

Indian Poetry in English
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Lecture - 40
Summary

Good morning friends and poetry lovers. Welcome to NPTEL online certification course on Indian Poetry in English. My dear friends, you might all remember that till now you have been listening to the lectures on Indian poetry in English by Binod Mishra. Friends, we have come a long way; till now we have completed 39 lectures and this is going to be the 40th lecture. Meaning thereby, this will be the last lecture of this course. I sometimes think what should I name it? Should I call it the last lecture or the Summary? I think it is better to call it or give it a name like bridging the gaps. My dear friends, everything that begins whether it is a journey, it is a book, it is a poem or it is a travel or whatsoever, it has to come to an end.

And this lecture will also be the end and the final lecture of this course. And that is why I call it bridging the gaps. Whatever we have done, whatever we have covered, whatever poetic flow has been there in all these lectures, now we are coming towards the end towards the bank.

In the hope that we can make a sort of summary of what we have done--- the aims, the missions, the objectives with which we had begun the course they have been fulfilled. So, through this lecture not only shall I try to give a recap of all that, but we will also see whether we have been able to complete the task that we had started with. So, let us see how can we bridge the gaps in Indian poetry in English.

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The Aim of the Course

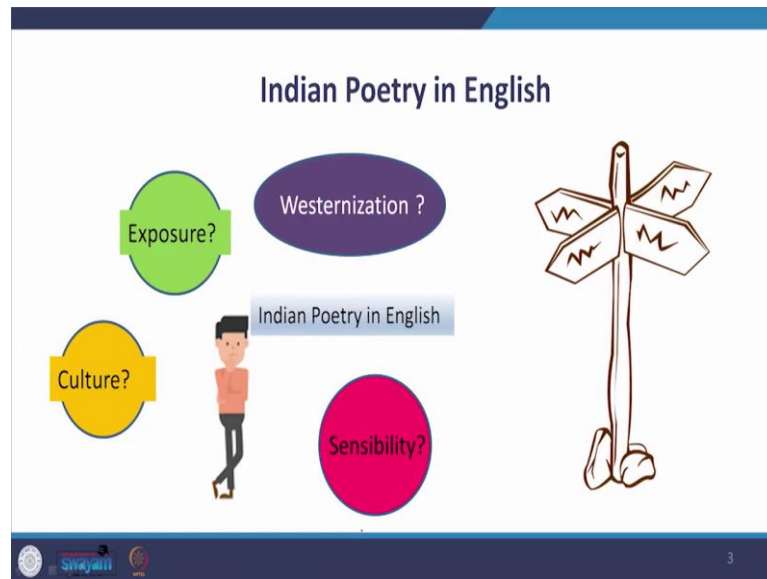
- To realize the journey of Indian English poetry the way it started and continues to make its presence felt.
- To familiarize the attendees with the quintessential ethos of Indianness comprising the musical, philosophical, aesthetic, and cultural legacy of Indian poets.
- To introduce learners to many contemporary Indian English poets.

But before we go ahead, let us talk about and once again remind all of my poetry lovers of the aim of the course Indian poetry in English. We had started with the aim of realizing that the journey of Indian English poetry which actually had been started in the early days whether it still continues to make its presence felt. And then we also had one objective to familiarize our learners, listeners and poetry lovers with the quintessential ethos of Indianness, comprising the musical, philosophical, aesthetic and cultural legacy of Indian poets.

We also had one mission to introduce learners to many contemporary Indian English poets, apart from all those who started the journey those who initiated the Indian Poetry in English and now how far have we gone till now that actually has to be realized. Now, while we say these things, there are certain things that we must keep into consideration and we must also throw some light on it.

Because as we have been saying that Indian English poetry began with a sort of imitation; there was a time when this imitation became a sort of inspiration. There also happened to be a time as in a global age of today where much flow of poetry we if we can use a proper word like nimiety I mean there has been too much of abundance of poetry which actually was not required.

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Whether all these things have been able to represent our Indian tradition, Indian culture? Have we really been exposed-- are our Indian English poets exposed also to the realities that are raising their heads or are we simply following a blind tradition? Are we really after the Westernization? Is Indian sensibility still to be found in Indian English poets who are writing or composing their poets either being in India or being abroad?

These were some of the things that we had started with, but then there was actually a time when our early Indian English poetry began. There were certain views which now after 200 years of the beginning of Indian English poetry, we can call such views as prejudiced views. Let us have a look at two views and by two people one of them being R. C. Dutt, a major Indian poet; Romesh Chandra Dutt who had once said that all attempts to quote the muse in a foreign tongue must be fruitless.

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Some Prejudiced Views

- ❑ “ All attempts to court the Muse in a foreign tongue must be fruitless...True genius mistakes its vocation when it struggles in a foreign tongue.” (R.C. Dutt)
- ❑ “ a blind alley linked with curio shops leading nowhere.” - Buddhadeb Bose(Spender and Hall, *The Concise Encyclopedia of English and American Poetry*)

He had used the word fruitless. True genius mistakes its vocation when it struggles in a foreign tongue. Of course, there actually was a comment and this comment is related to the way we started imitating or our early poets started imitating the poets of the west.

In yet another observation which was actually by Buddhadeb Bose and which was quoted in one of the major books entitled *The Concise Encyclopedia of English and American Poetry* by Spender and Hall where Buddhadeb Bose had said Indian English poetry is like “a blind alley linked with curio shops leading nowhere”.

Now, the question that these two people had raised and the observations that they had experienced or they had expressed, it is time now that we looked back over the journey of 200 years and see whether we have been able to actually learn from the mistakes, from the lapses.

And I think the scene is pretty well, it is actually better we are in a better shae. So, these prejudiced views now when we have a recap of all that we have done in these 8 weeks, perhaps we will falsify the observations which were made by these two eminent people, by these two eminent poets.

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Should Indian poets anglicize their expressions or Indianize English?



The Ramayana & The Mahabharata

Bhasa
Valmiki
Kabir
Vedvyasa
Kalidasa



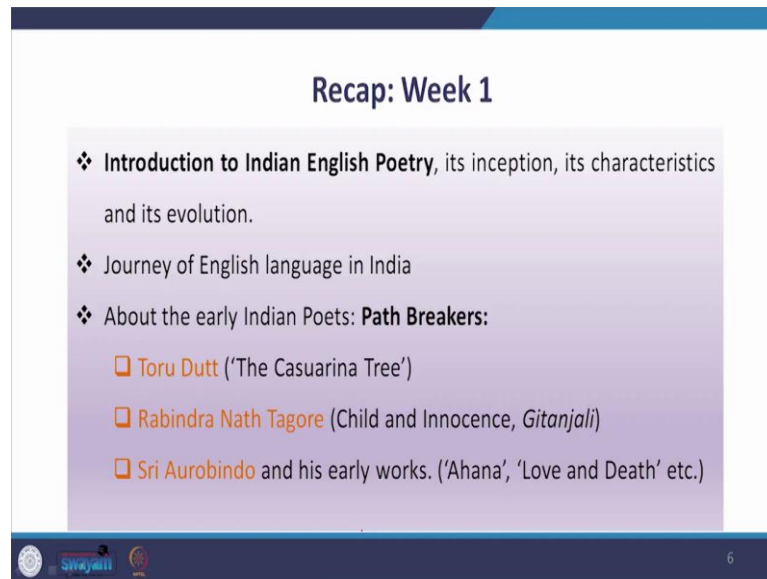
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The question that we had been raising from time and again was---- “Do our Indian English poets anglicize their expressions or Indianize their English?” You might have already come across several situations, in several lectures where many of our Indian English poets even if they tried to imitate, but then in an aim of imitating also they could not leave their Indian ethos behind.

We had already our inspirations, we had already our great people who had actually inspired prompted and ignited our Indian English poets to bring it through one way or the other the real verses. In this regard we have always referred to Bhasa, Valmiki, Kabir Vedvyasa and Kalidasa who wrote in their different languages, but later on they became the inspirations and many of their verses were translated into English.

Needless to mention that in this regard *The Ramayana* and *The Mahabharata* have always been an eye-opener and the inspirations from these two sacred books have actually been quite monumental and have really been a universal thing to be followed a universalization to be learnt from such ancient texts. If we have a look, in order to recap what we did I think all that you have listened to in those forty lectures perhaps will once again become alive fresh in your memory.

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A presentation slide titled "Recap: Week 1" with a purple gradient background. It lists key topics from the first week: Introduction to Indian English Poetry, the journey of English in India, and early Indian poets (Path Breakers) including Toru Dutt, Rabindra Nath Tagore, and Sri Aurobindo. The slide includes logos for Swajal and a small number '6' in the bottom right corner.

Recap: Week 1

- ❖ Introduction to Indian English Poetry, its inception, its characteristics and its evolution.
- ❖ Journey of English language in India
- ❖ About the early Indian Poets: **Path Breakers:**
 - ❑ Toru Dutt ('The Casuarina Tree')
 - ❑ Rabindra Nath Tagore (Child and Innocence, *Gitanjali*)
 - ❑ Sri Aurobindo and his early works. ('Ahana', 'Love and Death' etc.)

You might well remember that in the first week we not only started with the introduction to Indian English poetry-- its beginning, its characteristics and then its evolution. We also talked about the journey that Indian English literature or Indian English language had to face especially in the prime periods. And in this regard the beginners of the path breakers that we had called namely Toru Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo and many more.

So, in the first week we covered the journey of Toru Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore where we talked about the journey of the child and the innocence, where we talked about many such things which a child often comes across and needless to mention here that all of us have read in a very detailed manner the verses of *Gitanjali* which actually bring a sort of blend of the mind and the soul where we can find how there can be a journey. And this journey can be spiritual not only the journey from the real plane, but to the real spiritual journey.

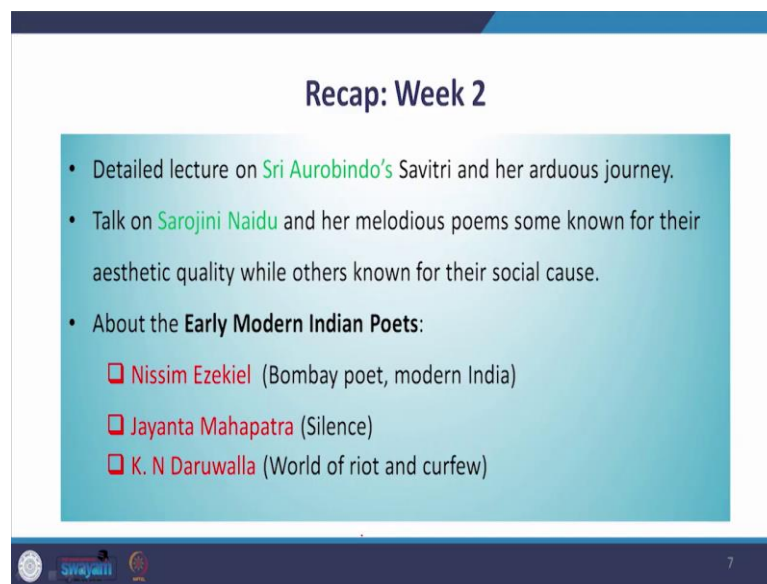
In this regard we also talked about Sri Aurobindo where if you remember well we provided two lectures to Aurobindo because his corpus is so vast and had it been possible perhaps there could have been more lectures even on Savitri. But then in these two lectures, I literally tried to bring everything in order to make my listeners and lovers aware of what sort of poetic corpus Sri Aurobindo had.

A detailed lecture on Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri* and her arduous journey where we could find how there could how a man could change himself from the earthly to the divine because everything that is possible is in our mind.

We also had a talk on Sarojini Naidu about whom we have said that she had one of the pleasantest ears as regards the musicality. Not only did Sarojini create sort of metrical composition and the harmony through her verses, but she also tried to picturize the Indian images--- birds, rivers, nature and what not while she was being inspired by Edmund Gosse who had actually appreciated her like anything.

And then we switched over to the modern Indian poets because we have already noted that our Indian English poets were not soaked only in the early phases, rather they were also inspired by the modernity.

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The slide is titled "Recap: Week 2" and contains a list of topics covered in the week. The list includes a detailed lecture on Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*, a talk on Sarojini Naidu, and a section on Early Modern Indian Poets. The poets listed are Nissim Ezekiel, Jayanta Mahapatra, and K. N. Daruwalla, each with a brief description of their work or background.

- Detailed lecture on **Sri Aurobindo's** *Savitri* and her arduous journey.
- Talk on **Sarojini Naidu** and her melodious poems some known for their aesthetic quality while others known for their social cause.
- About the **Early Modern Indian Poets**:
 - ❑ **Nissim Ezekiel** (Bombay poet, modern India)
 - ❑ **Jayanta Mahapatra** (Silence)
 - ❑ **K. N. Daruwalla** (World of riot and curfew)

And these modern Indian poets, namely the first to name was Nissim Ezekiel where we found that along with Ezekiel some other poets who actually created a Mumbai circle of poets and how they actually deliberated upon and delineated the picture of modern India.

You might well be aware that we also talked about Jayanta Mahapatra who not only provided us with a landscape of the regional, Orissan, literature and landscape and where past becomes a sort of inspiration to the poet, where the silence also speaks like words, where the silence has got meaning. And then needless to mention and doubtlessly rather

we could also go on to K. N. Daruwalla who being a police officer converted his experiences of his police service where there was a delineation of riot, curfew and chaos.

Indian English poetry is not oblivious to the fact that the changing phase of India could also be represented through the poetic numbers and that Daruwalla had really been successful at it.

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The slide is titled "Recap: Week 3" and is set against a light green background. It contains two main bullet points. The first bullet point is "A discussion on the Experimental Poets:" followed by three sub-points: "Shiv K. Kumar (Relationships and marriages)", "Arun Kolatkar (*Jejuri*)", and "Arvind Krishna Mehrotra (Kinship with American poets like Wallace Stevens)". The second bullet point is "A talk on the Confessional Poets:" followed by two sub-points: "Kamala Das (Eternal Eve)" and "Adil Jussawalla (Feelings of marginality, alienation and foreignness)". At the bottom of the slide, there is a dark blue footer bar with the Swayam logo on the left and the number "8" on the right.

Proceeding forth and while moving to week three we could also see that there were some experimental poets, namely Shiv K. Kumar, Arun Kolatkar and Arvind Krishna Mehrotra. All these poets they actually were inspired by the modern wave and they were also inspired by the experimentalism where these poets not only talked about the contemporary questions of relationships and marriages, but they also talked at times about the body and the spirit.

In one of famous poets named Arun Kolatkar who while depicting *Jejuri* says that every stone some way or the other not only were the (Refer Time: 15:02), but there was a sort of deep religiosity. And through *Jejuri*, he presents the picture of not only modern India, but India in a state of change India in a state where retreat and return to a spiritual journey is also possible. I think if you listen well to these lectures, perhaps you can get a better picture than many of us.

The journey of Indian English poetry has in its stride not only spiritualism, not only contemporary pictures, not only surrealism, but also many of the Indian English poets turned out to be confessional poets. And in this regard we can well remember the eternal eve which was Kamala Das.

And now, it is at this instant or at this juncture we could find that how aggression can also be a part of poetry through aggression from aggression to assertion of the feminine rights Kamala Das speaks and Kamala Das actually creates verses not only of the journey of the body and the yearning of the body, but the longings lost. And the longings lived relived all these actually comprise the beautiful world of Kamala Das. Initially, it may appear to be mere a sort of outbursts of emotions, but then we cannot ignore the fact that Kamala Das' poetry is not devoid of truth as regards the condition of picturizing women.

We also could see how Adil Jussawalla who mentions in one of his collections after another the feelings of marginality, alienation and foreignness. Jussawalla is a well-known poet and we have already devoted a very important lecture to Jussawalla. Not only have we confined ourselves to these two poets when we talk about confessional but when we have also talked about Gieve Patel and Pritish Nandy.

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The slide is titled "Recap: Week 4" and contains a list of topics for further discussion. It is divided into two main sections: "Confessional Poets" and "Indian Diasporic poetry".

- A further discussion on some of the other **Confessional Poets**:
 - Gieve Patel (Green Movement writer)
 - Pritish Nandy (Filmmaker and poet)
- **Indian Diasporic poetry**:
 - A K. Ramanujan (A hyphen between Indo-American poetry)
 - Agha Shahid Ali (Pain, death, loss, sense of uprootedness- Kashmir)

The slide also features a logo for "Swayam" in the bottom left corner and the number "9" in the bottom right corner.

Both these people though differing in their vocations; they have tried to picturize the inner reality of their vocation while Gieve Patel can be considered to be a green

movement writer on the other hand we could see British Nandy who actually has created verses which many of those have been sung by him and by some of well known people.

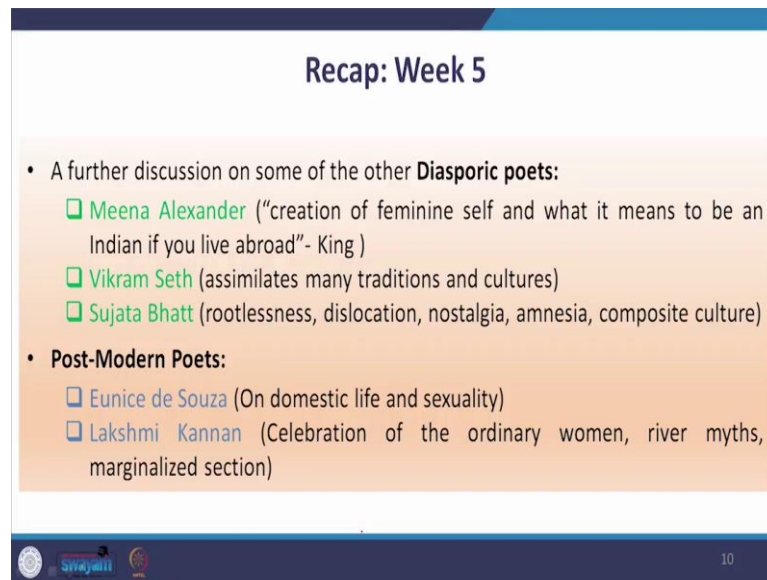
It is actually quite important to mention that British's poetry received the attention of the outside world also and he was more of an internationally acclaimed poet than of a national acclaim. Actually, our journey could also realize that Indian poets while they are Indian in spirit even when their bodies are in some different parts, India actually longs, India actually provides them a yearning towards their own culture, towards their own festivals. And in this regard we have mentioned some diasporic poets who actually in one of his own confessions A K Ramanujan one of the major voices of Indian English diasporic poetry already has not only criticized some of our traditions but at the same time one can note one can find a sort of love- hate relationship in the poetic world of A K Ramanujan.

There is no exaggeration to call him a hyphen between Indo- American poetry. As you well remember that Ramanujan was a professor in U.S and he also breathed his last there. He was very famous among his students and quite a good number of his poems have actually brought him the acclaim. My dear friends we have also devoted two lectures Ramanujan because of the depth intensity and the veracity of feelings which Ramanujan had felt in or during his stay in America.

Another name that deserves to be mentioned and we have already devoted quite a wonderful lecture on Agha Shahid Ali, who being a Kashmiri inhabitant while he was living in a foreign land, how Kashmir always pulled him back. One can have a mention of pain, death loss, sense of uprootedness, and then a longing for the lost love of his own land can be found in the world of Agha Shahid Ali.

So, some of his works have become very famous. And while you can relate to his lecture you can also if you feel interested go through some of his books some of some of his poetry books where it is said about Agha Shahid Ali that in a place where he lived in a foreign land there also he had become very famous because his sympathies were with those people who were uprooted. Then proceeding to week 5, we again continued the discussion on diasporic poets.

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The slide is titled "Recap: Week 5" and contains a list of poets. It is divided into two main sections: "Diasporic poets" and "Post-Modern Poets".

- A further discussion on some of the other **Diasporic poets**:
 - ☐ **Meena Alexander** ("creation of feminine self and what it means to be an Indian if you live abroad"- King)
 - ☐ **Vikram Seth** (assimilates many traditions and cultures)
 - ☐ **Sujata Bhatt** (rootlessness, dislocation, nostalgia, amnesia, composite culture)
- **Post-Modern Poets**:
 - ☐ **Eunice de Souza** (On domestic life and sexuality)
 - ☐ **Lakshmi Kannan** (Celebration of the ordinary women, river myths, marginalized section)

The slide footer includes a Swajati logo and the number 10.

And in this regard we took one Indian woman poet namely Meena Alexander where we can find the creation of feminine self and what it means to be an Indian if you are living abroad as had been noted by Bruce King in his very famous book. And then we also many of you might remember are the name of Vikram Seth, who actually also had been straddling between two cultures.

But then he tried to amalgamate two cultures, he tried to bring a sort of assimilation of many cultures and many traditions. Vikram Seth's the suitable boy many of you are well aware of and then majority of his poems we can find that though they hinge on love, but they also hinge on certain traditions and cultures.

We have also found in the poetic world of Sujata Bhatt, a diasporic Indian English poet who also sings rootlessness, composes verses on dislocation, nostalgia, amnesia and a composite culture. Bhatt's poems have become very famous and in some of the poems actually, she not only talks about English but she also talks or makes use of Gujarati.

So, Sujata Bhatt's world also transcribes rootlessness and pain of dislocation and nostalgia. Then we actually moved ahead and talked about some post modern poets where the two names became actually there could be many more poets, but then because of the paucity of time and because of certain you know restraints, I had to actually sacrifice some names in order to mention some names.

It may appear quite paradoxical, but that is actually the truth because, you know, you cannot do justice with every poet, but then if you have in a way been able to create a sort of comprehensive view naturally some names might have been referred to, even though many of them might not have been given a full lecture too.

We talked about Eunice D Souza and Lakshmi Kannan. D Souza who actually has also edited one very beautiful book on Nine Indian Women Poets. She herself also being a poetess she talks about domestic life and sexuality. And then Lakshmi Kannan it is actually very important to note here very significant rather that we can find in the world of Lakshmi Kannan the picture of an ordinary Indian woman.

But then, her femininity is transcribed through her depiction of rivers river myths and the marginalized section water works as a consistent symbol throughout the poetic world of Lakshmi Kannan. And then when we came to week 6, we actually gave more space to some more poets; and in this regard it was actually the women who occupied majority of space.

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The slide is titled "Recap: Week 6" and contains a list of poets categorized into Post-Modern and Impressionistic. The Post-Modern Poets listed are Tara Patel (Alienations, despair, existential crisis) and Menka Shivdasani (Nature, alienation, women's marginalization, relationship). The Impressionistic Poets listed are Niranjana Mohanty ("Merely to be human Is the gist, is the theme song Of my life, of my poetry" (Rain)), Charusheel Singh (Religious Chicanery), and Bibhu Padhi (Lower Middle class perspective of life). The slide also features a Swajathi logo and the number 11 in the bottom right corner.

Because these women poets namely Tara Patel and Menka Shivdasani. So, Tara Patel talks about alienations despair and a sort of existential crisis that every woman has to face. On the other hand, we also could decipher women's marginalization in the poetic world of Menka Shivdasani. She also talks about nature, she talks about alienation and she also talks about various relationships.

In this week I mean in week 6, we also had covered some impressionistic poets. It was actually very daring effort on my part to include some major names which might not have been given too much of a space namely of Niranjan Mohanty, Charu Sheel Singh and Bibhu Padhi.

While the world of Niranjan Mohanty actually talks about so many things, but what actually matters in late Mohanty's works are the prayers which are very much symbolical and which are very much representative of Indian faith. His Krishna and prayers to lord Jagannatha have already become very popular though still much and more and more research is to be carried out on the works of late Niranjan Mohanty.

And so is true of late Charu Seel Singh, who despite having a wide variety, is considered to be a very tough, a very pedantic a poet who actually is lost in religiosity and ancient scriptures, but through his verses we can find the truth. Through his verses we can find the representation of Indian culture in the true spirit, in *The Mahabharata* and the Ramayana traditions here one can also notice a sort of sympathy for our legacies, for many of such heroes of Indian texts who have not been given ample attention.

So, there is a sort of religious (Refer Time: 27:42), but what late Charu Sheel Singh mentions in his poetic world, he sings of the glory of this earth, he also sings of the sky, but at the same time in a very Tagorean tradition he talks about in *Tapascharanam* where he talks about the songs of life and death.

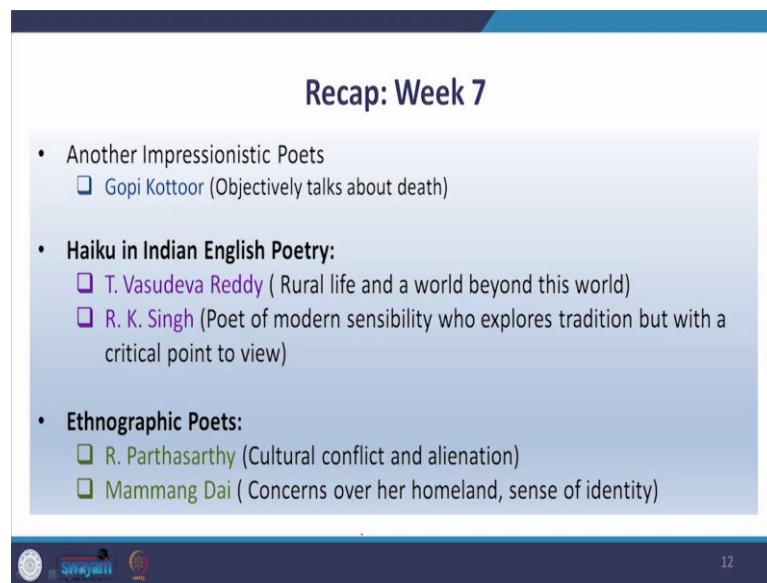
Needless to mention that in this category of impressionistic poet poets a big name can be taken time in again is that of Bibhu Padhi. Many people consider Bibhu Padhi to be a poet who actually tries to bridge the gap of the middle class of people for whom love is actually a sort of instrument to cross the river of faith, to cross the river of difficulties.

It is actually love that keeps on disseminating its fragrance far away from all lands, from the seas, from the rivers. Many of the critics often find Bibhu Padhi to be imitating Jayanta Mahapatra where both of them talk of an Orisa tradition but there is some amount of difference.

And this difference is a sort of distinction in both these poets where they talk about the silence which actually is struggling to make words that actually mean words that are not only words, but words that are actually full of messages, words that are full of meaning.

Moving ahead in the 7th week we again talked about one more impressionistic poets who even though he may not be a professor poet, but a banker as you might well remember. But one of his very important work named *Vrindavan*, if you have a look at it you will find a sort of poet who actually talks about Radha and Krishna. And through Radha and Krishna, he not only sings of the love, but he also sings of the loss that men have often met in their day to day affairs.

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The slide is titled "Recap: Week 7" and contains a bulleted list of poets and their characteristics. The list is organized into three categories: "Another Impressionistic Poets", "Haiku in Indian English Poetry:", and "Ethnographic Poets:". Each category includes one or more poets with brief descriptions of their work.

- Another Impressionistic Poets
 - Gopi Kottoor (Objectively talks about death)
- Haiku in Indian English Poetry:
 - T. Vasudeva Reddy (Rural life and a world beyond this world)
 - R. K. Singh (Poet of modern sensibility who explores tradition but with a critical point to view)
- Ethnographic Poets:
 - R. Parthasarthy (Cultural conflict and alienation)
 - Mammang Dai (Concerns over her homeland, sense of identity)

Gopi Kottoor is such name who talks about very objectively of death and at times it also appears that there is a sort of personal tone in the poetic world of Gopi Kottor, but then Kottor actually tries to bridge so many contemporary questions and tries to provide in a very subtle manner the solutions to day- to- day problems.

My dear friends! Indian English poetry is not oblivious to the changes that are taking place. And to say that Indian English poetry simply maintains sort of tradition will perhaps be an early judgment. There has actually been a new, there has actually been a sort of innovative effort by many such poets who are from Indian landscape, but they have also tried to bring the Japanese tradition of haiku writing in English.

And in this regard late T Vasudeva Reddy who in his haikus talks about or provides the picture, a panoramic picture of Indian life, a panoramic picture of rural India which is most of the time ignored by the urban poets. And that is why T Vasudeva Reddy has got

an edge over many of the modern day poets writing in English, a poet who not only talk about the rural life, but also a world beyond this world.

Actually it would perhaps be an injustice if in the course of Indian haiku writing in English we do not take the name of professor R K Singh who has been translated in most of the languages and his haiku poems have really opened the eyes of many of the Indian English poets. Professor Singh is a poet of modern sensibility who explores traditions, but with a critical point of view.

Dear friends, India is a land of possibilities, it is a land of potentials, it is also a land of predictions, it is also a land of predilections. And in this regard there have been some ethnographic poets who have actually been trying to save their own earth, their own land, their own sky, their own rock their own rivers, their own myth.

And in this regard, it will actually be an injustice if we do not give some space to R Parthasarathy who many of us only remember as an editor but with only one book entitled *Rough Passage*, he has created a sort of history in the world of Indian poetry in English.

Parthasarathy mentions cultural conflict and alienation in his poems and the three sections of his poem where in *Rough Passage*, they very beautifully carve a picture where he talks about home coming, where he talks about exile. So, such a beautiful creation of a poetic world one can find of course, in the world of none other than R Parthasarathy.

I have also tried my level best to include some nature poets and when the term nature comes to our mind we cannot forget some names who are from the northeast, but then even though they feel neglected, even they though feel that the big brother English is not providing them this space they have been writing of their own sky, of their own earth, of their own mountains, of their own river.

One can find in the world of Mamang Dai, the concerns over homeland over tradition and over the sense of an identity that is lost. And towards the end, in the last phase or in the last week we continued with the ethnographic voices where we also have given some lectures on Temsula Ao and Easterine Kire, the two cultural ambassadors of Ao Naga community where we can find a mention of Naga literature and jazz poetry.

My dear friends, many people simply might be thinking that Indian English poetry talks only about tradition and culture, but Indian English poetry has become quite alive and no more is Indian English poetry untouched with the new demands of a new age where queer writing, the writing about drug addiction, then writing about the marginalized voices also need to be mentioned.

And I have provided spaces in this regard to three important names namely of Hoshang merchant who for the first time created history when he started talking about a sort of culture, a sort of writing about those people who were neglected because they had the same feeling for each other.

It was not a sort of heterogeneous love but a different sort of love which can be considered to be a sort of queer writing, but then through that also Hoshang Merchant has made everyone realize what he really felt because these voices were before this not given proper attention.

So, to say that now anything is taboo will perhaps be a misnomer, will perhaps be a sort of early judgment. We have also provided one lecture to Jeet Thayil where Thayil talks about drug addiction which is the modern day reality without which actually the modern day people cannot think of a life.

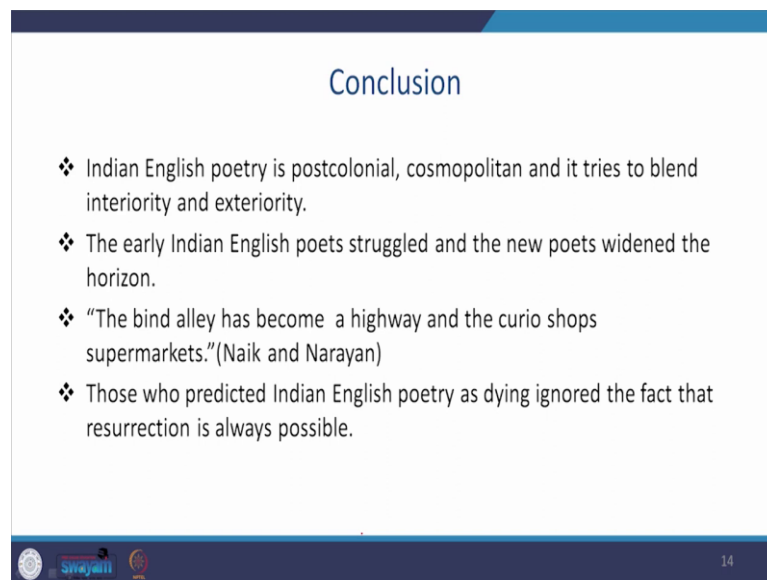
The way the world changes Indian English poetry has also tried to effectuate itself to that change. And even though we did not have much scope, but we could include one very aggressive poet like that of Kamala Das, but for a different reason and the name is Meena Kandaswamy the youngest of all the poets.

But then the sort of assertion, then the sort of aggression, but then the sort of consciousness that mina Kandaswamy had, it was for the first time that people could realize that there could also be Dalit voices being represented and that through none other than Meena Kandaswamy.

My dear friends, since it is the last lecture we will have to conclude. And in order to conclude of course, the conclusion can be long enough, but it is actually timely that we concluded by saying that Indian English poetry has come a long way. It has seen many phases, it has actually faced many sorts of cruel winds, it has also felt the sufferings the shivering, but Indian English poetry has become triumphant.

Because Indian English poetry is post colonial, Indian English poetry provides the spaces to every religion. Indian English poetry has tried to accommodate all sorts of faith. And since Indian tradition believes in a sort of cosmopolitan attitude namely to say Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

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Conclusion

- ❖ Indian English poetry is postcolonial, cosmopolitan and it tries to blend interiority and exteriority.
- ❖ The early Indian English poets struggled and the new poets widened the horizon.
- ❖ “The blind alley has become a highway and the curio shops supermarkets.”(Naik and Narayan)
- ❖ Those who predicted Indian English poetry as dying ignored the fact that resurrection is always possible.

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We have actually tried to cover all those voices which actually endeavored to blend not only the interiority of Indian tradition and culture, but also of its exteriority through different poets.

The early Indian English poets, no doubt, they struggled a lot, but the journey that they had started, the seeds that they had shown actually came to burgeon forth in the new poets who widened the horizon. It is actually time that we once again remembered what had been said by Buddhadeb Bose as Indian English poetry has become a blind alley.

My dear friends, 200 years have gone by and it is time that we make a sort of appraisal. And in appraisal of it what Naik and Narayan in their famous book on *Indian English Literature* say is the blind alley has become a highway and the curio shops have become supermarkets.

Have we not realized this change of course, most of you will agree that Indian English poetry has undergone a change, it has actually made a sort of transcendence? Those people who predicted Indian English poetry as dying because there were some voices

namely of Bhalchandra Nemade and Uma Parameswaran who had said. Even Uma Parameswaran had gone to the extent of saying that by 2000 Indian English poetry will come to an end, but I think the end has not come. There is perhaps a beginning in this end. We still find that quite a good number of poets have started and you know because of the advances of technology more and more poets are getting space.

There are e-books being composed, th there is e-poetry being written, there is poetry on the role of technology there is poetry on all the common things and happenings of life. So, how can we say that Indian English poetry will die in 2000?

So, those people who predicted that Indian English poetry would die its death in 2000 perhaps ignored the fact that Indian tradition believes in a sort of resurrection because always we have favored a sort of resurrection and we see this resurrection now.


So, before we come to the end, I think we should try to understand that we have really bridge the gap and we see now that there is a beautiful horizon waiting for Indian English poets. It is actually a horizon of hope it is a horizon of happiness, it is a horizon of faith, it is actually a horizon of harmony.

Before I sum up this lecture let me take some lines from none other than a famous Indian English poet and critic late Charu Sheel Singh who while following the tradition of Tagore's *Gitanjali* says in his book *Tapascharanam*. What he says is true also of Indian English poetry:

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Summing up
The sun shall shine
When I shall leave the cell,
Meadows shall not for long whine
Due to leaf's temporary fall.

Corpses are another name for births
And births for deaths,
Wisdom's self stretches out itself
From the life's lulling wealth. (*Tapascharnam*, Poem No. 89)



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“The sun shall shine/ when I shall leave the cell/ meadows shall not for long whine/ due to leaf's temporary fall./ Corpses are another name for births/ and births for deaths,/ wisdom's self stretches out itself/ from the life's lulling wealth.

My dear friends, Indian English poetry's wealth is inexhaustible and at times we may find when a leaf falls we find there is an end, but my dear friends should we not remain alive to the fact of what has been said in *The Mahabharata*, in the end is the beginning Indian English poetry continues.

It begins, it renews, it retreats, it recreates, it relieves, it transcends and it rejoices. With this I come to the end of this talk. I am sorry if I might have taken long lectures, but then in a world of poetry nothing can be long because the long and short of all our lives is poetry. The long and short of all traditions is the musicality and music is always the food of love, keep playing on, keep playing on.

Thank you very much.