

A Journey of Indian English Short Stories in Colonial and Postcolonial Era and its Impact on Present Short Story Writing

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Abstract:

The researcher concentrates the short stories written in English in India before and after independence. English was a link language before independence and it has become an official language after independence in India because there are different languages and dialects used for communication in the country there was no a common medium through which all the Indians can come together and unite. English has given a common medium of expression to the Indians through which they can share and evoke emotions through communication and literature. A short story is one of the best media to convey a common and powerful thought to the readers. It gives us a thematic understanding of what the author wants to say within a short text.

Keywords: colonialism, postcolonialism, short stories

Introduction:

A short story is a literary narrative work that characteristically can be read in one sitting and focuses on a complete incident or series of linked incidents, to bring to mind a single effect or sense. A dictionary defines an essential prose story shorter than a novel usually dealing with a few characters and aiming at the harmony of effect and often focused on the formation of mood rather than plot ("Short Story"). Indian writers significantly contributed their efforts to the development of short stories in India. Manjer S. Iswaran is one of the initial Indian writers in English and he wrote with recognizable importance to radiate his lot with the development of the short stories; he contributed his effort at the time when it was yet to find a grip in the field of

Before his advent, the short story as a modern art form had mainly been

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the occasional diversion of a novelist: Isvaran who published his first collection of short stories, *Naked Shingles* (1941). He is the first Indian writer in English who ascertains a reputation almost exclusively based on his success in the field of the short story. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Ramesh Chandra Dutt, Sharad Chandra Chatterjee and others who were concerned chiefly with novels had periodically tried their hands at short stories. Rabindra Nath Tagore wrote some of the finest short stories, but he was chiefly concerned with other forms of literature i.e. poems, plays and novels.

Colonial & Postcolonial Literature:

Colonialism is a practice of supremacy, in which the suppression is involved from a group of people to another ("Colonialism"). The literature produced by the People who are producing literature during the colonized period in which the European countries were colonized other countries mostly the countries in Africa, Asia, and South America is called 'Colonial Literature'.

Postcolonialism can be understood by the etymology of the words like 'Post' and 'Colony'; the word 'Post' is derived from the Latin word, 'Postis', which means 'after'. The word 'Colony' is originated from the Latin word, 'Colonus', which refers to a grower, a cultivator or settler in a new land ("Postcolonialism"). The term 'Postcolonialism' refers to the period after 'colonialism'. Broadly defining the term, 'Postcolonialism' refers to how race, civilization, culture and human identity itself are represented in the modern era after many colonized countries got independence. The European powers exercised their dominance over the immeasurable regions of Asia, Africa, and South America until the mid-twentieth century. The domination was restrained not only to the political lives of the people but also extended to the cultural, economic and social living situation of the colonized people. A substantial struggle in the colonized nations caused in the overthrow of the colonial system. These liberated nations are known as 'Postcolonial' (Abirami 166). Hence, Postcolonial Literature refers to the literature produced by the people in the post-colonial period i.e. after getting independence to their colonized countries.


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Short Stories before Independence:

The subcontinent of India was under the British Imperial rule for more than two hundred years. During British rule, the natives of India were suffering from several harassments. Especially, the cultural and moral lives of the native Indians were deeply disturbed. Because of this reason Indian writers emerged intending to unite Indian people and wipe out the colonial standpoint. As there are many languages in India, Indian writers selected English as a medium of their literature, because English was the link language through which all the Indian people could come together and unite to fight against British rule. The 'Literature' produced by the Indian writers mostly in English, is known as 'Indian English Literature'. The early literary works of the Indian English writers concentrated on the themes of 'Nationalism', 'Ethnicism', 'Racism' and 'Cultural Identity'. The authors also concentrated on the different sub-themes like: 'alienation', 'rootlessness', 'gender discrimination', 'labour exploitation', 'poverty', 'hybridity', 'corruption', 'marginalization' and so on (Abirami 168).

Short Stories after Independence:

Short stories in English were developed after 1935 in India; that time was productive for Indian short stories in English. The age of oppression was over after India got independence; people were free from domination. The period was to keep new steps on the ground of education, literature, business, trades, etc. The decade of 1950 was the decade of struggle in India for a new setup for the nation (Abirami 166). The optimism was raised and the country was considered the largest democracy in Asia. For the new setup in the country, financial trials were important than politics.

During this decade of 1950, new problems have been raised in the country. People were struggling with poverty and settlement. There was a chaotic situation after the partition of India and Pakistan; the nation was facing violence and hatred. Two major Indian short story writers emerged i.e. Attia Husain and Khushwant Singh; they started writing short stories in English. Attia Husain was dealing with Muslim life and society. The system of India was not changed even after independence (Edward 3). The women still in the curtain (PARDAHA). The violence and hatred between the two subjects: Hindu and Muslims were still alive in India. The communities like, the Sikh, the Hindu, and the Muslim, etc. were not properly settled in India.

during the first ten years of independence. Khushwant Singh has conveyed his distress in his short stories. Many writers experimented in writing English short stories. These writers are Ruth Pravar Jhabvala, K. N. Daruwala, Hamdi Bey, Kamla Das, Arun Joshi, Vivek Adarkar, Shashi Deshpande, Nisha Cunha, Raja Rao, and Shirje Antony, etc. These writers deal with social problems located in India. The Indian writer, Khosla presents the various painful situations of Indian women. Muzumdar writes and focuses on common human beings in India. Phadake writes about the nature of people in India. In the Sixties, the titles and themes are changed in writing and focused on the lifestyle of Indian people because people were also changing their lifestyle thinking attitude, etc.

Satire was used in the literature mostly in those days; Bunny Reuben has exposed the false values of Indian people. He also wrote about prostitution, marriage feast, etc. Kewin Sio writes on human foibles. Ruth Jhabvala wrote about the people who are influenced by western culture and thoughts. Bhabani Bhattacharya has written about the image of India; he focused on the bureaucrats' life in the towns of India (Soni 14). In the post-colonial period of literature, people rebel the previous colonial period of literature and focus on the new challenges arrived in liberated countries. Satire is used to make a positive change in the targeted person or people. In the post-independent period of literature, people want growth and development in their countries; to achieve this, they have to change the mindsets of the people. Hence, with the help of satire writers targeted such people who needed to be changed their mindsets in a newly evolving and developing country. Some people were lost their identity by following western culture and style; they must be Indian in culture and thoughts to protect identity and existence as a human being in this world.

The seventies had given promises and challenged the writers of English varieties. The writer, Hamdi Bey, writes about the problems of very small towns and villages; Suriya Daruwala and Vivek Adakar write about their worries regarding the problems of young generations. Arun Joshi explains the contemporary problems of India. Politics was not the exception for Indian English short stories; Gorwala also writes about the Indian political situation (Soni 15). Even after independence, India has a lot of problems; problems may be in small towns or maybe young generations. Literature is a mirror of society in which the surroundings or the society is reflected; writers have to focus on the problems mentioned above. The people must concern the

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contemporary problems, so that there may be some solution come out and resolve all the problems that could be a hurdle in a way of growth and development. Sometimes long stories cannot result in an effective result but the small stories can have more effective results because they are not so long to read and understand.

The Impact of this Journey on Present Short Story Writers:

After analyzing the journey of short story writing in India, one can observe the changes took place in the writing of short stories before independence and after independence. Meanwhile, the domestic problems were raised in the country and they are reflected in the literature including short stories. Colonial and Postcolonial writers laid down a resilient foundation for future literature. A big technological advancement in human life also changed the approach of the people in India; now people think globally: the current topics for discussions are environmental issues, economic growth, international relations, unemployment, Diaspora, etc. and these topics can be seen in literature also. Some of the present short story writers are like Omair Ahmad, Susmesh Chandroth, Rimi B. Chatterjee, Arnab Jan Deka, Anupama Jain, Anita Nair, Priya A. S., etc ("21st Century"). These writers write about the present situation and give a wider perspective to understand the present situation.

The features of short stories have been changing and will be changed in the future. Now the literature is more reachable to the readers as there are more facilities available for a publication like the internet, applications on a mobile phone, blogs, etc. which support reading stories and books. Some stories are written for entertainment and have no other intention. People can enjoy their reading on their electronic devices while having free time or traveling.

Conclusion:

The journey of Indian English short story writing changes from time to time: before independence, it was concerned with the national important issues like freedom fight, brotherhood, national integration, etc. They are also concerned with the people who try to adopt the western culture, their dialects, their way of thinking and even names. These people lost their identity as Indians but at the same time, they are not English even, because they are Indian in flesh and blood. Hence, they lost their identity; it was important to awake these people and make them think about the nation and its growth. In the post-colonial period, the topics were changed

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this time the issues are quite different; they are not related to the freedom struggle and anything like that but something related to the contemporary issues: like problems of young people, problems of poverty, employment, etc.

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