

Indian Poetry in English
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Lecture - 02
Introduction-II

Good morning and welcome to NPTEL online course on Indian Poetry in English. Standing before you, is Binod Mishra and you have been listening to the lectures on Indian poetry in English.

My dear friends ,you might remember that in the previous lecture or in the 1st lecture we talked about poetry in general, and how Indians also tried their level best to write in English, despite certain differences, despite many people having different views about English being imposed upon them.

But towards the end of the lecture, we could also realize that Indians could write in English and they had a conscious urge to write in English and they started writing in English. Now, in this lecture which is the 2nd part of the introductory talk we shall discuss how Indian English poetry began.


Earlier we, talked about how Indian English literature came to be and now we will talk about how Indian English poetry began. My dear friends, we know well that Indian English poetry was started or came to India through some of the British poets.

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Beginning of Indian English Poetry

- ☐ Englishmen who came to India
- ☐ Educated Middle class
- ☐ Modern Westernized Professionals
- ☐ People raised in families where English was spoken
- ☐ Daughters of progressive fathers.
- ☐ Mostly Poets marginal to traditional Hindu Society (Parsis, Jews, Christians, poets alienated by their English-Language, rebels, living abroad)

Besides, remember I am writing for that portion of my countrymen who think as I think, whose minds have been more or less imbued with western ideas and modes of thinking."-
Madhusudan Dutt



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And some of them were women fine? So, they started writing in English, but what they wrote was not about India because in their psyche, they had England. And imitating them some of the Indian poets started writing in English, specially as you find that the middle class who later on came to be the Babus during east India company's regime, they thought that they should be western professionals and they should actually try to learn English and for that many of them not only sent their sons and daughters to England, but when they came back to India they had very radiant views. They actually brought with them are the English style, and people raised in these families especially these elite families where most of the people spoke in English, they conversed in English.

There were some progressive sons and daughters we shall discuss them one by one in the lectures that follow. But in India also, many of the poets who actually followed their traditional languages, though they were writing in their mother tongues and all. So, many of them Parsis, Jews, Christians ----they actually felt alienated by their English language.

And also felt that those who came, with their qualification from England they actually differed from them and these people actually felt themselves different, they felt themselves alienated. Now, in this regard I will make a mention of one of the anglicized Indian poet Madhusudhan Dutt, because Madhusudhan Dutt had an opportunity to have English education and he was a great follower of that.

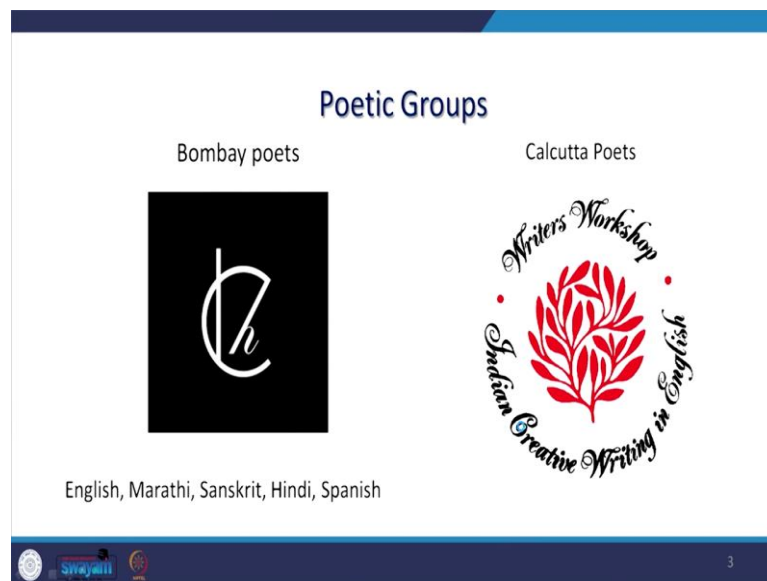
And he started first writing in English, though he was an epoch making Bengali poet which he later on became, but initially he tried writing in English we shall talk about him

also. So, he said, he once said besides remember I am writing for that portion of my countrymen who think, as I think, whose minds have been more or less imbued with western ideas and modes of thinking.

But my dear friend, to tell you the truth, Madhusudhan Dutt could not prosper as a celebrated writer in English or a celebrated writer in India. Actually he had to take to writing in his mother tongue that is Bengali, but then the contribution made by Madhusudhan Dutt is really so that we can still remember. But what he did? He actually brought the English style in many of his works.

Now, it is quite natural that when we grow and when we grow, in size because when in 19th century many people had started writing in English and you will know that as more and more people started writing in English, there were different groups of poets specially and they got themselves divided into Bombay group of poets, Calcutta group of poets.

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And then there were some publishing houses which also came into being and popularized many of the poets who till this time were not in the news. There were some journals also that came and the journals also could propagate many of the issues which then were the talk of the nation. And specially, not only and these people were not confined only to one language.

Some of them also wrote in Marathi, there were also some bilingual poets, who wrote in their mother tongue as well as in English, some of them also translated their own work into English and then of course, Hindi also was there. So, there was actually a sort of renaissance of knowledge and renaissance of writing in India.

But then as the situation; as the situation became better, there is actually one thing that we should also be reminded off and why and how? Actually after the two world wars and of course, before that even Indian freedom struggle, many of the English poets had by that time got a sort of a reputation.

And they were also influenced by the Second World War after the colonialism and then they started writing back and many people sometimes very jokingly started saying that, now we are writing ,they sent writing back to those people who gave us English.

Indian poetry in English for several reasons could not get; could not get an upper hand as compared to the novels, because even before independence you might realize though there were some poets, but these poets many of the readers and critics feel that they simply started imitating their English masters.

It was for the first time ,that the Indian novelists could make their own presence felt and the 3 forerunners you already are familiar with Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Anita Desai and many more, not only male writers, but even female writers. And not only in one part of the country, but even in Bengal you know Bhabani Bhattacharya and then in some other parts of India also these people actually popularized Indian English literature by their writings.

But majority of them started writing through the mode of novels. There were at times conflict of interest with nationalists intellectuals, cultural conservatives, and of course, regionalist.

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Indian English Writing & Socio-Political Conditions

- Second World War after the end of Colonialism.
- Indian Poetry in English did not culturally led movements inspiring national Independence.
- Conflict of Interests with Nationalists Intellectuals, Cultural Conservatives, and Regionalist.
- Poetry of the pre-independence period was discontinuous.
- **C.R Mandy**, an Irishman, who was the editor of *Illustrated Weekly* transformed the journal to one more appropriate to the newly-independent India (King, 2012, p12).



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Poetry of pre independence period actually was discontinuous, why discontinuous there are regions galore which actually requires a sort of detailed discussion. Even you know C R Mandy who was an Irish man and the editor of illustrated weekly, through his illustrated weekly he transformed the journal to one more appropriate to the newly independent India as mentioned by Bruce King in his book my dear friend.

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Modernization of India
200,000 books printed in the country between 1868-1905

"And with this new dawn of life came into the country one of the mightiest instruments of civilization, the printing-press." Bankimchandra Chatterjee.



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Now, it is also a fact to remember that between 1868 and 1905 more than 200000 books were printed in the country. So, press actually gave a new lease of life to these new brand of writers and many of those who were writing in their own language. So, in a very

subtle way because you know during that time they perhaps could not openly discuss or openly criticize the Britishers.

So, even Bankim Chandra Chatterjee when he wrote his own novel, you know he went towards the past and with this new dawn of life as he himself mentions came into the country one of the mightiest instruments of civilization, the printing press. But since we are talking about Indian poetry in English, we will also see how Indian English poetry came to be recognized.

It was not only because of the press, but then in India there were publishing houses no doubt, but many publishing houses did not publish in English. So, it was a writer's workshop which actually did a yeoman service to Indian poets and specially Indian novelists. So, the founder of the writers workshop was Purushottama Lal who in 1958 who started this writers workshop and even today it is functional.

So, it actually gave a new opportunity to many poets who were writing in English. Many of us should remember that P Lal once said that since nobody published my poems, I started my own press. And you know in 1960 Sahitya Akademi also accepted English as a national language.

Now we could hold our head high, because English got a sort of acceptance even by Sahitya Akademi. There were many appellations that we have already talked about, but then what new thing happened when we had Sahitya Akademi and when we had writers who had started writing and composing their own poems in English, actually this gave them an opportunity to Indianize English.

Now, it was for the first time that we are not Englishizing rather, we are actually Indianizing English and that is how when Indian writing in English started, you will actually witness if you read many of the novels of those days that many words of many languages got included in these words and this is how Indian writing in English.

And even and this was done not only through novels, but also through poems many regional words also came to be included. English became the link language for inter regional communication.

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con. Indian English Writing & Socio-Political Conditions

- Writers Workshop founded in 1958
- In 1960 Sahitya Akademi accepted English as a national Language.
- Identified with many various appellations.
- English language was being Indianized.
- It became the 'link' language for inter-regional communication.



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So, with Sahitya Akademi, accepting English as a national language we got more opportunities. Then as I said of course, there were certain groups, but then Indian English writer Indian English poets can be divided into certain periods ,there were certain periods. First as I said, many British poets they brought they started writing poems in English, but then their themes were not Indian they had in their psyche this England.

The early poets we will mention how the early poets they started writing and what was their modus operandi and how they were influenced or at times they also tried to show that they were they had their nation at the core of their mind. And then there were poets who after post independence there was actually a deluge of poets many of these poets have already been prescribed in certain universities.

And since then, there has been no end there is no stop poetry writing especially in English, in India is specially on a great you know a flow. And then there are also another a period of poetry where many of the Indian English poets they were not only influenced.

Because there were many English poets also who sometimes they spent most of their years in some alien countries and then they came back and when they came, back they also started practicing their hand in, even they had been writing while they were in some other countries, but then the themes of their poetry ranged not only from a sense of Diaspora, but also towards a beckoning or towards a retreat to their own nation.

So, we shall be discussing them through in our lectures in great details. Now, one question that actually is very important and we need to focus much on it, was whether or

should our Indian English poets be influenced by western ideas? Yes, my dear friend even though there were several impositions, I remember that in one of the books by Arvind Mehrotra, he makes a mention of one of the editors. One of the editors of a famous Indian journal who mentions that how one English man very jeeringly talked about Indians writing in English edge Matthew Arnold in a Sari; Matthew Arnold in a Sari this was actually a attack and to this attack one professor corrected Shakuntala in Skirt.

Now, by this time people had become and poets had become very conscious and they thought that English was not only the language of the Britishers, but English was our own language. Here, I, would like to remind you what I had been saying in my previous lecture how Kamala Das says the language in which I write becomes mine fine? The language in which I write becomes mine.

So, what the early Indian English poets and scholars opined they decided that they would write in English and while writing in English they would be talking about the problems of their own country, of course ,not keeping their nationalistic fervour on the margins.

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Influence of Western Tradition
 ('Not admirable but worth studying' -Metta)

What did the early poets and scholars opine?

Michael Madhusudan Dutt

'India became a province of European learning.'

"Kavi ani Kavita"

So, India then became a province of European learning and here as I said, many of the early poets had their stay in England. I had mentioned Michael Madhusudan Dutt who was born in India, but since he had a different sort of background he actually started following the great poets of England.

And you know, Michael Madhusudan Dutt that it is often said that he was the person who for the first time in his writings started introducing Miltonic verses we shall talk about that. And many regional poets who had been writing in English, or in their own mother tongue. So, one famous name that comes to my mind is a Gujarati poet named Narmad who said in one of his essays entitled *Kavi ami Kavita*, poet and poetry.

Where he says that *rasa*, he talks about *Rasa* actually is the *androni maja*, that is inner delight. So, the poetry and then you know. So, being an Indian he said that there should be an inclusion of *rasa* in poetry because that alone can provide a sort of inner delight to the world of poetry my dear friend. Now what did these Indian English poets do? Let us be reminded of these three words which we talk in post colonial criticism.

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Many of these poets also because they thought that they should not completely forget their own tradition which they have inherited from their forefathers. So, they had been they had inherited their tradition and they wanted that their tradition should get disseminated in their works. And next to that, they started experimenting or adapting you know, we, find that many writers started adapting.

And the last phase is the adopt phase where they feel that there could be no oppression, or they felt rather free from oppressive and overwhelming style of the past that is why, still we at times review the loss that the poets Indian English poets of today. They

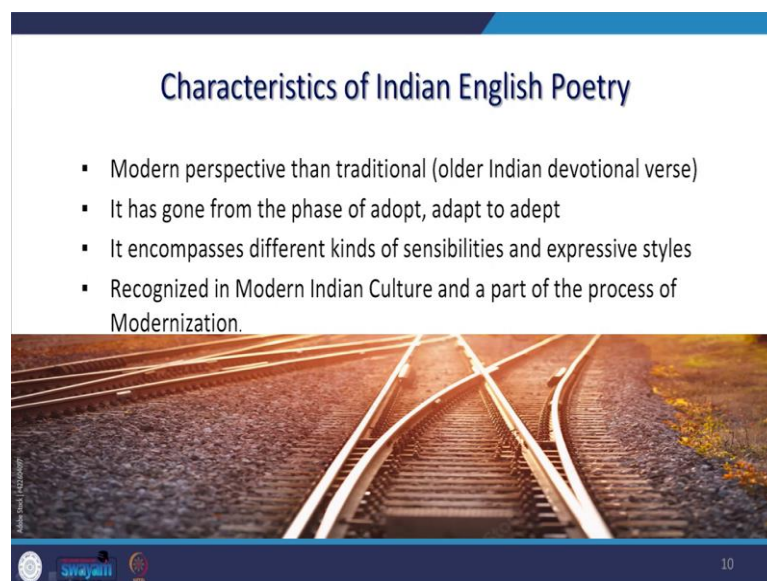
actually are ignoring their own cultures and that is why a great debate an ongoing debate is going on among the literary critics and the world of poetry.

Where they say that, Indian English poetry or for that matter, Indian English literature should propagate a sort of Indianness a sort of Indian sensibility, which is possible only when we talk of our Indian culture, when we recover our Indian culture. Because many of the poets you will find later in some of the lectures, that they started completely following the western tradition. Of course, there were many who felt that it was a sort of imposition as in the case of Tagore I have already mentioned.

That how when he was even translating his own work song offering or Gitanjali, he actually was not comfortable and he did not feel that he could write, but then he wrote and he brought a Nobel Prize in literature to the Indians and, that actually made our Indian English poetry proud and have its head hold high.

Now, what are these phases and who are these poets starting with the early ones say for example, Henry Derozio, a name which might appear quite a sort of alien my dear friend, but then this Henry Derozio what he was actually born of a Portuguese father, fine? We will talk about that, but before that let us also try to show some light on the characteristics of Indian English poetry.

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Characteristics of Indian English Poetry

- Modern perspective than traditional (older Indian devotional verse)
- It has gone from the phase of adopt, adapt to adept
- It encompasses different kinds of sensibilities and expressive styles
- Recognized in Modern Indian Culture and a part of the process of Modernization.

The slide features a background image of railway tracks receding into the distance under a warm, golden light. At the bottom, there is a blue footer bar containing the Swajal logo and the number 10.

Now, there are at times people raising questions that has Indian English poetry adopted the tunes and the tones of modern. Indian English poetry has a modern perspective now, then it was traditional in the olden days fine? In the olden days, you could find that most of the poets even though they were imitating many of them had started writing devotional poems devotional verses.

But over the years and over these two centuries now you can find that they have actually transcended and they have also adopted two different sorts of writing from the phase of adopt, adapt. Now, they have actually become adept at writing.

So, you can find the practice of the newer forms of writing which are there in some other literature specially in Britain and even you know, you should not wonder that now many of the Indian English poets are writing haikus my dear friend a tradition or a form which actually originated in Japan and that was not our own. So, we have actually come a long way, my dear friend.


It actually encompasses Indian English poetry encompasses, different kinds of sensibilities and expressive styles. You will find in the lectures to follow that how Indian English poets have experimented not only with the form, but also with the themes, also with the style, also with the meter, they are not no more now confined to the sort of musicality and rhythm.

Now many of these Indian English poets have been recognized elsewhere, I mean outside the country as well in modern Indian culture and they have formulated a part of the process of modernization, but still there are many poets who are still reminded of the fact that Indian English poetry should not get away from its tradition, from its mythology, from the spiritual values that we have been lending to the outside world my dear friend. Now, many of the works as I said, many of these poems got popularized not only through journals.

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Characteristics of Poetry in Indian English Literature

- Popularized through journal and book publications brought out by poets like P. Lal, Nandy, Nissim Ezekiel and others.
- Influenced in technique and theme by the major twentieth-century modernists as T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, French experimental poetry from the nineteenth-century Rimbaud and Lautreamont, Dadaists and surrealists, political poetry of Neruda (King, 2012).
- Decrease in distance between moral reflection and actuality.



The image shows the cover of 'The Illustrated Weekly of India'. The title is at the top in a stylized font. Below the title is a colorful illustration of a village or town with red-roofed buildings, trees, and a central square. At the bottom of the cover, there is a small text box with the words 'A FUTURE VISION' and 'THE HOUSE OF PLASTIC'.

As one of the journals I had mentioned by Kailash Chandra Dutta, how even 100 years before he wrote about 1945 you know, **48 hours in 1945** yes and. So, now see that they are not simply confined to writing about their mythologies, but they also had actually free access to their imaginations.

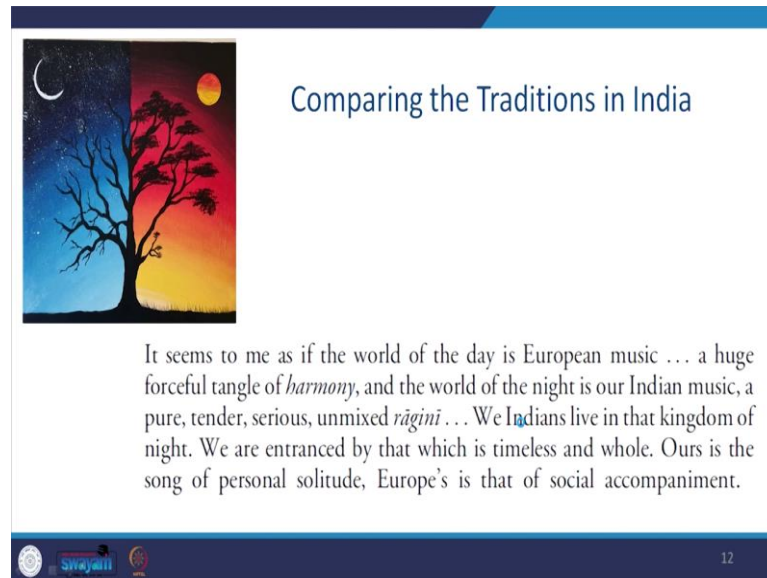
And many book publications, which as I said the writers workshop which was founded by Purushottama Lal, P Lal, Nandy and then Nissim Ezekiel and others. So, many Indian English poets have been popularized and not only have they brought innovation in terms of their technique and theme, but they have also seen to it that their themes are influenced even by the major 20th century poet T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound

French experimental poetry from the 19th century Rimbaud and Lautreamont, Dadaists and surrealists political poetry also and also I mentioned the new form that is haiku fine?. So, there has of course, been a decrease in distance between moral reflection and actuality. If you distinguish the works of some poets from others they will find that the canvas has become very broad my dear friend, the canvas has become very broad they have not only experimented with the new forms but they have also brought in.

Now, there are some newer themes also which as Indians we many of us may not be comfortable with, but they have brought it even in their poetry. Now, when we talk about traditions and the question that many of us come across so do we really leave our

traditions behind and how is Indian tradition better or what is Indian traditions stake. So, here it is quite pertinent to mention the words of Rabindranath Tagore.

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Comparing the Traditions in India

It seems to me as if the world of the day is European music ... a huge forceful tangle of *harmony*, and the world of the night is our Indian music, a pure, tender, serious, unmixed *rāgini* ... We Indians live in that kingdom of night. We are entranced by that which is timeless and whole. Ours is the song of personal solitude, Europe's is that of social accompaniment.

Who even though initially he started writing as a traditional Indian English poet, but then what he says about the traditions in India is really an eye opener.

“ It seems to me if the world of the day is European music

A huge forceful tangle of harmony

And the world of the night is our Indian music.

So, he says the world of our Indian night is our Indian music a pure look at the words

A pure tender serious unmixed Ragini.

We Indians live in that kingdom of night

We are entranced by that which is timeless and whole.

Ours is the song of personal solitude

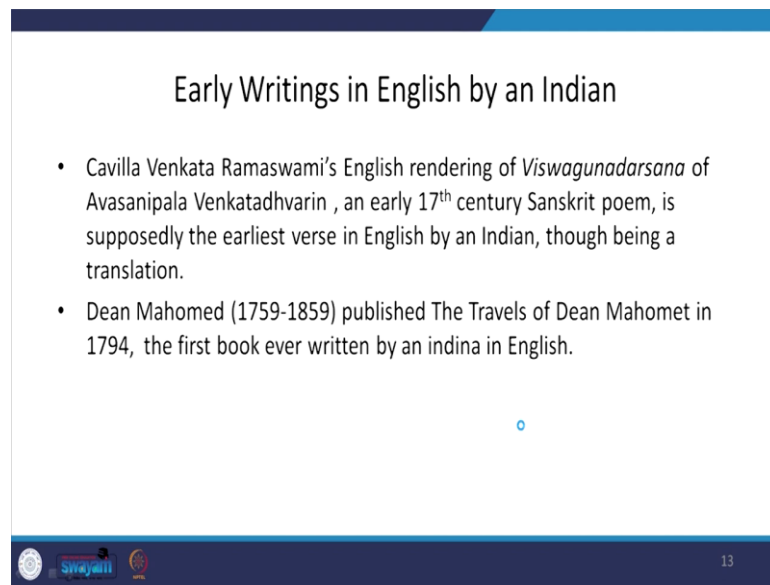
Europe's is that of a social accompaniment”

a sort of seclusion that we can find in Indian devotional poems.

And my dear friends, you will find that when Tagore talks about that kingdom of night what he actually means is, it is timeless and it is whole ours is the song of personal solitude Europe's is that of social accompaniment.

We cannot leave our legacies behind we need to talk about and that is why when Aurobindo writes Savitri one can find the layers of meaning that is embedded and the layers of values that it has got in our poetry. So, when we talk about the traditions we ought to be reminded of what Tagore says and what Aurobindo has also followed.

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The slide is titled "Early Writings in English by an Indian" and contains two bullet points. The first bullet point discusses Cavilla Venkata Ramaswami's English rendering of *Viswagunadarsana* of Avsanipala Venkatadhvarin, an early 17th century Sanskrit poem, which is supposedly the earliest verse in English by an Indian, though it is a translation. The second bullet point mentions Dean Mahomed (1759-1859) who published *The Travels of Dean Mahomet* in 1794, the first book ever written by an Indian in English. The slide has a blue header and footer with logos and the number 13.

Early Writings in English by an Indian

- Cavilla Venkata Ramaswami's English rendering of *Viswagunadarsana* of Avsanipala Venkatadhvarin , an early 17th century Sanskrit poem, is supposedly the earliest verse in English by an Indian, though being a translation.
- Dean Mahomed (1759-1859) published *The Travels of Dean Mahomet* in 1794, the first book ever written by an indina in English.

Now, when we talk about the early writings in English by an Indian, as I had been mentioning that why even when Cavilla Venkata Ramaswami who actually rendered Vishwagunadarshana of Avsanipala Venkatadhvarin it was actually an early 17th century Sanskrit poem but it could not be accepted as Indian writing in English only because it was a piece of translation.

But my dear friend even, before that as I might have mentioned in my previous lecture there was one Dean Mohammed fine, Dean Mohammed in 18th century was born in Patna and this Dean Mohammed was actually employed by east India company along with his father.


And he wrote his first ever book in English and that is the travels of Dean Mohammed, but as luck would have it this, person later on switched over to England where he got

settled and he started his own business there and that is why we are not able to consider him as an Indian English writer. Now, who is then the first Indian English poet? Of course, the name that most of us are familiar with is Henry Louis Vivian Derozio fine?.

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The First Indian English poet
Henry Louis Vivian Derozio

- ❖ First Indian English Poet
- ❖ Portuguese Descent
- ❖ Anglo Indian Mother
- ❖ English Romantic Poets : Byron, Scott, Shelly, Keats
- ❖ Greek and Indian Mythology
- ❖ *The Fakir of Jungheera (1828)*



(1809-31)

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This person you know ,where at a very early age he started writing poems and you know even though he was of a Portuguese decent and had an Anglo Indian mother he was actually surcharged with a sort of nationalism and the fervor of a young man. And you know, initially when he had his education; he had his education he was actually influenced very much by romantic poets namely Byron, Scott, Shelly and Keats and the imprint of these influences can be found in many of his works.

So, Henry Louis Vivian Derozio, who actually, he had also a knowledge of Greek and Indian mythology and he started writing in English. His life was full of ups and downs he actually became a lecturer in the famous Hindu college, but because of his modern outlook and rebellious views ,he could not survive there for a long time.

Because he had become quite a favourite of many of his students, and he had been writing poems there are many of the poems which are even dedicated to his young students where he calls to the new petals that you are off fine? And then what he wrote and what made him popular was his famous work the **Fakeer of Jungheera** which was published in 1828.

So, Henry Derozio, the lecturer in Hindu college he became famous, but then since he was influenced by western views it, was actually said that many of his students while they had to chant mantras they were actually reciting *The Iliad and The Odyssey*. And it is said, many people often say that Derozio was polluting the minds of the young Indians and that is why he had to leave the job of lecturer in that Hindu college.

But then, there are some works that made him very famous and one such was the Fakeer of Jungheera. Now, this Fakeer of Jungheera is actually a poem about a Brahmin widow named Nalini. And you see, how Derozio during that time was trying to delineate the predicaments of a widow. So, this Nalini was going to make her sacrifice when her husband was dead.

She was going to be on the funeral pyre, in those days *Sati* was quite famous or infamous whatever you say, but it was only at that time that one of the Fakeers, the fakeer the fakeer from Jungheera, Jungheera is actually Jungheera was actually a place in Bhagalpur or where Derozio had spent some time it was. There was actually a rock where many of the fakeers used to stay and that is what he has delineated in this a book also.

So, one of the fakeers came, and this fakeer is supposedly the first lover of this Nalini. So, the fakeer rescued, but then the fakeer wanted to take Nalini with him, but then he had to fight and in the fight once again the fakeer lost his life and Nalini was once again sacrificed to the flames. So, Henry Derozio even though being of a Portuguese decent he actually allowed in his works this predicament of women.

So, how can we say that Derozio was simply a traditional poet, but Derozio was actually trying to open the minds of the masses that how are the system of sati even though it had traditional element mixed in it was, not welcome to the outside world. And then afterwards he wrote some other poems also, even when as a child you know he at times questioned himself why we are not able to write.?

And he was writing under the pen name named Juvenis and in one of one in one of the writings he had said, which actually is provided somewhere in a book-----“ why is it that literature does not flourish in this country.

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- “ Why is it that literature doesn’t flourish in this country--- is the soil or the climate uncongenial to the culture of so delicate a flower– or is there a paucity of those talents which are necessary to accelerate its growth? ... there is something that withers it in spite of every effort, and every care. What it is , I have never yet satisfactorily ascertained. (Derozio under his pen name “ Juvenis”)

Is the soil or the climate uncongenial to the culture of so delicate a flower? See he talks about his country India as a flower, or is there a positive of those talents which are and every care what it is, I have never yet satisfactorily necessary to accelerate its growth. There is something that withers in withers it in spite of every effort ascertained.

So, even when as a child he used to write and he said that why this flower is not flourishing and then from his own scrapbook, he snatched some of the pages and sent it to the publishers and thought that he will be published.

My dear friends, many people might talk about Henry Derozio as one who was simply trying to glorify, who was simply try to who was simply trying to bring the romantic elements even in the sacrifice of a widow, but what we can find, we can find a sort of nationalistic flavour in one of his sonnets which he calls. And you see that even though he was of a Portuguese decent, but he had the elements of the place where he was living.

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Sonnet: To the Rozunigundha

The fragrance comes upon my heart as 'twere
A love-breathed sigh from bashful maiden fair,
So sweet, so soft. My inmost raptured sense
Of bounteous Nature feels th' omnipotence.
Thou art like Goodness, – by the cold world's eye
Unseen, unfelt; while breezes pass thee by,
Receiving a rich boon from thy sweet breast –
An odour like the breath of angels blest:
Thus, like petitioners they wake the sigh
Of incense pure from gentle Charity,
That from her home in shades unseen, unknown
Bestows her bounties, blest by those alone
Who feel their influence – the world ne'er knows
Where and for whom that flower of sweetness blows! (ll. 1–14)

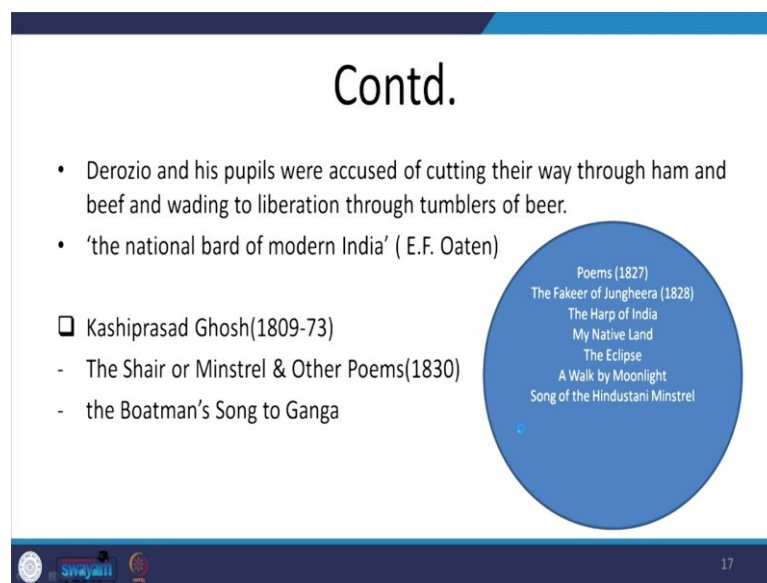
And here he writes in the poem entitle to the Rozunigundha, I mean this is a flower and in that sonnet he says :

“The fragrance comes upon my heart as ‘twere
A love breathed sigh from bashful maiden fair,
So sweet so soft. My inmost raptured sense
Of bounteous nature feels though omnipotence
Thou art like goodness,- by the cold world’s eye
Unseen, unfelt; while breezes pass thee by,
Receiving a rich boon from thy sweet breast-
An odour like the breath of angels blest:
Thus, like petitioners they wake the sigh
Of incense pure from gentle charity,
That from her home in shades unseen, unknown
Bestows her bounties blessed by those alone
Who feel their influence- the world never knows

where and for whom that flower of sweetness blows.!

So, in a way, he is talking about his own country that is India..And he had already raised the question as to why literature cannot flourish in this country and in a very subtle manner, he talks about and he sings of the glory of the country called India, where he says where and for whom that flower of sweetness blows. So, even though one can say that he simply imitated Byron and Shelly and other romantic poets, but there is an there is a universal element of his own nation in many of his poems.

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- Derzozio and his pupils were accused of cutting their way through ham and beef and wading to liberation through tumblers of beer.
- 'the national bard of modern India' (E.F. Oaten)

☐ Kashiprasad Ghosh(1809-73)

- The Shair or Minstrel & Other Poems(1830)
- the Boatman's Song to Ganga

Poems (1827)
The Fakeer of Jungheera (1828)
The Harp of India
My Native Land
The Eclipse
A Walk by Moonlight
Song of the Hindustani Minstrel

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Actually many many critics who actually viewed Derzozio and his peoples were accused of cutting their way through ham and beef and wading to liberation through tumblers of beer. So, this actually became a sort of impediment for the poet, but then there were many who praised him also, there were many who were the admirers of Derzozio and one of them named E F Oaten very enthusiastically called him the national bard of modern India.

There are other works of Derzozio also, those who are interested can go through poems published in 87, then The Fakeer of Jungheera and then The Harp of India, My Native Land, The Eclipse, A Walk by Moonlight, Song of the Hindustani Minstrel.

But then, when he was actually expelled from the college at that time there was another person named Kashi Prasad Ghosh who ,can be supposedly called as the first Indian

English poet who actually had the pure Indian blood in his writings as the critic says. And two of his works which became very popular were, *The Shair or the Minstrel* and *Other Poems* and then, *The Boatman's Song to Ganga*.

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Michael Madhusudan Dutt (1824-73)

- An epoch-making writer in Bengali
- Early career as an English poet
- Embraced Christianity
- Introduced Miltonic free verse

"I acknowledge to you, and I need not blush to do so--- that I love the language of the Anglo-Saxon. Yes- I love the language- the glorious language of the Anglo-Saxon. My imagination visions forth before me the language of the Anglo-Saxon in all its radiant beauty; and I feel silenced and abashed."

The Captive Ladie (1849)
Visions of the Past (1849)
Razia, Empress of Inde(1858)
Sermista (1859)

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My dear friends we have made a mention of Michael Madhusudan Dutt even though he could not flourish too much in the world of English, but then what he wrote were in some way or the other influenced by Indian mythologies and Indian stories.

But then he actually tried to bring a sort of difference for example, in the work entitled *Captive Lady* where he talks about Prithvi Raja and his love for the Kanauj king's daughter. And there he actually makes a sort of difference. It is said that the king and the queen were killed, but what he shows in it was that they got themselves killed only because of the opposition of the society against their marriage.

Now, Michael Madhusudan Dutt was, had started his hand in English, but then because of the advice of one of his friends who told him that you could do better if you confine yourself to writing in your own mother tongue. So, he had embraced Christianity, he was also he left Hindu college and then he embraced Christianity, but then what is significant of him is that he was so much influenced by English that he introduced free Miltonic words in his poems.

And then he wrote two dramas in English, named **Razia, Empress of Inde** and **Sermista**. We can find that later on Michael Madhusudan Dutt became very famous in Bengali and he is remembered no less than any other great poet because of one of his works in Bengali that is Meghnada Vadh where, he also distances himself from the tradition of adoring Rama, rather instead of adoring Rama, he actually talks about Meghnada and fine the Ravan's son.

And he finds a lot of courage and he actually sings of Meghnad and Meghnad Vadh has become one of his most immortal pieces. We can find that as we have mentioned that where these Indian English poets even for that matter the famous early poets were they also influenced by, yes. In one of his interviews or writings he has himself mentioned.


“ I acknowledge to you, and I need not blush to do so----- that I love the language of the Anglo-Saxon. Yes, I love the language the glorious language of the Anglo-Saxon. .My imagination visions forth before me the language of the Anglo-Saxon in all its radiant beauty: and I feel silenced and abashed.”

Michael Madusudan Dutt 's contribution in English early Indian English poetry maybe less but he made himself a celebrated writer, and a celebrated poet in Bengali and, he got he made himself very famous for his writings of course, not without being influenced by many of his English masters. My dear friends, there are other path breakers also whom we can call as one of the significant voices of Indian English poetry.


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The Path Breakers

- Infused Indian sensibility into the body of verses.
- Disowned the conventional western models
- Discovered their own style



The slide features four black and white portraits of Indian English poets. In the top left is Sarala Devi Chaudhurani, a woman with long dark hair. In the top right is Rabindranath Tagore, a man with a long white beard. In the bottom left is K. M. Munshi, a man with a dark beard. In the bottom right is Mahadevi Varma, a woman with short dark hair. The portraits are arranged in a 2x2 grid.

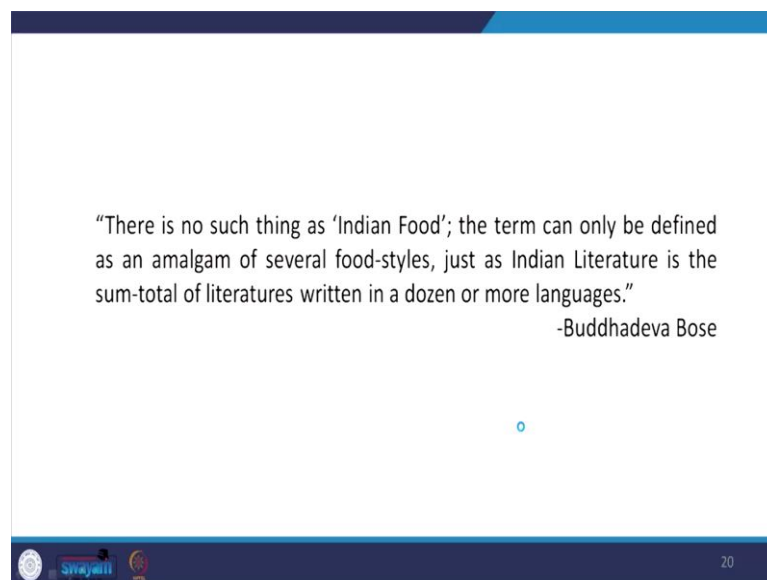
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Which we shall be discussing in the lectures to follow and the contributions of these people here you can find some of them Toru Dutt, then Aurobindo, then Tagore and then Sarojini Naidu, who in the early period of Indian English poetry made a remarkable presence felt. What they did, they not only infused Indian sensibility because Indian poetry should stand Indian English poetry should stand for Indian sensibility, Indian strain, Indian ethos in one word to say Indianness to the core.

They actually disowned the conventional western models and they discovered their own style our Sarojini Naidu it is said that no one had a better pleasant ear, than Sarojini Naidu. And Rabindranath Tagore we all are familiar with his contribution not only as a writer of Bengali poetry, but also as a writer who actually infused a new sense of Indianness by writing his famous *Gitanjali* or the song offering.

Now, my dear friend there can be continuous debates about Indian poetry in English as to how the theme, how the form, how the experiment, how the tone of Indian English poetry should be, but to conclude we can quote what **Buddhadev Bose** though he was at times criticized and admired for his remarks what he said.

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“There is no such thing as ‘Indian food’; the term can only be defined as an amalgam of several food-styles, just as Indian literature is the sum-total of literatures written in a dozen or more languages.”

So, what Buddhadev Bose says, has actually become true today we find that now Indian English literature or Indian English poetry is the sum total of all literatures. It is an amalgam of several food styles, it is an amalgamation of several styles, several forms, several themes and proudly now we can say that Indian English, Indian poetry in English has come to stay and is making its journey making its sojourn pleasant day by day.

We will see that even though many of the poets are prescribed in most of the universities, but then there are many poets who are still contributing their might, yet they have passed unnoticed and through this course we shall take some of the voices. Because it is very difficult to include the vast corpus of Indian English poets, but then if time permits, we shall try our level best to touch upon the major significant magnificent voices.

Because Indian English poetry is giving voice not only to the people living in the urban areas, but also to the people who are living in rural areas, people who are voiceless. And one of the efforts of any literature or for that matter, Indian English poetry should be to voice the voiceless.

To record not only the lived, but the unlived experiences, to record not only the imagination but the dire reality that is changing our lives and giving us a new lease of life. So, before we start a new lecture, let me say a goodbye to you thank you very much I wish you all the best and I think you will be enjoying cherishing, and relishing these lectures by me.

Thank you have a nice day.