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DRAWING & READING THE REGIONS IN INDIAN ENGLISH POETRY

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Abstract:

Indian English literature is considered the voice through which the Indian writers speak of the colonialism, their experiences, their daily struggles, beauty of nature and so on. Presently Americans, Africans, Canadians, and Australians write in English. However, their works are not precisely considered as English Literature but described such as American Literature, African Literature, Canadian Literature, and Australian Literature respectively. However, Indian writing in English falls under the three different categories. However, it is difficult to distinguish between the 'Anglo-Indian Literature', 'Indo-English Literature' and Indian Writing in English. The Englishmen who have spent their long period of life in India and attempted to present India for creative expression in English can fall under the category of Anglo-Indian Literature. Many writers like Sir William Jones, John Leyden, Meadows Taylor, F W Bain, Sir Edwin Arnold belong to this category. Drawing & Reading the regions in literature means fiction and poetry aims at focusing and presenting the characters, dialect, lifestyle, tradition and culture, nature and landscape and other salient characteristics of a particular region. It is true that any piece of literature is truly the presentation of that time and place and one can find the glimpses of particular period and place in that work. Moreover, there are many literary pieces that exponentially intend to showcase the region. The present work aims at focusing on the presentation of regions in the poems by Indian English poets. Let's find out the drawing of the regions in the poetry of select Indian English poets namely Jayanta Mahapatra, Arun Kolatkar, Tabish Khair, Anjum Hasan, R. Parthasarathy.

Key Words: culture, regions, struggle, inner expressions, colonial, essence, fresh, portray Literature is the representation of society and life. It represents the daily struggles of people, their joys and sorrows, their relationships and interactions, devotions, attitudes, their problems and many more. Literature gives voice to inner expressions of human beings. It records those things that cannot be expressed using spoken words. The representation of culture, tradition, natural beauty, daily struggles of the common mass, struggle to win bread,

and so on in literature is also such an area of exploration wherein the written words take the readers to the psyche of the characters and open up a new world full of unexpressed feelings. In this paper the aim is to focus on reading the regions in the poems of Indian English poets. Many poets across the world have portrayed the picture of the regions in their poetry. There are many Indian English poets who have tried to reflect the region in their poetry. In his book "Modern Indian Poetry in English", Bruce King tried to convey that Indian English poetry is the part of 'New Literatures' after the World War II. The contemporary Indian English literature forms the part of Postcolonial Literature. The present Indian English literature belongs to that Postcolonial Literature like other Canadian, Caribbean and Australian Literature. Soon after the independence many Indian English poets came up to contribute to Indian English literature. They tried to portray various social issues like cultural evacuation, linguistic displacement and many more. Many post-independence era poets wrote poetry on how the situation of the region after being colonized by the British rule. The British left behind poverty, starvation. Moreover, even the culture of Indian people was completely ruined, and the tradition has become history. This predicament was then voiced through poetry.

Poetry has been considered as the greatest means of inner soul. Moreover, India is the nation that enjoys poetry like other art forms from ages. It is believed that Indian English Poetry emerged after the Second World War II. The colonialism gave a new language to India. The advent of Indian English Poetry did not enjoy glorious reception by critics, readers across the nation and across the world as it was void of cultural representation. The poets were away from describing the reality of the societies. The poetry written by them presented them as alienated from real India. The nationalists demanded the revival of their culture, language as they were marred during the reign of British. There was a prevalent demand of having literature about their traditional culture, the description of poor and deprived India, and those days it was believed that the poets were all educated and they overlooked this dominantly affluent themes of literature into their poetry. For an instance, Henry Louis Vivian Derozio is regarded as the first Indian English poet. Albeit, his poems are highly criticized as his poems depict western culture the most and his poetry is full of Christian charism. Derozio was half Indian and half Portuguese. It is true that the Indian Poets have been high influenced by colonialism. The inception of Indian English poetry dates back 1825. It has been more than 175 years.

The Indian English poetry can be divided into three main periods. (I) Colonial Period of Indian English Poetry (1825-1900) (II) Period of Nationalism (1900-1950) and Post-Colonial Period (1950 onwards). The period of Indian English Poetry can also be divided as Pre-Independence Period and Post-Independence Period. The initial years of this period was the Romantic era in England. So there was influence of English poets such William Wordsworth, P B Shelley, Scott, Byron on Indian writers. The Indian English poets too started imitating them in their poetry. This phrase of time was considered as the time of imitation and the poets were romantic in their writings. India was initially colonized by Mughal Rule. After the Mughal reign, British reign was there over India. There laid heavy impact of British reign over the writings of Indians. The language, culture, and their living habits.

Thus, the emergence of Indian English poetry was under some adverse circumstances. Initially, there was a strong resistance of using English as it was considered to be ruler's language. 1900-1950 was the period when the romanticism was gradually decreasing and the fervor of Nationalism was increasing. Romanticism was gradually getting replaced by Nationalism. It was this period when many great poets penned down such as Sarojini Naidu, Shri Ravindranath Tagore, Aurobindo Ghose, and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. However, the poetry of these poets was full of nationalism, spirituality and mysticism. Philosophy was

explicitly seen as the major themes of their poetry. Aurobindo was in search of a Divine man while Rabindranath Tagore was in search of beauty in man and nature. Both the poets were philosophical poets. The romanticism displayed in the poetry of Sarojini Naidu was for the rustic and traditional life of India. As these poets represented the time of the age, they could not be romantic in their poetry. They did not merely imitate the English Romantics and Victorians but as the poetry proved to be the best means of presenting the contemporary India. Post-Colonial period resembles that of Modern age in the history of English Literature. There was political reform in India. Partition between India and Pakistan took place. The people of India gained a new national identity and that boosted the confidence level of the Indian writers. They started questioning and presenting irony into their works. Indian English literature is regarded initially as the Anglo-Indian. Some use 'Indo-Anglian' term instead 'Anglo-Indian'. However, India has numerous literatures like Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Oriya, Marathi, Sanskrit and so on because these literatures in vernacular is producing but at the same time Indian in English is also considered as one of the voices in which India speaks. Late C. R. Reddy pointed out in the course of his Foreword to K R Srinivasayengar's P.E.N book on Indo-Anglian literature:

Indo-Anglian literature is not essentially different in kind from Indian literature. It is a part of it, a modern facet of that glory which, commencing from the Vedas, has continued to spread its mellow light, now with greater and now with lesser brilliance under the inexorable vicissitudes of time and history, ever increasingly up to the present time of Tagore, Iqbal and Aurobindo Ghose, and bids fair to expand with our and humanity's expanding future.

"'Indo-Anglian' strikes many as a not altogether happy expression. It is sometimes said that I concocted this expression, and I have accordingly been chastised for it. Actually, it was used as early as 1883 to describe a volume printed in Calcutta containing "Specimen Compositions from Native Students." It was later feely used in the twenties and thirties in reviews and articles. In another book, Literature and Authorship in India, published at about same time in London, 'Indo-Anglian' was printed by mistake, 'Indo-Anglican'" (K R Srinivasayengar). Indo-Anglian appears to be an odd expression. There has been long debate and protest over the usage of the term. As many people avoid using the term 'Indo-Anglian', many prefer to use 'Indo-English.' Yet Indo-Anglian writing has contributed a lot across the world.

The poetry has a significant stand in Indian English instead of presenting the creative presentation of the place, Indian English poetry started focusing on reflecting the reality and the clear picture of the regions. It has the themes like starvation, poverty, prostitution, and socio-economic conflict. Not only had this but Indian English poetry also showcased the beauty of the particular region, rich culture and tradition. There are many Indian English poets who have tried to portray the region. Many belong to the diasporic group of writers; many belong to such group who were initially attracted by the foreign culture and felt isolated and returned home, many remained in India and presented the real picture. There has been much criticism of the Indian English poets but still their place in modern Indian culture is significant. There are many poets who have contributed a lot in the Indian English poetry. The earlier poets are Nissim Ezekiel, Kersey Katrak, SrinivasRayaprol, Keshav Malik, Dom Moraes, Kumar Das, R Betholomew, AdilJussawalla and R.Parthasarathy and so on. There are more significant poets namely Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, ArunKolarkar, DilipChitre, Shiv Kumar, JayantaMahapatra, Anjum Hasan, Robin S Ngangom, and many more. India is culturally a rich nation. The traditional and cultural practice of India is the significance of our nation but after the reign of British, it has caused a great violation to the Indian culture, tradition. Many were attracted towards the western cultures and thought of settling down there and as they left their hometown, they felt culturally uprooted and isolated on the foreign soil. However, many were feeling lonely and they returned to motherland. Let's find out the

drawing of the regions in the poetry of select Indian English poets namely JayantaMahapatra, ArunKolatkar, TabishKhair, Anjum Hasan, R. Parthasarathy.

JayantaMahapatra was born in the village named Cuttack, Odisha. He has written 27 books of poems; seven in Odia language and rest in English language. He was the first Indian poet to receive SahityaAkadami Award for English poetry. He has tried to draw a picture of his surroundings and the region in his poems. His two poems namely "Indian Summer" and "Hunger" are considered the classics in modern Indian English Literature.

ArunKolatkar is an influential Indian English poet. He was born at Kolhapur, Maharashtra. He has written a series of poems written in 1976 for which he was awarded the Commonwealth Prize in 1977. In this collection, Kolatkar presents the culture, tradition, and faith. Jejuri is a village in Pune district in Maharashtra. It is a famous pilgrimage because there is a temple of Lord Khandoba that is the family deity of many houses in Maharashtra and Karnataka. The entire collection focuses on the religious aspects of Jejuri village. ArunKolatkar wrote another significant work named "Kala Ghoda Poems" published on January 01, 2006. Kala Ghoda reflects the daily lives, sufferings and pathetic experiences of the common mass. The poor and marginalized people, beggars, drunkards, prostitutes, lepers, sweepers, and other people wandering on the street lead their life in a very pitiful condition. Arun Kolatkar observes this true picture and the dichotomy between the lives of these unprivileged people and the capitalist people.

Another important Indian English poet, TabishKhair, was born in Gaya village of Bihar. In his poetry collection Where the Parallel Lines Meet, TabishKhair tries to portray the picture of the culture and his dilemma as he feels culturally uprooted. In this poetry, he tries to search for his identity. The present poetry collection is the paradigm of merging of two different cultures; east and west. The parallel lines indicate merging of the eastern culture and western cultures. Anjum Hasan is also called one of the prolific poets in the category of North-East Poets. There have been many poets from this region who have tried to present the socio-political issues and terrorism in their poetry but Anjum Hasan is quite different from them. She was born in Shilong and she has spent her childhood there. She has tried to portray the landscape and the beauty of North-East India in her poetry collection unlike her contemporaries. In her poetry collection Street on the Hill, she presents her childhood experiences and beauty of North-East India.

Another significant Indian English poet is R. Parthasarathy. He was born in the Southern Part of India. In his poetry collection named Rough Passage, he presents the cultural loss and disorder in society. He tries to give voice to his feelings like linguistic displacement, dilemma, and cultural dislocation. However, reading the regions is carried out in many literary genres such as fiction, play, and so on but it is really worth to find the picture of regions drawn in the poems of the above discussed poets at length.

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