

Editorial

Indian English fiction is today more than a century old. Since pre independence day, it has traversed a long journey witnessing various ups and downs in its social, cultural and political history. It is interesting to see its gradual development in themes and techniques in synchronicity with the thinking of Indian people. From the colonial days, there has been a tremendous shift in its focus and concerns. If the trinity - Rao, Anand and Narayan captured the ethos of Indian society in their respective novels, registering the social and political awakening of the Gandhian period, post Indian Novelists in English have brilliantly probed their age old traditions and myths and have transformed them in their fictional pieces with such a linguistic innovation that has surprised even the West. Contemporary Indian English fiction startles any scholar by its diversity of themes and styles.

Even a cursory glance at contemporary Indian English fiction makes us aware that the contemporary Indian English Novel is predominantly rooted in the ideology to castigate caste system, discrimination of women, the exploitation of children, the displacement of the minorities (dalits) and subversion of marginal cultures. If the fictional writers like Ismat Chughtai, Mahasweta Devi, Shashi Deshpande, Anita Desai, Bharti Mukherjee, R. P. Jhabwala, Chitra Banerjee, Manju Kapoor, Jhumpa Lahiri and Arundhati Roy etc. have exposed the exploitation of the womankind in patriarchal structures and have welcomed the emergence of New Woman by challenging the male supremacy, male writers like Khushwant Singh, Salman Rushdie, Rohinton Mistry, Aravind Adiga etc. have debunked religious, cultural and political structures which often turn vicious. The fictional pieces of Vikram Seth and Amitav Ghosh dream of a world without the feuds of cultural supremacy and national boundaries. Perhaps the two most striking features of contemporary Indian English fiction are the predominance of women writers and the other being the transformation of the age old myths/history for the present generation of globalized world. The autobiographical pieces by Laxmi Narayan Tripathi and Revathi, raise a new voice to rethink about the plight of transgenders, adding a new feather to Indian Novel's cap. Among young authors of note, if Chetan Bhagat is intent on portraying 21st century Indian Urban reality with an eye on making profit in the market, a writer like Amish Tripathi is re-reading mythical texts for deriving new moral meanings in the ancient texts.

Dialogue's this issue focuses on some of the most important contemporary Indian English writers and their select works. It is just a glimpse of the treasure house that Indian English fiction can be proud of. We are hopeful the readers would enjoy reading the papers and oblige us with their feed back.

At last I express my sincere gratitude towards Prof. L. R. Sharma for being the Guest Editor of this issue and all the Review Editors who have taken pains to review the papers and have extended valuable suggestions.

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