



INDIAN CULTURE DEPICTED IN MODERN INDIAN FICTION

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ABSTRACT

India, with its rich heritage is well identified for its unity in diversity. People from different religion, caste, language and custom live together. Different religions have different culture, and they follow it with keeping its greatness alive. This is the only country which has accepted cultural diversities and follows them. Thus the nation represents ideal integrity. As India has agreed with all the customs and traditions it becomes the nation of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is not only seen in religious ceremonies but also in literary works produced in India. Indian literature has been produced in various regional languages. Right from Sanskrit to foreign language like English is being used for creating literary works. Initially, Bengali writers started translating their Bengali works into English. Then literary works were being written in English. Other regional writers also tried their hands in English. Many Indian writers have created wonderful works in English.

INTRODUCTION

Indian writers have created their own place in the world of literature. They have been creating various literary works since the times of Rabindranath Tagore. Today's Indian English writing is known for its innovative ideas. A large number of inventions are seen in their literary works. Various innovative techniques are used. Different innovative trends are being seen in the modern Indian writing in English.

Chetan Bhagat in his novel *2 States: the Story of My Marriage* deals with the love story of a Punjabi boy and a Tamil girl. They met, fell in love and wanted to marry. But circumstances didn't allow them. The problem was that both of them belong to different states, different

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cultures. Thus the novel presents a multicultural atmosphere. The author presents the story, inter-woven with multiculturalism. The readers get to know the story without knowing that the two cultures are running around. His other novel *One Night @ the Call Centre* revolves around a group of people who belong to cyberspace profession. It represents the culture of consumerism. The people from this culture have different world. They have to deal with the consumers and their problems, without making them disappointed.

The Three Mistakes of My Life is the story of three friends who belong to different states. The narrator Govind belongs to Gujrat. His mother has a shop of sweets and other Gujarati dishes. Gujarat state and its culture is represented through these characters. He represents a businessman. Ali represents a Muslim character, its culture. The story revolves around Hindu-Muslim conflict. For that the story presents cultures of these religions.

Shashi Tharoor also deals with multiculturalism in his novel *Riot*. He not only presents different cultures from different states but the cultures from different countries. The central character of the story is an American woman, she comes to India. She represents American culture through her thoughts, actions and behavior. The place of woman is different in American and in Indian culture. Both the images are presented in the book. The difference can be well understood when the American woman tries to help Indian woman in her personal matter. Indian woman has to depend on her husband in every simple matter and American women are free to lead their own lives.

Shashi Tharoor not only highlights cultural difference at international level but also national and social levels. Farida Bi, a Muslim woman has different culture and Geetha, a Hindu woman has different culture. Both of them belong to the different social classes which again deal with different cultures. Being a Muslim and lower class woman Farida has many restrictions. She has to depend on her husband. She can't take any decision without him. Her decision about abortion creates much chaos. On the other hand, Geetha - a higher class woman has every freedom and position. But she doesn't want to do anything against her husband. She even knows her husband's affair and accepts this reality. The cultural difference in the social classes is presented well in the novel.

Tharoor also deal with the different languages used by different characters. Priscilla's English is American English. She speaks with American style. Magistrate speaks Indian English but the good one. His English matches with that of the American English. The editor who takes the interview of Priscilla's parents has low level Indian English. He makes mistakes grammatically but the meaning is understood. The Indian regional impact can easily be understood by the reader.



Vikas Swarup also deals with the class difference in his novel *Q & A*. A teenager from a slum is central character of the story. He gets into a controversy where he has to deal with the police, businessman, politician etc. Each one of them represents the different social class and their different culture.

Rama Mehta's concern is about the status of women in male-dominated society. She also presents the fact that, in India even today there is no equality in men and women. Women have to suffer a lot and face so many obstacles in living a simple life. This culture of male dominance is seen in her books, whereas Shobha De and Zumpa Lahiri present the strong female characters.

Thus the Indian writers now a day are using various innovative techniques in their writings. Multiculturalism is seen in their writings which is used as one of the techniques.

In the realm of novel reading, innovative story-telling methods have been used. Their imagination power has produced the unique creations. Their works are the perfect combination of entertainment and invention. They have introduced various innovative concepts in the field of novel writing - multiculturalism is just one of them. The use of such innovative techniques will give the new horizon for the coming generations to explore.

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