A CRITICAL CONTRIBUTION OF C. D. NARASIMHAIAH TO INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH.

SYNOPSIS

1) INTRODUCTION :-

Indian English Literature has come to its own not merely within the safe confines of commonwealth literature but also as a significant part of world literature in English and names of litterateurs like Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan Raja Rao, Vikram Seth, Anita Desai, Nissim Ezekiel, A. K. Ramannajan would be familiar in literary circles wherever English literature is discussed. The beginning of English education and knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of English language offered a fresh fillip to the growth and expansion of English in India. Throughout the world the Indian contribution has been acclaimed in the realm of world literature. In the modern set up, the contribution of India has been basically through the Indian English literature and novelists are considered to be the forerunner in this respect. A sizeable number of novelists, on the literary horizon, have given vent to their creative urge in no other language than English and earned credulity to establish Indian English fiction as a prime force in the world fiction. Since the thirties, the Indian novel written in English has become the trend making voices on the native soil, which spearhead the progressive ideas and experiments in the novel writing. At the same time, it has got a remarkable status and meaningful recognition in the complex body of Indian literature delving deep directly into Indian mind and heart which is denied to outside readers because of the language obstacles. Indian English literature has been an outcome of change, it has also become the perennial source of the consciousness and conscience of that change. The vast orbit of assimilation and inclusion pertaining to Indian mode of temperament, culture and civilization has been reflected and projected in a set of thought and theory in such savant-garde thinkers as those of Tagore and Nehru. Tagore’s philosophy of universality which he applied and embodied in his artistic sensibility, has been imitated by Nehru in the doctrine of Panchsheel, which can be interpreted as Indian historical and cultural extension. The contemporary objective situation in the thirties was conducive to imaginative work because the creativity has been inextricably embedded with the national situation in general. In the Indian tradition of learning unlike the west, the creative soul neither merely craves for universal recognition nor hawks after personal and individual identity. The Indian English literature in general and the Indian English novel in particular made its debut in the Thirties.
Tagore’s literary acumen and insight as a creative soul is a subject of study and analysis. His creative output (including drama, short story, novel, poetry etc.) represents the adventures of the individual consciousness in pursuance of the universe. His poetry and novels are an experimental documentation with the higher and finer symbolism of the finite individuality of man in the channel of self extension into the infinite, ineffable and immortal truth of the cosmic purpose. Tagore perpetuates the Indian tradition of philosophy which stands for synthesis – a coherence of the sublime and energy meant for a mediating vision anchored in Beauty. No doubt, it is inevitably rooted in truth and goodness as well. Gandhi symbolizes the empirical verve and vigour of truth and for non-violence as piety and goodness and Sri Aurobindo finds truth as productive of Good in terms of its own evolutionary supra – mental consciousness. Sri Aurobindo is not a pedagogue or an academician, nevertheless a poet and prophet, above all a critic of the new social and intellectual order. His thought structure is certainly one of the massive and encyclopedia products of the contemporary renaissance movement in India. As a great synthesizer of the Eastern and Western moral, spiritual and aesthetic traditions Sri Aurobindo will be ranked among the towering personalities of the ages. To him, the supreme poetry is man’s soul finding tongue where scholarship acquires a perfect resonance – mantra the Real. Tagore too perceives his stance as intellectual meditation, which echoes as aesthetic Beauty and Bliss.

Some Indian English novelists have registered their protest against the negative exploration of the past in the hope of a brilliant future upon which a purpose – oriented future may be based and built. They have been regarded as chroniclers of social mobility and realism and their works have subsequently been pioneering and facts bearing and sometimes extending and amplifying into an unflattering, unyielding naturalistic art of exposure and exposition. Mulk Raj Anand has brought this taste and tendency to almost crude perfection in his novels, which are essentially novels of experience. Anand and Bhattacharya are commanded by the same social concern and commitment which has made the Bengali novelist Sarat Chandra Chatterjee, believe that artist has a direct social obligation. An objective study of Indian English novels exposes that writers like Anand and Bhabani Bhattacharya, K. S. Venkataramani and K. A. Abbas not simply share the tenets of social change but also the social commitment of Premchand and Saratchandra.

R. K. Narayan, as a leading novelist has risen to remarkable heights of artistic excellence because of the very multifaceted intensity of his art – an art whose self – effacing worth liberates
itself into the realms of dignified grandeur free from the tyranny end triviality of common facts. He applies the devices and disciplines of Art to the run-away realities of life so as to infuse order out of chaos, and meaning out of Maya. Raja Rao explores a broader cosmopolitan canvas, and articulating life neither in time, nor in space, but providing them an epic design of their own magnificence and majesty in divinity. Raja Rao’s handling of the part are both complexes, composite and cohesive. The intellectual absorption and imaginative proliferation of contemporary India’s cultural synthesis constitute the innate structures of the works of the four representative Indian English novelists – Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao and Kamala Markandaya. The sagacious streams of national mind as represented by Sri Anrobindo with his doctrine of spiritual evolution of man, Mahatma Gandhi with his belief in the union of ethics and politics in the sanctum sanctora of truth and non-violence and Tagore with his saintly vision for cosmic man is the summon bonus of the Indian English novels.

A perusal of the contemporary novels deals with the writer’s preoccupation with our tradition and the curious fascination of the readers in the novels that describes the antiquity, events and episodes of greater significance which receive wide repercussions and responses. Amitabh Ghosh’s literary vision of history is not of the same persuit as that of a historian, but this does not in any way abate its worth and wonder as historical fiction. Ghosh’s novels point out that the novelist’s preoccupation with history in his prime obsession. Indian English writers through Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Vikram Chandra, Anita Desai, Shobha De, Arundhati Roy and Manju Kapur hold centre stage in the modern literary galaxy. They have earned national and international repute, fabulous royalties and achieved prestigious awards. It is 1993, a landmark when Indian English literature came to be associated with money, power and luxury. It began with Vikram Seth’s ‘A Suitable boy’ which is a soothing and sonorous unison of money and imagination. The publication of Arundhati Roy’s ‘The God of small things’ is the latest and most welcome addition to the expanding body of Indian English fiction. It is fundamentally a novel by a woman, about a woman, observed by the analytical and perceptive mind of a woman. After the declaration of the Booker’s award, it has become the most talked about work of art in Indian English novel writing.

A worth mentioning progress at the turn of the century may be witnessed in the growth of popular literature writers like khushwantsingh and Shobha De as today’s statistics suggests, are the best selling writers. Like Nayantara Sahgal and Shashi Deshpande, she concentrates on women’s
problems and gives a new approach to them. Her treatment of the contemporary urban woman’s position and the challenges, she faces as not without significance.

Among the women novelists Kamala Markandaya deserves a special mention because she is gifted with extraordinary vision of life. In her novels, she depicts race conflicts, temperamental disparities, cultural conflicts and sexual problems as factors working in the form of barriers of communication. As a writer, she has the practical experience of life in rural area as well as in urban area. Similarly an intimate study of Anita Desai’s works reveals her struggle for female autonomy played out against the backdrop of the patriarchal cultural pattern. Her creative output can be analyzed as a self – conscious reaction to overwhelming masculinity of privileged dominant gender. Her profound intellectual maturity provides a literary landscape based on as the ideological and theoretical formulation for the understanding of society in general.

Indubitably, the new era belongs to the writers like Arundhati Roy, Vikram Seth, Rohinton Mistry, Rajkamal Jha, Pankaj Mishra, Kiran Desai and Jhumpa Lahiri who are emerging and growing as powerful and prominent writers deserving world wide appeal. While the new crops are indulged in making their footprints, the old writers too are busy with their noble missions. Anita Desai’s ‘Fasting, Feasting’ has been judged as one of the finest contemporary novels of classical touch. She has been shortlisted for the third time for the covetous booker prize. In the nineties, Manju Kapur, a Delhi based, Miranda House teacher of English, has beautifully narrated the hitch and hesitation of Indian women in a joint family in ‘male construct’ society. Her debut novel ‘Difficult daughters’ won the commonwealth writers’ Best First Book Prize in 1999. The novel focuses on larger issues of patriarchy, which devise women voice and liberty set around the time of partition. Fundamentally, she has projected the women of 1940, when women had no voice to assert their rights.

The twentieth century under the charm and spell of colossus figures like Eliot and Yeats, gave a fresh turn to Indian English poetry. Sarojini Naidu, Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo were the salutary geniuses of this era. Their poetry emits thrill and flux, permanence and authenticity, not simple because of their sense of language but because of their unified sensibility end exploration of their own tradition and heritage. Tagore makes his best effort to synthesize Indian mystical though with the modern temperament of the west. He received the nobel prize for his Gitanjali, a transcreated collection of love poems with religious and mystical overtones. At the outset, Sri Aurobindo contributed some tautalizing poems of patriotic and nationalistic tinge and tone and then came back
upon Indian mysticism. His ‘Savitri’ has been acclaimed as a rare work of art in world literature, and an ocean of spiritual vision expressed in an epic form.

In post-colonial era, the Indian English Poetry took a serious note of Walt Whitman, Eliot, Ezra Pound and Bandelaire. Now Indian English poetry is not standstill, dreary and imitative rather it has become innovative. The contemporary Indian English poetry finds its sustaining source and force both from self and society. Poets like Nissim Ezekiel, Jayant Mahapatra, Kamala Das, A. K. Ramanujan has got universal recognition. Truly, Kamala Das’s English is a living Indian language – it voices her joys, her longings and her hopes. She has, indeed, achieved what Raja Rao had set as a goal for Indian writers in his foreword to ‘Kanthapura’. Kamala Das has been able to evolve a personal idiom, is a commendable task, indeed, and a landmark achievement in the field of Indian English poetry has been registered. The contemporary Indian English poets have infused new blood into their poetry by their innovative use of the diction and daring experiments with poetic modes. Jayant Mahapatra’s ‘Relationship’, Kamala Das’s ‘The invitation’, Nissim Ezekiel’s ‘Night of the scorpion’, K.N. Daruwala’s ‘The striders’ and Arun Kolhatkar’s ‘Jejuri’, are praiseworthy pieces of Indian English poetry. It is delightful wonder that the Indian English poetry has achieved phenomenal paradigm and power both in volume and variety. The canvas and counter of Indian English verse is much larger and more varied today then it was ever before.

Today Indian English literature has captivated the scholarly and critical attention in the Indian and foreign universities. It figures as a paper at the M.A. level in several universities in Indian and syllabi of Indian English literature are given in many American and common wealth universities. The salutary development in the realm of Indian English literature is the growing interest of Indian English writers in the Indian literary and critical tradition. What finally established Indo Anglian literature as an Indian literature, that is not just as an overflow of English literature rather it is the feeling of Indian-ness in the selection of subject, in the texture of thought and display of sentiments and above all the creative use of language. It has become the chief concern of Indian English literature to promote an all Indian consciousness.