

English Poetry by Indian Poets

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Abstract

Indian poetry written in English is exceptionally high-quality. Poets writing before India's independence tended to write about Indian subjects in a traditional Romantic or Victorian meter and rhyme scheme, while poets writing after the country gained independence displayed a great deal of experimentation, divergence from traditional modes of expression, and the exercise of freedom in both these areas as well as others. The writings of these contemporary poets vividly depict the tension between tradition and modernity on many scales, including the social, cultural, familiar, national, and global.

Western poets such as Yeats, Pound, Eliot, Whitman, Hughes, Cumming, Platch, etc. are also reflected in these works. The emergence of women's lyrical voices in post-independence Indian English is one of the genre's most significant developments. The evolving role of women in contemporary Indian society is reflected in the work of the new women poet. Their poetry, which depicts the fight of women to overcome patriarchal norms and find their own voice, is a complicated blend of aestheticism and activism. This study provides an exhaustive analysis of contemporary Indian English poetry. This study investigates two main questions: The manner in which Indian English poetry grew as a distinct subgenre of English literature over time, and the role that contact with other cultures played in its emergence in the first place. In order to demonstrate the paper's central argument that Indian English poetry emerged and developed over time, the author has offered examples of poems written during each of these phases, paying close attention to the eras' respective preoccupations.

Key words:- Culture, Indian Theme, Post-Independence, Tradition, Women's Impact

Introduction

The topic of the way the English language and literature initially came in India must be addressed when discussing the development of English literature in that country. That raises the questions of how the British got there, how they grew to control Indian industry and education, and the manner in which they were finally ousted. In light of the entrance of the English in India, M.K.Naik has summarized the reactions to these concerns as follows:

The East India Company regarded the disintegration of the Mughal Empire as a chance to increase its foothold in the Indian market by colonizing the country. Postcolonial theorists and analysts assert that the British colonialists arrived in India under false pretenses, pretending to be members of the East India Company and Christian Missionaries in order to carry out a well-planned conquest of the country.

Many of the people who came to India for trade ended up staying for two centuries and ruling the country. The Mughal empire gradually disappeared out of the Indian landscape when the English drove its final nail in its coffin in 1857. The English language evolved in India as a natural result of interactions between the English colonizer and the Indian people through the various institutions created and developed by the English colonizer, such as the introduction of English as a medium of instruction in schools and colleges and the teaching of English culture and civilization to the Indian people through the primary texts of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Milton, Shelley, and Keats.

This was a watershed moment since it led to the development of an entirely new form of English in India, one that is now formally acknowledged as Indian English Literature and of which Indian English poetry was a significant part. When talking about Indian English and the influence Indian writers had on the development of the language and literature in India, the concepts of adoption, adaptation, and adeption come up naturally. Using these principles as a lens, we can examine how Indian English literature has evolved over time. These three concepts and approaches to composing in English allow us to broadly divide Indian English poetry into two eras:

Pre-Independence Evolution and Growth: This includes the time before and after independence, as well as the various stages of development during which one may make reference to the empire's write back, experimentation, and imitation. To determine the extent to which contemporary Indian poetry published in English reflects Indian ethos and sensibility, the present study highlights and evaluates the manifestation of various cultural and philosophical transitions and changes in such poetry.

Some critics, such as Parthasarthy, had a dim view of Indian English poetry before independence, stating things 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" The first page of the book by Arora (2016).

Daruwalla seems to be following in Parthasarathy's footsteps when he calls for the execution of every poet from before independence without first reading their works in detail. They were unaffected by the external reality of drought, famine, plague, colonial exploitation, or the internal reality of deterioration of belief and the breakdown of the modern consciousness, he says, and this will be the basis of the final indictment of the earlier poets. As stated on page 2 (Arora, 2016: Volume I).

It is undeniable that the earliest works of Indian English poetry remained imitations, but it is also not true that the early Indian poets were so mentally enslaved that they did not speak out against the various types of injustice and oppression perpetrated by colonial institutions in India. Though there were undoubtedly those poets who welcomed and even admired British rule in India, there were just as many who questioned and even opposed it. These lines from Cowasji Nowrosji

Vesuwala's poetry collection *Courting the Muse*(1879) illustrate the poet's contempt for the colonial culture and way of thinking by depicting an administrative structure in disarray.

And in his own verses, Chattopadhaya vehemently proclaims, "That no existing government/ based upon war is permanent" (Early 149), adding his own opinion that "Whatever men might say in song/ to conquer others land is wrong" (Early 149). Poets like G Annaji Rao disclose the truth behind "White men's burden" and show that the introduction of English language and literature into Indian educational institutions was done with the intention of creating a new breed of clerks to service the needs of the English.

Indian English poetry is one of the earliest types of English writing in India, and it is also the most prolific and brilliant. From the early 1900s until the mid-1900s, it covers a vast swath of our nation's cultural and historical development. It develops through three distinct phases. Several elements of the initial phase of ecodevelopment have served as catalysts for the development of Indian English poetry. Henry Derozio, Michael MadhusudanDutt, Toru Dutt, B.M.Malahari, S.C.Dutt, and R.C.Dutt were among of the earliest to poeticize Indian echoes in a foreign language.

Even if it was derivative of English poetry, their writing about Indian history, mythology, and folklore gave English-language Indian poetry a new direction. The phrase "imitative phase" is used to characterize this time period. Between 1850 and 1900, poets had a hard time finding their foothold. Similar to the British Romantics and Victorian poets, they have embraced this style.

After the initial creative era, poets enter a time of assimilation. Period of time starts in 1947. The poets of assimilation were obsessive nationalists whose goal was to communicate India's emerging consciousness during the period of its history when it was caught in a storm of conflict, turmoil, and change that culminated in the country's attainment of political freedom in 1947. The early poets portrayed landscapes, moods, imaginations, and visions, while their readers sought essential certainty of their origins and fate. Toru Dutt and Sarojini Naidu symbolize both the personal nostalgia of their forefathers and the existential pain and desire for their own identities among their successors, making them a bridge between these two eras. ToruDutt follows in the footsteps of the great saint poets and unfulfilled greatness.

Poetry by such illustrious Indian figures as Swami Vivekananda, Swami Ramtirtha, Swami Yogananda, Sri Aurbindo, and Rabindranath Tagore is an amazing amalgam of India's ancient spiritual, philosophical, and methodological traditions, which can be traced back to the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Gita. To better express the Indian point of view, they attempted to make English a lot "native" in their poems.

The third and last step, experimentation, follows stage three, independence. An clear outpouring of poetry has occurred, with themes of painful introspection and the need for national self-definition being common themes.

Rajyalaxmi remarked, "Our models have been cosmopolitan, not just Indian or British. Our cultural awareness now includes influences from all across the world, including Europe, Africa, the Americas, and Asia. The creative possibilities for our poets have expanded dramatically recently. They were brought up in the modern world, learning to accept change and form a fresh perspective on the fate of humanity. A new look is necessary in this modern day". The poet has succeeded in this regard, largely.

Today's English poets in India have been influenced by the likes of Walt Whitman, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, and W. B. Yeats. They are also the key avenues of contemporary Indian poetry. The contemporary poet places their trust in an essential language. Their poetry is grounded in real-world observation.

Indian contemporary poets' fresh writing is guided by their personal values. Many different approaches are tried in an attempt to reach modernity. Techniques from the entertainment industry and advertising are being applied alongside those from English craftsmen like Eliot, Auden, and Dylan Thomas. The rejection of convention and the embrace of innovation, individualism, and creativity often yields spectacular outcomes. In today's Indian English poetry, both "image-hunting" and "word-hunting" are common practices. Don Moraes, Nissim Ezekiel, P.Lal, Kamala Das, A.K.Ramanujan, Krishna Srinivas, Mahanand Sharma, and a host of others are just a few of the excellent poets that have come before them.

Amalendu Bose writes: "Modern poets in their poetry are free to use English which is not mechanically but organically out of a natural inwardness which gives a poem its immediacy of experience. The poets of the modern time have been suddenly lifted from an exclusive to an extensive range of creative experience. They have been raised from a conservative to a cosmopolitan culture to confront the new shape of things and to acquire a new view of human destiny. The age has changed and requires a new change. This has largely been met by the poet. They have no influence of the British poets and they have their aim at working in their own way. They prefer originality and experiment in word-craft intensity and strength of feeling, clarity in thought structure and sense of actuality, freshness, sensibility, concrete, experience, trained intelligence and vitality are essential for good poetry". Nissim Ezekiel writes in this connection:

"Good poetry is not always lucid and clear. Nevertheless, the amateur poet ought to aim at clarity and lucidity concrete and relevant images are usually superior to vogue immensities, simple disciplined forms within which much freedom can be exercised, help the poet to discover what he feels more than sprawling accumulation of lines. Rhyme and other devices may be discarded only if structural compensations and very especial effects are provided instead. Development within a poem is a sign of maturity in the poet" There is tension in the poems of many contemporary poets, including Nissim Ezekiel, A. K. Ramanujan, R. Parthasarthy, K. N. Daruwalla, O. P. Bhatnagar, Jayanta Mahapatra, Kamala Das, Monika Verma, Gauri Deshpande, and many others. There is an

innate Indianness to their poems. Some, like A. K. Ramanujan, moved outside of India yet still, in their poems, they delve into their Indian heritage.

Krishna Srinivas: As a pioneer in the literary world, "Krishna Srinivas" has earned the affectionate moniker "Krishna" from fellow poets and poetry enthusiasts alike. The poems 'fragrant blossoms' heralded a mature fruit, which he generously bestows upon us in the form of 'Dance of the Dust'. Because of his Indian heritage, appreciating his creative talent requires a high level of empathy, spiritual emotion, and sensibility; he is passionately dedicated, intellectually curious, symbolically deep, philosophically prescient, and spiritually elevated. He performs at an exceptionally high standard without going out of his way to confuse others. His poetry is a revitalizing imagistic pattern where science, metaphysics, and history all come together; his philosophy incorporates multiple scientific disciplines. There are mystical, classical, and prophetic undertones to his poetry, much like those of Emerson, R. N. Tagore, and Sri Aurobindo. His verse has a really organic tone. The framework of his central concepts offers penetrating moral and psychological insight into the modern moral society, acting as a catalyst for spiritual awakening. His poetry may be found in works such as "Dance of Dust," "Maya," "Everest," "Beyond," "Void," "Sonnets," "Five Elements," "Sankara," "Ramanuja," "Madhva," "Christ," "Mohammed," "Vallalar," "Mahavir," "Tamil Vedas," etc. All of his poetry is infused with a sense of the spiritual, ethereal, and cosmic. His poetry, like that of Sri Aurobindo, is an expression of the attainment of supra-consciousness. His poetry demonstrates his broad education in fields as diverse as Vedanta, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, mysticism, pantheism, Muslim philosophy, Christianity, ancient and current science, geography, astronomy, and linguistics. The religious purpose of his poetry. His poetry is characterized by mysticism and pantheism. He condemns Western materialism and encourages dust-ridden, lust-torn men and women to find salvation in the spiritual virtues of the East.

Nissim Ezekiel: After India's independence, Nissim Ezekiel emerged as one of the country's finest poets. To fully grasp the poet's craft, his primary topics, and the development of his creativity, it is necessary to take a quick tour of this massive body of work. His poetry may be found in collections like "A Time to Change (1952), Sixty Poems (1953), The Third (1959), The Unfinished Man (1960), The Exact Name (1965), Hymns In Darkness (1976), and Collected Poems (1952–1988) (1989)", among others. He is the greatest Indian English poet and a multifaceted creative talent. His poetry shows the development of his skill and brilliance over time, and he is widely regarded as a great love poet. His poetry includes a variety of overarching themes that have grown in complexity and depth with each new collection. The topics of romance and sexuality appear more often than any others. Descriptions of human anatomy and sexual activity in bed are explicit. His depiction of romantic love and the allure of women's bodies is unabashedly honest. Because of this, he's been called a "poet of the body," "female anatomy poet," and "sex poet," although this is unfair and shallow. He does not dispute the claims of the body, but he is neither a Platonist nor a romantic dreamer. His poetry, in general, is quite moving.

Kamala Das: Kamala Das, along with Nissim Ezekiel and Ramanujam, are the three most influential contemporary Indian poets working in English. She is one of the three great Indian poets who have written in English. A. K. Ramanujam and Nissim Ezekiel are the other two. Some of her most notable poems are "Summer in Calcutta," "The Descendants," "The old Playhouse," and others, all of which explore the universal human experience of longing for a romantic partner but never quite finding it.

In the poem she finds an objective correlative in 'The Dance of the Eunuchs' to represent the theme of suppressed desire within. "The dance of the eunuchs with their wide skirts going round, cymbals richly clashing and anklets jingling, jingling....." is contrasted with their vacant ecstasy suggesting a gully between the external, simulated passion and the sexual drought and rottenness inside.

The poem continues to maintain its contrast throughout. The poet's unrequited, unquenchable love for the woman is symbolized by the dance of the eunuchs, a dance of the barren. In *The Freaks* too the theme is the same. "In the hands of Kamala Das and Sunita Jain, the poetry of protest is largely personal; in the case of Mamta Kalia and Eunice De Souza, it becomes ironical as well."

Jayanta Mahapatra : Jayanta Mahapatra is so well-known that he probably doesn't even need an introductory sentence. Poet, essayist, and physicist who also speaks Spanish. Having won the "Sahitya Academy Award" (1981) for "Relationship," Jayanta Mahapatra has earned the honor of being the first Indian English poet to do so. Because of his deep and abiding affection for the entire natural world, Mahapatra often returns to themes of poverty, deprivation, social injustice, and the fate of the Indian woman in prostitution in his poems. Everything, he claims, occurs because of me. He is unable to merely write about the "better things" in life and disregard them. ----- about privileged people's daily routines. Unlike most of today's English poets, he sees poetry as a social reality. Jayanta Mahapatra like many other Indian poets writing in English is bi-lingual. R. Parthasarthy rightly points out, "The true poets among Indo – Anglian seem to be those who write in English as well as in their own language. They are poets in their own Right who have something significant to say, and know how to say it, both in English and their native tongue. They are not out to 'sell' their poetry through a skilful manipulation of words and the employment of Sophisticated techniques".

Mahapatra is one of the select few who may truly be called poets. Like her, he is a writer who writes in two languages; his success resides in the fact that he has never rejected his Indian heritage or succumbed to what some have described as isolation. He has avoided the aforementioned problems to great effect, giving his work an obvious genuineness of tone and presentation. Mahapatra has a deeply Indian sensibility, but he doesn't fake it by bringing in tiger skins, snakes, snake charmers, jugglers, crocodiles, and the like.

He is authentically Indian since he doesn't force himself to adopt stereotypical Indian behavior or language. His poems on Orissa are particularly representative of his Indian identity since they elevate the particular to the universal. Oriya is the native language of India, hence works like "Oriya Landscapes," "Evening in an Orissa Village," the "Orissa Poems," "Dawn at Puri," etc. are both Oriya and Indian. Is there any Indo-English poet about whom we could say the same thing? K.A.Panikar argues that while Mahapatra writes in English, his Oriya sensibility and not just his subject matter shine through in his best works.

Mahapatra's Oriyaness shines through in the reoccurring images in his poetry. His poetry captures the warmth of India's eastern shore. The morning breeze off the eastern sea blows through them. To find comfort, the son of the sun and the sea Mahapatra often turns to poems like "Sunburst," "The Exile," "Indian Summer Poems," "This Stranger," "My Daughter," and "The Beggar." In several of their poetry, Puri is a real person. "The Temple," "The Priest," "The Beggar," "The Fisherman," and "The Crow" appear before us in all their solid, objective actuality, and then slowly, almost imperceptibly, become monument-like pictures and symbols.

Large Converse Larger Portrayal:

R. Parthasarathy and **Arun Kolatkar** are two of India's greatest poets, both of whom have written works addressing societal issues in the country. Parsi poets have also made significant contributions to modern English poetry from India. K.N.Daruwalla, Gieve Patel, and Adidil Jassawalla are three of the most prominent figures in modern Indian English poetry. Shiv K. Kumar, Jayanta Mahapatra, A. K. Mehrotra, O. P. Bhatnagar, A. N. Dwivedi, Niranjan Mohanty, Saleem Peeradina, Syed Amanuddin, Syed Ameeruddin, R. C. Shukla, S. C. Dwivedi, and many others are all considered to be "academicians" among the new generation of poets. Poetry by A.K. Mehrotra is characterized by "incongruity," "choice," and "free association," all hallmarks of the surrealist (a French movement of the 1920s) style to which he predominantly belongs. Mahapatra and Mehrotra share a dependency on mental imagery. A. N. Dwivedi is a social realist who keeps a close eye on the social and political happenings around him, and the sardonic perspective of O. P. Bhatnagar comes through clearly in his poetry. Because of the unique way they use vocabulary and beat.

Furtado again seems modern enough to address the subject at hand in a profound psychological manner, as in his poem "The Neglected Wife," in which he expresses sympathy for a woman whose husband hasn't seen her since the day he went to Bombay. Because her husband never sees her or communicates with her in any way, she is constantly filled with heartache and need. 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?"

Some critics argue that the earlier Indian English poets had been irresponsible idealists who had no idea what was going on in the world. Such generalizations are inappropriate because they demonstrate a lack of maturity in both judgment and a critical understanding of the texts at issue. Below are some lines from *Indian Bouquet* (1906), a collection of poetry by Lala Prasanna Kumar Dey, that serve as an illustrative example:

“A Budha, Christ or Chaitanya Despatch”.

Reviewing Indian English poetry from its inception with Derozio to the present day reveals a wide range of subjects, including "Nature, Love, Man and the Heritage of man consisting of myth, legend, history, and the fine arts" (Gokak, 1970) and "metaphysical longing, devotion, mystical contemplation, and spiritual illumination," among many others. According to Gokak, contemporary poetry is characterized by a great deal of introspection and self-reflection. This, he argues, is a natural outgrowth of the poet's internal and external preoccupations: if he is preoccupied with the outside world and gives it careful thought and response, he will write poetry that is reflective; if he is preoccupied with himself and his past experiences, hopes, dreams, and aspirations, he will write poetry that is introspective. There is plenty of both in Indian English poetry. This may be true of poetry all across the world, as it is the poet's engagements that determine whether the poems are introspective or exploratory.

There is room for studies that attempt to track the ebbing and flowing of societal and cultural dynamics in a people's literary canon as fashions come and go. Perhaps the poet's primary concerns shifted from patriotism and spiritual yearning to a love of India's landscape when the country gained its independence.

One Indian literary genius after another contributed to the growth and refinement of Indian English Poetry in this way. To demonstrate the rich history of Indian English poetry and the legendary and brilliant figures who have shaped it on Indian soil, many more poets' names may be given here. This review/overview could be shortened by mentioning the remaining poets and their works.

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya (1898-1990) was a talented writer who published several volumes, including "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 "Freedom Kabraji" (1897-1986) also made significant contributions to Indian English poetry through works such as *Raindrops: Brief Sketches in Prose and Verse* (1920), *A Minor Georgian's Swan Song: Fifty One Poems* (1944), *The Cold Flame: Poems* (1956), and an edited anthology called *This Strange Adventure: An Anthology of Poems in English by Indians, 1826-1946* (1947). As it traveled, it attracted more and more creative minds, such as Jehangir Rustomji Patel, whose poem *The World War* (1921) is widely regarded as

a masterpiece of Indian English poetry.

There's Ram Tirtha (1873-1906), whose contributions include the five-volume masterpiece *Woods of God-Realization*, in which he displays his piety and mysticism. He has also produced a book of poetry titled *Poems of Rama*, which, like his other works, is filled with expressions of dedication and themes of introspection. Magnificent works like *Malini, the Daughter of Punjab*, and *A Talk of India's Sacrifice Written in Blank Verse* are only two examples of how S.H.J habvala's (1884–1971) contributions to Indian English writing have enhanced the field. *Prince of Light* (1945), *Poems Written in Prison* (1933), and *Beads of Amber* (1932) are some of his other works.

Conclusion

It is reasonable to assume that the quantity of Indian English poetry produced during this period exceeds that of any previous era. *Indian Poetry in English: An Anthology*, edited by Professor P. Lal, is a compilation of poems written in English by more than 130 modern Indian poets. Poems from this era span a wide range of styles, from introspective meditations on the poet's inner life and deep romanticism to scathing satire and even nursery rhymes. In spite of its modern feel and forceful expression, this poetry still has deep historical origins. This infuses the poet's entire existence, influencing how they view the present and the past and, in turn, how we will develop in the future. Our cultural practices originated in the teachings of the Vedas, the Upanishads, and the Ramayana. The Mahabharata, devotional saint poetry, the great rivers of India, the storehouse of Indian myth and legend, and the recall of our own ethnic or local past have all had an impact on modern poetry. The spiritual and mystical traditions of India are reflected in the works of poets such as Sri Paramhansa Yogananda, Mahanand Sharma, and Krishna Srinivas. Of course, they are more than a simple purist group. Their poetry is very meditative and contemporary at the same time. Nissim Ezekiel, A.K. Ramanujan, R.Parathasarthy, Arun Kolatkar, Jayanta Mahapatra, Gieve Patel, K.N.Daruwalla, Kamala Das, Shiva K. Kumar, and dozens more contemporary poets have all struggled to break away from tradition.[8] While contemporary poets speak to modern men's tangible realities, P.K.J. Kurup argues that "the aroma of the private life of the experiencing self" shapes how one perceives their own experiences.

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