and a sense of urgency. He is not only an effective speaker but also bold, daring, fluent and essentially educative. One of his powerful sayings is 'fear is death and

courage is life'. Another important saying is 'arise and awake and not to stop till the goal is reached'. 'The song of the Sanyasin', 'Angles Unawares', 'My Play is done' and some of the English Verse renderings he made from his own Bengali.

'Prabudha Bharata' is the monthly English journal of the Ramakrishna Mission. Rajam Iyer's English novel, 'Vasudeva Sastri' and his psychological essays and portrait of the saints written in transparent prose and collected in the volume 'Rambles in Vedanta'. It is an illustration of good Indian prose writing in English.

III. CONCLUSION

Through the contribution of several writers, literature became a product of Indo-English relationships. Indian Literature has commenced from Vedas and spread its rich and pleasant light. Some writers extended the area of friendship, self-respect and admiration. After independence Indian writing in English achieved new level. It has been steadily growing since independence. English was recognised as official language for national, international purposes and medium of instruction for higher education, law courts and learned journals. To reduce the gap Indians used common medium of instruction and introduced scientific techniques. Through this achievement Indian spirit wanted to meet the values of modern science and the civilization of the west. There was a close association between the modern Indian literatures and English literature. The renaissance in modern India began with Rajarammohan Roy who was a bridge between India and England. He was not only a great humanitarian but also a great social reformer. Rajarammmohan Roy and others became Indian writers and speakers in English. Most of them were influenced by the Romantic writers. The face of English education and other sources came forward to challenge the west. At the time of necessity Ramakrishna Paramahansa appeared in Bengal to protect Indian culture. He was an ignorant of English. Later he became the living embodiment of human unity through the realization of God. After his death his chief disciple Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Mission. Prabudha Bharata is the monthly English journal of the Mission. Rajam Iyer's 'Vasudeva Sastri' is an illustration of good Indian prose writing in English. Thus a large number of persons took part for Indian writing in English to protect our culture and heritage by adopting techniques from the west.

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