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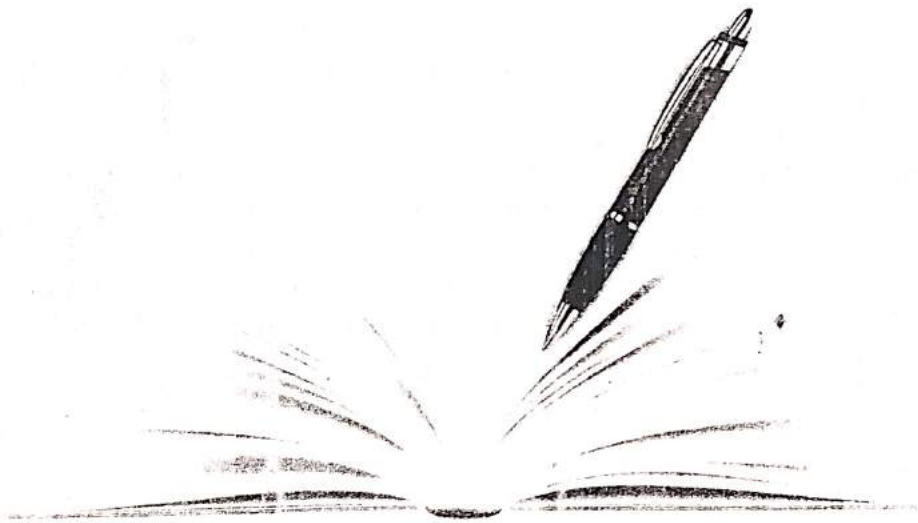
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## IMPORTANCE OF CRITICISM



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*Chief & Executive Editor*





## Indian Drama and Writers : A Critical Analysis

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Indian English Drama dates back to 18th century when the British Rule became stable in India. British brought with them, the theatre. But during the initial decades of their rule, they could not present English Drama due to the unawareness of Indians regarding the English Language. Hence, a lot of English plays, like those of Shakespeare were translated into Indian Languages and then presented before the Indians. Gradually, Western education made its way to India. As a result, Indian English Drama came into existence.

The postmodern Indian writing in English in novel, drama and poetry is gaining ground and making a separate and independent entity of its own. Now the age of obscurity and oblivion has reached completely to an end and the withered and uprooted tree, once again, has taken its roots in the solid ground of Indian culture and tradition. In its early stages, the Indian writings in English were heavily influenced by the Western art form of the novel. It was typical for the early Indian English language writers to use English unadulterated by Indian words to convey experiences that were primarily Indian. The core reason behind this step was the fact that most of the readers were either British or British-educated Indians. In the twentieth century, the writings were largely confined to writing history chronicles and government gazettes.

Indian English Literature refers to that body of work by writers from India, who writes in the English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous regional. English literature in India is also linked with the works of writers of the Indian diaspora born in India but residing elsewhere. In Time political writing in the novel or essay format was dominant, as can be seen in Raja Rammohan Roy's works. During the 1980s and 1990s, India had emerged as a major literary nation. Indian English literature novelists of repute of the contemporary times include V.S. Naipaul, Shobha De, Amitav Ghosh etc.

The history of the Indian English novel had though begun to emerge from these benevolent English gentlemen themselves. This very timeless strand was held strongly soon after by the spiritual prose of Rabindranath Tagore and the anti-violence declarations preached by Mahatma Gandhi. With the bursting in of 'colonialism' genre in Indian literature, novel writing never did remain the same. Under men like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan, the historical journey of the Indian English novel had begun to take its gigantic strides into the world of post-colonialism and a concept of comparing Indian novelists had emerged. In "Coolie" of Mulk Raj Anand, the social discrepancy and gross inequality in India is very much laid down, stripped from any social constraints. R.K. Narayan's, much-admired visionary "The God of Small Things", the invisible men and women of the country's ever multiplying population, come to life and in a heart-rending manner. In "Kanthapura" by Raja Rao, Gandhian struggle comes alive in a quaint laid-back village down south. The Indianness of novel writing in English, which was once viewed as a taboo and things of scorn due to English stronghold, was no longer needed to be depicted by outsiders; par excellence writers had come to light and with





what consequences! People like Tagore or R.K. Narayan have proved this in shining glory time and again. The perspectives from within ensured more clarity and served a social documentative purpose as well.

In the postcolonial era Mulk Raj Anand's novel *Untouchable* and *The Road*, Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*, Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance*, Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Narendra Jadhav's *Outcast: a Memoir Life and Triumphs of an Untouchable Family in India*, Vikas Swarup's *Q & A* and Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* have faithfully documented the social history of the untouchables. Together they constitute a powerful critique of the moral corruption and hypocrisy of the Indian society which allows untouchability to continue. The work offers a kaleidoscopic portrait of modern India.

Indian English Literature has attained an independent status in the realm of world Literature. Wide ranges of themes are dealt within Indian Writing in English. While this literature continues to reflect Indian culture, tradition, social values and even Indian history through the depiction of life in India and Indians living elsewhere, recent Indian English fiction has been trying to give expression to the Indian experience of the modern predicaments. There are critics and commentators in England and America who appreciate Indian English novels. Prof. M. K. Naik remarks "alone of the most notable gifts of English education to India is prose fiction for though India was probably a fountain head of story-telling, the novel as we know today was an importation from the west".

Post - Independent India has been making quick strides in the field of science and technology. There has been an admirable economic growth in India in recent times. So, the novel proved to be an effective medium for the reflection of the spirit of the age, encompassing the bitter and sweet realities of the period. The great proliferation of the Indian English novel also owes its credit to the sudden increase of interest in the new literature of post colonial nations by the west.

The contributions by women writers cannot go unnoticed. In fact the works by women writers constitute a major segment of the contemporary Indian writing in English. Today women are seen establishing their identity in almost all walks of life. Among the women writers Sarojini Naidu, the great poetess charmed the readers with her writings. Feminism themes have also been used by authors like Nayantara Sahgal and Rama Mehta. Regional fiction theme has been aptly used by Kamala Das, Anita Nair and Susan Viswanathan. Novelists like Kamala Markandaya and Anita Desai captured the spirit of Indian cultures and its traditional values. During 1990's India became a popular literary nation as a number of women authors made their debut in this era. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Suniti Namjoshi and Anuradha Mahapatra Roy used realism as main theme in their novels.

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