



Role of Indian Literature in Freedom Struggle

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Abstract: At the beginning of 19th century, nationalistic ideas emerged in Literature and number of writers began to write with patriotic and nationalistic purposes. Literature strengthened the freedom movement and encouraged people to participate in the freedom struggle. Literature inspired people to make all kinds of sacrifices for the cause of freedom. The need for freedom was expressed in Literature. India feels freedom as the natural condition to which any people should aspire.

Key Words: Literature, freedom struggle, Indian English Writers, novels, poetry, Gandhian thought.

Introduction:

Literature has played a vital role in every major revolution in history. Like that it played a very important role in Indian history. As we are celebrating *Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav*, it would be obligatory to remember the role of Pre-Independence literature in the freedom struggle. The contemporary writers make use of literature for patriotic purposes and national discourses.

Writers and poets like Rabindranath Tagor, Subramanya Bharathi, Josh Malihabali Mohammed Iqbal, Bakim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, Mohammed Ali, Johar and the Kazi Nazrul Islam used literature, poetry and discourse as a weapon against the brutal rule of Britishers that elevate the thoughts of freedom and encourages people to fight against British Empire for India. Women leaders like Sarojini Naidu Begum Rokeya provoke women for their participation in freedom struggle and national policy.

Bakim Chandra Chattopadhyay, using literature, spread the message of Patriotism. he highlighted number of Patriotic act and sacrifices made by his characters, common people who lost homes and families to fight for freedom and to serve "The Mother" in *Anandamath*(1882). He pictured revolution against Britishers by untrained soldiers who succeeded in beating the trained British soldiers with sheer pebbles and determination representing a sense of Patriotism and nationalism. This novel was banned by the British Empire and it was lifted after independence by the Indian government. Our National song *Vande Mataram* was first published as a poem in the novel 'Anandamath'. The characters encourage and urge people to fight against the British

Empire. Despite being banned, common people would relate the poem in front of British officers and many were arrested and sent to jail for this act. The first two verses of *Vande Mataram* were adopted as national song by Indian National Congress in 1937 due to its tradition of sacrifice and its success in bringing a country together against the British Britishers.

Bankim Chandra published his Novel *Devi Chaudhurani* in 1884. This novel became an inspiration for women to participate in the freedom struggle. The woman is the protagonist in this novel like in *Anandmath*. In both the novels, women took up weapons to fight for independence and also expressed the values of love. Chattopadhyay had the inside to understand that to make the freedom struggle a successful, the nation needed cooperation of women as Shanti says in *Anandmath*, “which hero ever became a hero without the cooperation of his wife?”

Another world celebrated name in Indian English literature is Rabindranath Tagore. He is novelist, dramatist, short story writer, musician, philosopher, painter, educationalist, reformer and a critic in every field and had earned accolade for himself. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 for his immortal great work *Gitanjali*. Rabindranath Tagore proved in front of the world that Indian writers are capable of expressing their literary aspiration in a foreign language with accomplished effortless. The Western influence in Indian literature was just under the label so that Indian English literature during the British empire had acquired its generic name. The setting of Tagore's novels is reflective and representative. He painted friendly and effortfully in Bengali and English. He wrote thirteen novels and translated his nine novels into English in Indian during the British empire. His translated works are *Gora*, *The Home and The World*, *The Wreck*, *Binodini* etc. The characters in his novels are realistic and natural. He portrayed socio religious culture of Bengal in his novels and also brought out the problems of women. He portrayed and analysed different human relationships through different social settings. He first wrote *Valmiki Pratibha* at the age of 20. His work sought to articulate ‘the play of feeling and not of action’. He used philosophical and allegorical themes in English and Bengali work.

The triumvirs Mulk Raj Anand Raja Rao and RK Narayan stabilised and fortified Indian English literature with their unique work and literary style.

R. K. Narayan is another great writer in Indian English writing during the British Empire. He had the capability to fascinate the readers with the portrayal of contemporary society. He has portrayed the socio-economic aspects of a common family. The great feature of his writings is that he used such simple language in writings that common people could easily understand it. He uses ironic humour which explores the oddities of human nature. He gave birth to a town *Malgudi* in his Novel like Thomas Hardy's *Wessex*. His novels revolve around the imaginary town *Malgudi*. His first novel *Swami and Friends* is based in the fictional town *Malgudi* and presented through the eyes and experiences of the character Swaminathan. R. K. Narayan depicts the village life which describes the Indian cultural identity and philosophy to the world. His other popular novels are *Bachelor of Art*, *The Financial Expert*, *The Guide*, *Waiting for Mahatma*. The writings of R. K. Narayan have stretched across seven decades and occupies a remarkable position in the history of Indian English novels. He got mastery over portraying characters in simple English language.

Mulk Raj Anand was among the earliest Indian novelists in English. Indeed Indian English literature during the British empire had gracefully captured poetry, prose, drama, and novels. His short story *The Lost child* has numerous written work comprising prose, poetry, and drama. His three novels *Coolie*, *untouchable* and *The Woman and The Cow* are stories of downtrodden and underprivileged people in India. He gave graphical description of the character, tale of sorrows, calamities. The novel *Untouchable* aimed at the evil of casteism and brought the issue based on profession. It is a unique opportunity for readers to experience the plight of victims of the caste system. Another novel *Coolie* is a devastating account of the poverty and exploitation faced not just by Moonu but thousands like him. Mulk Raj Anand uses his characteristic of realism to expose the dark reality of the country where one's position at birth guarantees one's trajectory in life. This arguably makes the suffering even deeper because there is absolutely no hope for a better future. Both the novels are a plea for downtrodden Poor and outcast economic hardship and emotional humiliation in a rigid social structure.

Raja Rao is one of the great writers during this period. The reader clearly observed the influence of the Gandhian movement in his novel *Kantapura*(1938). The writer focused on a small village where the villagers were impacted by the freedom struggle. The number of people participating in the freedom struggle as depicted in the novel. Raja Rao used his novels to spread Gandhian thought and message to the nation. The novelist represented the influence of Gandhi on Indian society and how his teaching inspires people to participate in freedom struggle. After independence, he wrote novels like *The cat and the Shakespeare*(1956), *The serpent and the Rope* (1960), *Comrade Kirilov*(1976). The women characters in his novels who suffer domestic injustice and tyrannical tradition. Women characters are ambitious but blue their ambition and play the role of Wife like Savitri in the novel *The Serpent and the Rope*(1960). The Indian culture was rooted in his writing but he failed to have concrete solutions for the women' problems.

It is these three writers who defined the area in which the Indian novel was to operate. They established its assumptions; they sketched its main themes, freed the first models of its characters and elaborated its particular logic. Each of them used an easy, natural idiom which was unaffected by the opacity of a British inheritance. Their language has been freed of the foggy taste of Britain and transferred to a wholly new setting of brutal heat and brilliant light.

Conclusion:

The pre-independence literature deals with the aspect of freedom struggle. The protagonists of the pre independence literature were common men and women who contributed for freedom struggle and became heroes though they were not literate and intellectual. They belong to different classes, different castes, different regions and with different regional languages. But the aim of their lives to get India free from British empire. Indian literature during the freedom struggle, force us to move away from neat categories in. What we have said about the freedom movement -the constant interplay of contradictory forces - holds true about the making of modern Indian society as a whole. To put it simply, it is not that one person or group is secular, progressive and nationalist while another person or group is reactionary and communal. Society and the people living in it are

too complex to permit such neat classifications. This is a lesson that literature teaches us best. Historians, and official scientists, may do well to learn this lesson.

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