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Origin of subaltern novels its place and importance in literature: A glimpse

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Abstract---Terry Eagleton in her book “The English Novel an Introduction” states that a novel is a piece of prose fiction of a reasonable length. The truth is that the novel is a genre which resists exact definition...The point about the novel, however, is not just that it eludes definitions, but that it actively undermines them. It is less a genre than an anti-genre. It cannibalizes other literary modes and mixes the bits and pieces promiscuously together...You can find poetry and dramatic dialogue in the novel, along with epic, pastoral, satire, history, elegy, tragedy and any number of other literary modes. Virginia Woolf described it as ‘this most pliable of all forms’. It is the queen of literary genres in a rather less elevated sense of the word than one might hear around Buckingham Palace. The novel is an anarchic genre, since its rule is not to have rules. An anarchist is not just someone who breaks rules, but someone who breaks rules as a rule, and this is what the novel does too. Myths are cyclical and repetitive, while the novel appears excitingly unpredictable. In fact, the novel has a finite repertoire of forms and motifs. But it is an extraordinarily capacious one even so.

Keywords---novel, independence, pre post, forms elements.

Pre-Independence Novelist in India

Bijay Kumar Das in his article “Remembering the founding fathers of Indian English Fiction” states that historically Indian English fiction owes its origin to Bankim Chandra Chatterjee Rajmohan’s Wife (1864), its foundation was laid by Mulk Raj Anand when he published his Untouchable in 1935. R.K.Narayan and

Raja Rao joined him in giving, as it were, 'a local habitation and a name' to Indian English fiction in nineteen thirties. Anand's *Untouchable* and *Coolie*, Narayan's *Swami and Friends* and *The Bachelor of Arts*, Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* mark the beginning of Indian English fiction. And these three novelists continued to write till the end of the twentieth century. (8- Bijay, 2009). William Walsh says that 'If Anand is the novelist as reformer, Raja Rao is the novelist as metaphysical poet, Narayan is simply the novelist as novelist' (8- Bijay 2009) Bijay in his article further traces the importance of the three eminent writers of the Indian English Fiction as Walsh calls R.K.Narayan, 'the novelist as moral analyst. C.D.Narasimhaiah says, "Where distinctions are made they fall into neat categories of Anand the Marxist, progressive or committed writer; Narayan the comic genius or writer pure and simple; and Raja Rao the religious or philosophical novelist (148). These three novelists have broken new grounds in Indian English fiction in terms of making innovations in themes and techniques. They have re-created their characters in their own situations-social, as well as psychological. If Anand is known for humanism, Narayan is known for social and psychological realism and Rao for metaphysical ideas. (8- Bijay 2009)

Bijay states that Anand was always giving importance to creative literature, highlighting indigenous culture and social art form. He was a rebel I young age and social realism is the main concern in his novels. Anand's important novels include *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), *The Village* (1939), *Across the Blackwaters* (1941), *The Big Heart* (1945), *Seven Summers* (1951), *The Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953), *Gauri* (1960), *Morning Face* (1968), *Confessions of a Lover* (1976), *The Bubble* (1984), *Little Plays of Mahatma Gandhi* (1991) and *Nine Moods of Bharata: Novel of a Pilgrimage* (1998). (9-Bijay 2009). R.K.Narayanan published his first novel *Swami and Friends* in the year 1935 and he created a imaginative and fictional place called *Malgudi*, he is traditional in his representation of the characters in his novel. His novels speaks about the Hindu culture and deep rooted tradition and his notable works are *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937), *The English Teacher* (1945), *MrSampath* (1949), *The Financial Expert* (1952), *Waiting for Mahatma* (1955), *The Guide* (1958), *The Man Eater of Malgudi* (1962), *The Vender of Sweets* (1967), *The Painter of Signs* (1977), *The Tiger of Malgudi* (1983), *Talkative Man* (1983), *The World of Nagaraj* (1990) and *Grandmother's Tale* (1992).

Raja Rao is the youngest among the trios and he is known for his metaphysic Indian tradition. His important works are *Kanthapura* (1938), *The Serpent and the Rope* (1962), *Cat and Shakespeare* (1965) and *The Chess master and His Moves* (1988). Bijay further states that Anand, Narayan and Rao have many things in common. All 'the Big Three' as William Walsh called them, were influenced by Gandhi and tried to make a myth around Gandhi in their novels. All these three lived abroad, and were exposed to western life and culture. Unlike diasporic writers they never thought of 'imaginary homeland' - they were firmly rooted in India. All of them won SahityaAkademi Award for their novels - R.K. Narayan for *The Guide* in 1960, Raja Rao for *The Serpent and the Rope* in 1963 and Mulk Raj Anand for *Morning Face* in 1971. (14-Bijay 2009) He further adds that if we compare Anand, Narayan, and Raja Rao with the novelists of nineteen eighties and nineties says, Vikram Seth, Vikram Chandra, SashiTharoor, Arundhati Roy, KiranNagarkar, UpamanyuChatterje, and AmitavGhosh, we find

that the great trios have nothing to fear. If these new novelists have made innovations in terms of themes and techniques, the great trios have done that in their own way. (14- Bijay 2009). The other novel which belong to this period is C.S.Rau's *The Confession of the Rogue Patriot* 1923, J.Chinnadurai's *Sugirtha* 1929, Ram Narain's *The Tigress of the Harem* 1930, H.Kaveribai's *Meenakshi's Memoris- A Novel of Christian life in south India* 1937, V.V.Chintamani's *Vedantham or the clash of the Tradtions* 1938, Shankar Ram's *The love of Dust* 1938, G.F.Karaka's *Just Flesh* 1941, *There lay the city* 1942, and *we never die* 1944, C.N.Zutshi's *Motherland* 1944, Purushottamadas Tricumdas's *living Mask* 1947 and N.S. Phadke's *Leaves in the August Wind and The Whirlwind*.

After Independence

After the advent of the trios like Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayanan and Raja Rao it was the writers like Salman Rushdie who won the booker prize for his novel *Mid Night Children*. Nayanthra Segal was the first female writer to get wide acclamation she received Sahitya Academic award for her novel *Rich like US*. Anitha Desai, Kiran Desai, Ruskin Bond, Vikram Seth, Amitiv Gosh, Aravind Adiga, V.S.Naipaul and Arunthathi Roy were notable novel writers in India. Girish Karnad and Mahesh Dattani was great dramatist of India. Poetry excelled with the writings of Rabindranath Tagore and he won the Nobel Prize for his work *Gitanjai* and other poets were Sarojini Naidu, Toru Dutt and Madhusudhan Dutt. Fiction arrived last in the Indian literary scene. Post-Independence the Indian novels gained its momentum with the writers like Babahani Bhattacharaya, Manohar Malgonkar, Kushwanth Singh, Arun Joshi, Chaman Nahal and well known women novelist like Ruth Pawar, Kamala Markandaya, Nayanthra Segal, Jhabvala and Anitha Desai.

The Indian novel in English has come a long way from the triumvirate of the 1930's. The language which was once treated as foreigner, or the language of the elite class, is viewed differently. As the number of the readers has increased so as the quality of writing also improved. The writers are now no longer active users of English but they have English as their first language. They express themselves with native proficiency they are the writers who think and write in one language, which is English. They have travelled in every continent and they have something substantial to tell their readers. Indian English fiction is now the part of world literature. It has struggled endured in the difference of west and now finally emerged as a clear winner among the recent fiction writers. (57- sheik)

Now the modern young fiction writers are ruling the Indian English fictions with their best selling and notable works. Writers like Chetan Bhagat with his works like *One Night at the Call Center*, *Five point someone*, *2 States*, *Three Mistakes of my Life*, *Revolution 2020* and *Half Girlfriend*. Amish (Tripathi) *Shiva Trilogy*, Ravinder Singh with his works like *I too had a Love story*, can love happen twice were the best sellers and youngsters got the habit of reading novels with the writers eminent way of portraying the reality of the young generation in their respective novels. The Indian English Novels has gone through a lot of transformation from its initial days to its present times and has attained its whole

new intensity in terms of concept marketing, presentation, business and impact on Indian Culture.

Abinish Singh in his article "A Chronological Study of Indian English Fiction with Social Perspective" states that as a creative process, fiction is an expression of the most powerful and intimate consciousness of life and society- the society in which it grows and develops, It has some purposes to fulfill them, some thoughts to be contemplated and some plans to be acted upon for the welfare of humanity. When it broods upon such different things, it witnesses changes taking place in life and society, and, therefore, these changes are reflected in the fictional world. Indian English fiction, is also doing the same thing and expressing thoughts, feelings and emotions in a rationale and interesting manner, and directly or indirectly throws light upon different changes in its own way. Hence, the reflection of change in different fields of Indian society manifests the significance and utility of the Indian creative writing in English. (1-Abinish Singh)

The Indian English fiction witnessed the socio-cultural, economic and political change. The British rule divided the Indians in terms of religion, caste, color, creed, race and were denied the fundamental rights. Abinish Singh says in his article that the truth of the novel has no end and no beginning. The beginning of the Indian English novel was Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohun's Wife* (1864). The Bengali writes mostly dominated the period from 1864 to 1990 the writers are Raj Lakshmi Debi, Toru Dutt, Lal Behari Dey, K. Charkavarti, Kamala Satthianandhan, Behramji Malabari, N.V. Pai, R.K. Pant, T.C. Mookerjee, A.P. Dutta and others. Raj Lakshmi Debi's *The Hindu Wife* (1876), a novel about cultural change, Toru Dutta's maiden romance *Bianca or The Young Spanish Maiden* 1879, is an autobiographical novel. Lal Behari Dey's *Bengal Peasant Life or History of a Bengal Raiyat* (1880), the best Indian English novel, B. Malabari's *Gujrat and the Gujratis* (1882) gives a vivid picture of Gujrati life and society, Nagesh Vishwanath Pai's *Stray Sketches in Chakmakpore* (1894) is remarkable in depicting the Bombay life, Kamala Satthianandhan's *Saguna: A Story of Native Christian Life* (1895), is the first autobiographical novel in Indian English fiction. Sarla and Hingana (1898) by K Chakravarti, the story of Bengal life. some other novels which evolved during this time are R.K. Pant's *The Boy of Bengal* (1866), *The Scorpions or Eastern Thoughts* (1868) by Tara Chand Mookerjee, *The Indolence* (1878) by Anand Prasad Dutta, *Bijoy Chand: An Indian Tale* (1888) by M. Dutta.

The seminal period of the Indian fiction in the beginning of the 20th century was flooded with the works like Ramesh Chandra Dutta's translated works *The Lake of Palms* (1902) and *The Slave Girl of Agra* (1909) Sir Joginder Singh's two historical novels- *NurJahan* (1909) and *Nasrin* (1915) and two romances- *Kamla* (1925) and *Kamini* (1931) S.K Ghose's *Love of Kusuma* (1910) by Bal Krishna, *1001 Indian Nights* (1905) and *The Prince of Destiny* (1909) S.M. Mitra's *Hindupore or A Peep Behind the Indian Unrest* (1909), *Padmini* (1903) and *The Dive for Death* (1912) by T. Ramakrishna Pillai, *Clarinda* (1915) by A Madhaviah, *Love and Life Behind the Purdah* (1901) and *Between the Twilights* (1908) by Cornilia Sorabji, *Bengal Decoits and Tigers* (1916) by Maharani Sunity Devee, *The Home and the World* (1919) by Rabindra Nath Tagore the *Wheel of Destiny* (1920) by C. Parthsarthy. (2 Abinish Singh)

The Indian English fiction during the PreIndependence era focused mainly on the contemporary issues like the political, cultural and economic aspects were involved and Gandhian principals were followed. Abinish marks this period as during this era the toddling Indian English Novel, In spite of many hindrances and handicaps, has learnt to stand firmly on its legs. A conscious and artistic pattern has evolved itself. The novel has become a great literary force, a powerful medium for creating social and national awareness and for suggesting ways of changing society. Novels like *The Wreck* (1921) and *Gora* (1923), RabindraNath Tagore's *M.M. Banarji's Nanda*, *The Pariah Who Overcome Caste* (1923), D.G. Mukharjee's *Hari*, *The Jungle Lad* (1924) and *My Brother's Face* (1925), K.S. Venktramani's *Murugan*, *The Tiller* (1927) and *Kandan: The Patriot* (1932), MulkrajAnand's *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936), R.K. Narayan's *Swami and Friends* (1935), *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937), Krishnaswami Nagrajan's *Athawar House* (1937), *Raja Rao's Kanthapura* (1938), Ahmad Ali's *Twilight in Delhi* (1940), Humanyun Kabir's *Men and Rivers* (1945), Khawaja Ahmad Abbas's *Tomorrow Is Ours* (1943) and *Defeat For Death* (1944), D.F. Karaka's *Just Flesh* (1940) and *There Lay The City* (1942) were all the novels published during the pre independence era.

The first two decades of the twentieth century writers focused on the regional life, local color and awareness to bring about the socio-cultural and political changes. Some important facts that affected the life style of the Indians were depicted like the social evils of casteism, purdha system, child marriage, poverty, exploitation, disparity, cultural-conflicts, historical happenings, realism and romantic tales occupied the place of the novels in India. K.Venkata Reddy says that: Parallel to this struggle for political freedom was a social struggle-a fight against superstition, casteism, poverty, illiteracy and many other social evils that were eating into the vitals of Indians society. The socio-political movement that had caught the imagination of the entire nation also inspired the Indian novelists in English who rightly realized that novel too had a vital role to play in it.

The Indian English fiction got a wide acclaim and maturity during the Post-Independence era. The novelists started to concentrate on the critical issues that plagued in and the novels focus shifted from the public to private sphere. The major issue and themes of the novel were the inner dilemma, anxiety, alienation, frustration, detachment, involvement, self-condemnation, self- approval, and restlessness, sense of guilt, loneliness and nausea. The issues related to the current happening of that time also was reflected in the novels like the cross-cultural conflict, realism, fantasy, rural events, the traumatic experiences which affected the people's social life like partition of India and Pakistan, Indo-China and Indo-Pak wars, loss of faith and values, advent of industrialization and materialism and the growth of Indian sensibility were depicted in the novels of the era.

During the second decade of the twentieth century the novelist started focusing on the aspects of the contemporary issues they started to observe the world and portrayed all the facts about the daily life in the fictional world. In the eighties the novelist came out with new vision, new values, new technical and new linguistic devices were used. The novelist of this age emerged with new confidence and made new experiment in their writing and made a worldwide recognition and

acclaim and set a place for the Indian English fiction in the world record. Abnish in his articles states the words of Satish Kumar as remarkable: Indeed, the veteran masters of Indian English novel have the Indian novel in English seated fairly and firmly on a high pedestal in the literature of the world....Indian English novel no doubt will grow from strength to strength and 'help to make us a new nation and a new people wedded to the tasks of national reconstruction and international harmony'. Its future is immense.

There are many new creative events such as Dalit writings; Diasporic writings, Postcolonial writings, Post modern writings, Feminist writings, translations and transcreations are emerging into Indian English fiction. Now the modern writers are very active on the social media sites and are in touch with the readers through blog and Facebook. Rajkumar MLakhadive in his article "Recent trends and developments In Indian English fiction" states that: Literature is the mirror of society. Literature reflects the social, cultural, economical and historical life of human beings. Literature no longer remains limited to particular geographical, national or cultural circumstances. The global concerns and shifting paradigms informing different art forms have transformed the nature and the understanding of literature. (111-Rajkumar)

Rajkumar states that: Now Indian English literature no longer remains limited to the writings necessarily of the "sons of the soil". It has broadened the scope of fictional concerns of these writers from purely Indian to the global and transnational. Today Indian English as well as Indian writing in English has got its own identity. A number of recent Indian novelists have produced significant novels, making a mark in the literary world. (112- Rajkumar). The Indian English fiction has not only depicted the Indian cultural background but it has also exposed the multi-cultural aspect with global concern. The writers started to represent different culture which is present in India. The novels also presented the middle class society with the contradiction of the rich and liberated people. The feminist writing started emerging in the Indian English Fiction they concentrated on the women issues like subjugation, discrimination and marginalization of the women were represented in their novels. Different characters apart from the traditional women were portrayed as the women characters were not submissive, docile or passive instead they were assertive, aggressive in nature. The marriage is no more the ultimate view in a girl's life with a feminist perspective the women try to excel in other areas of their work and in employment.

Postcolonial issues related to the imperialism and colonization of India under the British rule represented the life of domination, slavery, subjugation under class, caste, race, creed and religion. They also trace the life of the marginalized who's oppression are still not put to an end even after the end of the political imperialism and how India has turned into a no place to is represented in the novels of the writers who emerged in the second decade of the 90's. The Diasporic writers also share their perspective of the Indian bonding and how they are having a different and alienated environment is being put forth through their strong characters in their novel. Cross-culture has also become a major representation in Indian fiction. Earlier it was concerned only with the East and West conflict but now it has got a new dimension with the representation of the

two cultures coming together in close contact of political dimensions. The Eastern and Western cultures which were represented in the fiction are considered to be fundamental eternal and transcendental. Magic realism was dealt with many writers after the post independent period. Regional literature was translated into English by many writers.

Vidhya R. Patel in her article "The Indian English Fiction beginning to Modern" states that there are two kinds of writers who contributed to the genre of novel: The first group of writers focused on the various social problems of India like poverty, class discrimination, social dogmas, rigid religious norms etc. which has an appeal to the West. The second group of writers includes those who are global Indians, who are Indian by birth but they have lived abroad, so they see Indian realities objectively. They are at ease with the English language and have enriched English language with their creativity. Even though handling Indian sensibility these writers are no longer the slavish imitators of English. They have used English so creatively that the freshness becomes a prominent feature in their language. They have experimented with the language and fused Indian spirit in the foreign language. They have coined new words and idiomatic expressions in English and added a new flavour in English language. Some of these terms are now accepted as English words. The West relished it with zest and they have their permanent place in the world literature. (6)

Conclusion

Dalit as a word was used in India only after independence by which the Dalits gained inspiration from the pioneers like Jothirao Phule, Bhuddha and Ambedkar. Hinduism as a religion divided man from man and it did not unite them into humanity. The Dalit writers and the writings are real, authentic and lively these are the hall marks of the Dalit literature. The stories of the Dalits are untold and unheard history and to make the unknown know to the world is the emergence of Dalit literature. R. Ramanathan in his article "Studying Dalit literature in Indian writing in English" states that in subaltern studies, oppressed and oppressor. The oppressed want to relieve themselves from the tyrannical clutches of the oppressor, against which the oppressed protest to establish themselves. So, the literature of the subaltern group is usually portrayed as protest literature, in which the oppressed try to release themselves from the clutches of the oppressor. (328, R.Ramanathan 2014)

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