**THE ROLE OF MYTHOLOGY IN SHAPING INDIAN CULTURAL LITERATURE**

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**Abstract**

Poetry, prose, theater, and plays are all examples of literature, which is a way for people to communicate their feelings, ideas, and thoughts. We might refer to literature as the mirror of life since it reflects authors' thoughts about life and the actual state of the world around them. Literature in any country is the picture that displays the honest ideals. As far as Salman Rushdie is concerned, literature is the means by which we may really understand the lives of society.

*“Literature is where I go to explore the highest and lowest places in human society and in the human spirit, where I hope to find not absolute truth but the truth of the tale, of the imagination and of the heart.”*

Although literature serves as a mirror of society, this does not imply that the author is also its photographer. Rather, literature aims to correctly depict societal distortions, flaws, faults, superstitions, and beliefs. The author has been referred to as Brahma. He establishes a new civilization as well. It also reveals what type of society he is interested in and parodies the weaknesses of the current one. In spite of its literary period and culture, it honors the defining principles of life and offers a glimpse of what the most beautiful society may look like. In this sense, the author is both national and international due to their adherence to the timeless principles of life.

**Keywords** : Human Expression, Satire, Society, Hope, and Social Distortions

**Introduction**

Literature is a mirror of the mind, a study of both internal and exterior conflict and peace. It captures the essence of both man and nature. The wide meaning includes all written forms of a culture, or everything that has been recorded in some way. The general explanation is challenging since it doesn't really facilitate discussion of the subject. Additionally, this concept ignores the fact that literature has not been captured in written media in many cultures in the past or for many original people today, but has instead been transmitted orally through myth, storytelling, ritual speeches, etc. Sanskrit theater was thought to be the first Indian theater performance, having begun in the second century BC. It demonstrated the religious and aristocratic fervor in India, which originated as a result of religious tradition. Thus, the popularity of Sanskrit theater persisted until the 17th century. Indian literature in English deals with broad, expansive issues. Indian culture and traditions are reflected in Indian literature. The social and political history of the middle of the nineteenth century was closely related to the Indian influence on modern literature. English instruction in India gradually improved throughout the first half of the 1800s.

The Indianite English was represented in the writings of contemporary Indian authors such as Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor, and Salman Rushidie. India had many crises after its independence, including social, political, and economic ones. Indian English authors of the modern era were aware of their own customs and culture. The majority of writers still write in their native tongues, however some publish in English. The majority of contemporary authors have managed to preserve the distinctive flavor of their respective regions in their writing. English-language Indian authors have had a major impact on the book. The Indian English novel's power lies mostly in India's vast and magnificent heritage.

Spolit Sort of a Rich Family, written by Alaler Gharer Dalal and published in 1858, was the first book written in Bengali. It also provides a good overview of how things have changed in the post-colonial age.

The original founders of Indian English literature, Mulkraj Anand, Raja Rao, and R.K. Narayana, were primarily interested in the oppressed segments of society, middle-class Indian life, and the manifestation of India's historic and cultural values. Every facet of Indian life has been influenced by Indian writers. Their works have painted a stunning image of India, and as a result, our nation's culture, traditions, and ideals have been preserved.

Gained a great deal of recognition in the global scene. Modern poets performed a fantastic job of bringing awareness to the hearts of the hopeless and downtrodden Indians.

Simply said, literature is an imitation of life. The actual world and literature are highly correlated. The methods by which literature evolves as an artistic medium are provided by life. The first person to consider literature in connection to the actual world was Plato. Even though he mostly discussed poetry, his points on poetry are readily applicable to all of literature.

Good writing doesn't inform the reader, hence it doesn't explain. Good writing is evident. It provides an example. It causes a reader to feel something.A skilled writer pays attention to people. The author creates characters who are essentially realistic. It makes no difference whether the species is Klingon and the environment is an alternative universe. The character reminds the reader of the human condition in some way.

Literature may use examples to describe other people's life. But we read literature to meet people in difficult situations and watch what they do, not to solve problems about them. It is not the same as describing people. A storyline might be a riddle with a character as part of the answer. individuals are present instead, which leads us to believe the tale because we have either seen something similar previously or because individuals act in ways that are consistent with what we are reading.

Some elements of human behavior may be better understood by reading literature, but it would be more beneficial to observe people passing by while sitting on a bench. Literature has always served as a social mirror. Through their works, ancient writers had painted a picture of ancient India. Munshi Premchandra, for instance, depicted the real Indian society and the circumstances of that era. the period when India was mostly a rural country. He depicted the actual suffering and anguish of the poor and farmers. The impoverished farming family in Kafan lacked the funds necessary to cremate a deceased woman's corpse.

We see a slow evolution in our culture and literature as our Indian civilization evolved throughout time. The representation of the average Indian man and woman is one of the major topics covered by our great Indian writers. Indian writers' representations of women are not all the same. It varies periodically, from book to book, and from author to author. In all, the writers have shown three facets of women. First, of the period when they were exploited and made to follow their society's customs and traditions. Rabindra Nath Tagore's works provide the greatest illustration of it. He wrote extensively on women. Among the well-known female leads in his works are Shyama, Chandalika, Binodini, and Bimla. Second, people started speaking out for their rights as their identities changed. We consistently see a revolt against the male-dominated culture, like in Kamla Das's poetry.

My femininity. Wear sarees and act like a female. "Be a wife," they urged. Be a chef, an embroiderer, and a quarrelsome servant. Adapt. "Oh, belong," the categorizers said. Please refrain from sitting on walls or looking in through our lace-draped windows. Either be Kamala or be Amy. You may still be Madhavikutty, however. Now is the moment to decide on a name and a role. Don't engage in pretend play.

She promoted women's liberation and equal rights via her writings. Finally, we find a new image of a self-assured woman who makes her own choices in the works of Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lehrai, Shashi Deshpande, and Bharati Mukherjee. As Shashi Deshpande correctly stated: "I realized then that women without men are completely different creatures."

A literary worker attempts to depict a broad topic in literary language, much as an artist uses a brush to create a picture of the country and the nation. Individuals, families, society, and the state are all really reflected in such literature. National values, ethics, culture-subculture, decency, service, loyalty, justice-injustice, brotherhood, empathy, compassion, and other topics are all covered in their insightful writing.

Innate intelligence, rhythmic sentences, inventiveness, word and concept choice, application skills, information technology presentation, phrase selection, and analogy are only a few of the issues that the composer attempts to address. Even if a writer may have moral failings and moral character issues in his own life, his writing wakes humanity.

The 1956 film Train to Pakistan by Khushwant Singh explores the life of the people living in the border hamlet of Manomajra. The love story between Jugga and Noora, as well as Jugga's sacrifice to enable Noora to go to Pakistan via train, is shown well. The ghost of bloodshed and the horrors of the division that have wreaked havoc on humanity is represented by the train.

For this reason, it is claimed that although a writer may be abandoned, his work cannot. Literary people are worshippers of beauty, and literature is a medium through which attractive ideas are presented via art, beauty, craftsmanship, and beauty. Literature is not governed by any particular laws or traditions. Education is not standardized.

Magic realism is used by Salman Rushdie in his 1981 book Midnight's Children. It examines the hardships faced by children born on August 14, 1947, at midnight.

Can you Hear the Night Bird's Call (2007) by Anita Rau Badami captures the terror and anxiety of being a Sikh during the Hindu-Sikh riots after Indira Gandhi's 1984 assassination and of being a lady during Partition.

With equal unpredictability, chance separates lives and unpredictably brings them together. (90)

It also looks at the issues facing the Canadian diaspora, the growing calls for Sikhs to have their own state, Operation Blue Star, etc. Gulzar's Two (2019) has a strong connection to the locations. It tells the story of how the people who were one before the subcontinent was divided into two. The narrative of the protagonists, who ride in a Kafila and visit different locations, are expertly woven from India's historical sociopolitical events, ranging from the Kargil conflict to the partition.

The Indian literary landscape was at its peak in the early 1990s when Vikram Seth wrote A Suitable Boy (1993). A Suitable Boy's layout is endearingly straightforward. Seth's A Suitable Boy seems to point to a significant contemporary trend in literature that isn't limited to the Indian-English category. This is the propensity for exaggerated blurbs and lurid media hype to make claims before they are really evaluated. As correctly pointed out by RukunAdvani:

Under the breath-taking façade of quantification, "the publicity clouds of the media darken the qualitative worth of a book beneath crores of rupees, millions of words, and hundreds of pages: ergo, the book is bound to be as those statistics" (1993: 172).

Another outstanding Indian author is Shashi Tharoor. His Among the best works of Indian English literature is the magnificent Indian book (1989). Considered a classic of post-modernism, the book offers a scathing reflection on the political history of modern India. Although Tharoor's work isn't particularly outstanding or Indian, it does convey the point it intended to. It has also resisted the oppressive weight of tradition and history and shown a distrust of historical interpretation. Gunter Grass asserts that "literature must refresh memory" (26) and Tharoor's book successfully does this.

According to Ganapathi, democracy is perhaps the most conceited type of administration since only democrats claim to speak for the whole populace; oligarchs and monarchs do not. Authoritarian democracies, however, go beyond conceit and assert that they are the product of a populace that is subjugating itself. This odd political experiment was now being conducted in India. When it comes to voting on their own oppression, our people would be the first in the world.

The White Tiger is a book written by Aravind Adiga, an Indian novelist. 2008 saw its publication, and that same year it was awarded the 40th Booker Prize. Through a retrospective narrative from a country child named Balram Halwai, the book offers a darkly satirical view on India's class struggle in a globalized world. The Hindu faith, caste, loyalty, corruption, and poverty in India are all topics covered in the book.

To put it simply, literature is the human brain. Similar to how a person's brain retains a record of his past experiences, sensations, and knowledge, he interprets each new experience and sensation in the context of this record. Similarly, the entire race has a literary record of its past, and it is only from this light record that its current situation and conditions can be comprehended. Without the brain's assistance, the senses' message is unclear and useless to the person; hence, the race's life would be reduced to a simple animal "existence without the accumulated stores of previous experience which literature places at its disposal."

As much as his work is a reflection of his personal response to life, a literary man is a product of his culture. Even the best artists sometimes express their own spirit consciously, and other times unconsciously. A given age's political, social, religious, and scientific developments come together to form the time spirit, which is the culmination of all of these developments. Therefore, it is impossible to completely disregard the historical component of literature, regardless of how insignificant or irrelevant it may seem for aesthetic reasons. Hudson asserts that "a nation's life has its moods of exultation and depression; its epochs of strong faith erroneous idealism, now of doubt, struggle and disillusion, now of unbelief and flippant disregard for the sanctities of existence." Although each writer's style will differ greatly, the prevailing spirit of the time, whatever it may be, will either directly or indirectly manifest itself in his work.

The spirit of the times is therefore reflected in literature. No, the writer can avoid the effects of his age. According to Goethe, every man is a citizen of both his age and his nation. "Even when one reacts against one's century and race, one still belongs to one's race and century," Renan said. As a result, literature consistently conveys the feelings and ideas of the human mind, which are strongly influenced by age. Age has an impact on people's minds because they are always impacted by the spirit of their age and respond to it with energy and vividness. The quality of the mind in which the age is reflected determines how it is mirrored. It is clear that the caliber and character of the reflecting mind determine how well a literary work is appraised based on the caliber of this reflection. The smallest shades and subtleties may be brought back by a sensitive mind, and its creations are marked by depth, subtlety, and delicacy.

**Conclusion**

Through its rich and complex tales, Indian literature, a deep tapestry of life, culture, and society, reflects the unique spirit of the country. Its foundations are found in ancient writings like the Vedas and epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana. It skillfully blends spiritual philosophy with the intricacies of human life. Indian literature has changed throughout the centuries, including a wide range of regional languages and contemporary genres while maintaining its ability to capture the dynamic interaction between tradition and modernity. It continues to be a gripping account of India's historical changes and current issues, tackling everything from social justice and cultural identity to themes of love, adversity, and resiliency. In the end, Indian literature celebrates the essence of human existence in all its variety and acts as a link between the universal and the particular.

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