



## NATIONALISM IN THE POST-INDEPENDENCE ENGLISH FICTION

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### Abstract

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, nationalism is defined as "loyalty and devotion to a nation, especially a sense of national consciousness," and "exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations or supranational groups." Nationalism involves a strong identification of a group of personages with a political entity defined in national terms, i.e. a nation. It is the belief that a nation has a right to statehood. Nationalism emphasizes collective identity - a 'people' must be autonomous, united, and express a single national culture. Nationalism centers on a country's culture, language, and often race. It may also include shared literature, sports, or the arts, but is primarily driven by cultural associations. And, it promotes the nation at the expense of others. Nationalism has also its effect on literature. We have seen a whole lot of era of literature focused on nationalism. Because nationalism cannot only be bound with society, culture, race or people but it also has its influence on literature too. In Indian writing in English, a whole lot of writers has shown their interests in writing nationalistic fiction, at the time of 1857 revolt then before independence, during independence after that much more literary works has been written. The major Indian writers in English like Tagore, Soshee Chandra Dutt, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R.K. Narayan, Manohar Malgonkar, K.A. Abbas, G V Desani, Bhabani Bhattacharya and many others depicted the dominant themes of nationalist struggle apart from their civilizational, cultural and historical antecedents.

### Keyword

Nationalism , Post ,Independence , Fiction



## Introduction

In the early nineteenth century, English education was introduced to India. With the emergence of English-language periodicals and newspapers, it is reasonable to assume that Indian writers would have begun to produce essays, articles, and sketches shortly thereafter. It is reasonable to assume that some Indians were writing in English even earlier than that because of the English presence in India. All of this should naturally lead to short and long-form fiction in English.

According to the essayist, the essayist describes nationalism as a "awakening of a nation to self-consciousness". For example, he argues that English literature was first introduced to school curricula in colonial settings before becoming an official subject in Britain's schools. An Indian response to both nationalism and the national movement was the emergence of Indian English literature. In order for their works to be read by a wider audience, some authors chose to write in English because of the language's widespread acceptance. Others wished to demonstrate their command of the English language by submitting original works. Even though they were once viewed as uncivilised, they appear to be confident in their ability to face anyone.

Many more and richer languages and literatures were discovered in post-independence India by the reading public as well as by the government, beyond the confines of a person's own mother tongue or province. Some states jumped in with both feet, awarding prizes and promoting translation work in a big way. Authors had the opportunity to travel and promote their works in new locations. All of this, despite its flaws, sparked a literary climate. In addition, post-independence India's industrial and scientific advancement had an impact on Indian literature. Contrary to popular belief, Indian literature retains its feudalistic and medievalist characteristics despite the fact that it has been adapted for a variety of new mediums such as film and radio/TV. Interestingly, post-independence literature in the country showed signs that great tragedy can give rise to lasting literature. An examination of 'Nationalism and Literature' can be done easily by referring to patriotic writings as a manifestation of the nationalist enthusiasm of people against foreign supremacy that began to appear in mid-20th century India.



P. P. Raveendran discusses the historical development of Indian English literature. "Travels of Dean Mahomet," a travelogue by Sake Dean Mahomet published in English in 1793, was the first book written in English by an Indian. Early Indian writers are compared to contemporary works by him. "Rajmohan's Wife" was written and published by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in 1864. A novel written in English is the first Indian novel. The stories "Kanthapura" and "The Serpent and the Rope," written by Indian philosopher and writer Rajaram, have distinctly Indian storytelling qualities. The Mahabharata was translated into English by Kisari Mohan Ganguli. His works were translated into English from Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore. Examples of Indian English writers like R.K. Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao and Kiran Desai and V.S. Naipaul are cited, as are their writing styles. While comparing Kamala Das to Kamala Das, he says that Sarojini Naidu's poem is more "orientalized."

#### Literature

In The Calcutta Literary Gazette in 1945, Kailash Chunder Dutt published A Journal of 48 Hours of the Calendar Year (6th June 1835) This is a storey! unfruitful attempt to overthrow the British Indian English literature (think Henry Derozio's poetry) has always been nationalistic in nature, as this piece of literary fantasy shows. To put it another way, Indian English literature-felt the need to dissociate itself from British rule. Critiquing both the English and Indian reality was inevitable when one was writing in English.

The Asli Bahadur Shoshee Chunder Dutt (1825-1886) was a JP. It was published in the Saturday Evening Hurkam on 25th May 1845 as The Republic of Orissa: Annals from the pages of the twentieth century. In the second decade of the twentieth century, the action in this storey takes place. Orissa becomes a republic after the British are defeated. The English language is once again being used against them!

Things changed in India when Naik refers to the Gandhian whirlwind as it struck. We're talking about a rise in nationalism and a concerted effort to create an idealised image of modern India. To get things started, we'll start with another novelist and poet. It's K.S. Venkataramani here (1891-1951). Murugan, the Tiller (1927) and Kandan, the Patriot: A Novel of New India in the Making are two of his works (1932). Kedari is a materialist, while Ramu is a Gandhian. Murugan compares their lives. At the book's





conclusion, a Gandhian colony is established, and the two friends move in. The Civil Disobedience movement is the backdrop to Kandan. The English-educated ICS officer Kandan resigns from government service and joins the freedom movement, only to be assassinated at the end of the film's run. During the struggle for independence from British rule, the idea of Indian nationalism took root. India's territorial nationalism is inclusive of all Indians regardless of their ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds. This is an example of Indian nationalism." It continues to have a significant impact on Indian politics and reflects a rejection of the sectarian tendencies of Hindu and Muslim nationalist movements.

India's literary nationalist movement began in 1857 with Kylas and ShosheeChunderDutt, who wrote "A Journal of Forty-Eight Hours in the Year 1945" and "The Republic of Orissa: a Page from the Annals of the Twentieth Century," but they ended up with different outcomes because of their differing visions of the future. On a date more than 100 years in the future, KylasChundurDutt pinpoints an Indian confrontation with the British. Indians would have reached their breaking point by this time in the future. "The people of India, especially those in metropolises, had been subject for the last fifty years to every kind of subaltern oppression," he writes in the introduction to his piece. There was no age, sex, or condition that could keep the British barbarians from unleashing their fury with the dagger and the bowl. Recalling their ancestors' suffering, as well as those events, awakened "the dormant spirit of the generally considered timid Indians," he writes.

Through his writings, BankimchandraChatterjee (1838-1994) had a profound impact on the concept of Indian religion and secular nationalism. As part of his campaign against colonial rule, he relies heavily on the power of religion. Bankim asserted that western nationalism bolstered Indian nationalism's spiritual values. Anandamath (The Abbey of Bliss 1882) depicts the Sannyasi Rebellion of the late 18th century. A lot of people are inspired by this book to give up their lives for the cause of freedom. The British government banned the book.

As Tagore saw it, nationalism was a tool of violence used by Gandhi to promote nonviolence. A book by Indian scholar Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, entitled Nationalist



Movement in India, emphasised the country's pluralism and its struggle for independence. All of India's nationalist debates are addressed by him. For example, he introduced readers to debates on the formation of modern nationalism and Gandhian masses, the role of Muslims in political participation in the nation's political process, women in the nationalist movement, the role of capitalists in promoting nationalism, and the final years of British rule in India.



International politics in the twentieth century was dominated by nationalism.<sup>4</sup> Everything from trade to the global state structure was altered as a result of its innovations in international politics. It aided in the fall of the empires of central, eastern, and southern Europe; it played a significant role in the horrors of World War II; it brought an end to colonialism; and it was crucial in the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, the three federal Communist states.

Let my country awaken in that heaven of freedom, my father, where the mind is led by thee into ever-widening Thought and action. Also in Tagore's *Gora*, the theme of nationalism is prominent (1909). To Tagore, nationalism does not ignore the human qualities that are present in everyday social interactions. For him, it is imperative that every Hindu lay down his life for the sake of freedom. With a similar premise, his second book *The Home and the World* captures many facets of India's anti-colonial nationalist struggle against the colonial system. As an alternative to nationalism, he advocated for nationalism that was based on humanitarian values. I believe that by fighting against the education that tells my countrymen that a country is greater than the ideals of humanity,



they will truly gain their India. He resented the West's influence on the country's nationalist ideology.

As a massive crusade by an entire people for national sovereignty, national satisfaction, national prosperity, and a collective understanding of one's own country, one could characterise Indian nationalism. In spite of occasional attempts to reach the pinnacle of the Motherland, the movement remained largely logical and swept by the winds of lascivious ideas.

In other words, we can say that Indian nationalism was not merely a collective fantasy, but rather the manifestation of physical potential and perceptible social attitudes. To a great extent, this was due to the forerunners' calm and collected demeanour when confronted with the heat of battle, as they were constantly examining and depicting movement's various facets and nuances.

Mulk Raj Anand was another notable author during the Indian independence movement (1905-2004). Having become influenced by Gandhi, he made the decision to relocate from Bloomsbury to Sabarmati, where he now lives. A single day in the life of the untouchable Bakha is depicted in his debut novel, *Untouchable* (1935). Also, Anand's *Coolie* (1936) and *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) deal with the plight of the underprivileged and the oppressed. The life of Moorthy in a simple village is depicted in Raja Rao's classic novel *Kanthapura* (1938). He wants to challenge the Indian people's adherence to a rigid set of cultural norms.

The rise of the Kuomintang in China is an excellent example of this trend. Having gained independence from foreign rule, a nationalist movement's primary goal is to bring about a socio-economic revolution. However, it's possible that the country's independence from external pressures can still be preserved through a pure political revolution.

A residual feeling of patriotism can be kept up by propagandist rants about foreign adversaries but must ultimately give way to social and economic concerns at home after independence. Despite its ferocity in the face of foreign rule, Indian nationalism has developed a socio-economic soul. This shows the sanity and strength of Indian nationalism.





In his novel *A Bend in the Ganges*, ManoharMalgonkar deals with the pain of the partition in an inclusive manner. In the novel, the terrorist movement's 'complete freedom movement' is depicted in a realistic manner. This uprising was a symbol of Indian unity aimed at removing the British from power in the country's soil. During the partition, this movement for freedom leads to a rise in racial hatred and violence. Fighting between Indian nationalism and British imperialism has devolved into something dreadful in recent years.

"A great national experience must surely help in maturing the novel form, because an experience shared by the people at becomes the matrix of a society, and the novel flourishes best in a society that is integrated," writes Meenakshi Mukherjee in her novel *The Twice Born Fiction*. To say that literature is an expression of a nation's mind in writing, she penned this essay. In a country, national events can have a significant impact on its literature. Creative writing in Indian English literature was heavily influenced by current events at home and abroad. The Indian independence movement has played a significant role in establishing India's national identity. It had such a profound effect on the minds of Indian English writers during this period that no one could avoid writing about it. Post-independence writers, as well as those from the 1930s and 1940s, have documented the various stages of the struggle for independence.

More recently, many writers in Indian English Literature have revisited India's 1857 independence struggle in their work. There are many works of fiction in free India that deal with the 1857 war, but a few examples are needed to show how the British were snobby and how they were insensitive to the suffering of the Indian people. Fictional autobiography of Nana Sahib by ManoharMalgonkarThe events depicted in *The Devil's Wind* (1972) take place in 1857. An autobiography written in the first person by Nana of Bithoor, detailing his life and his involvement in the revolt of 1857. The colonial officers' brutality and atrocities are also depicted in the book. William Dalrymple's 2006 novel, *The Last Mughal*, depicts the brutality of British imperialism, including the killing of all of Zafar's sons and the destruction of cherished Indian monuments. This novel by Ruskin Bond examines the events of 1857 from both a British and an Indian perspective and examines colonial relations.



K.A. Abbas, for example, uses a female protagonist, Parvati, in his novel *Tomorrow is Ours: A Novel of the India of Today* (1943) to discuss issues of nationalism and untouchability. There are many hungers in *So Many Hungers* (1947) by Bhabani Bhattacharya, which is set in Bengal during the famine and the Quit India Movement of 1942. Gandhi's philosophy has a profound effect on his characters. It is Kajoli, a village girl who emerges as a new and educated woman in the Gandhian sense, who is the focus of the novel. She rejects the imposed profession of prostitution by her environment. Because she needs to support her family financially, she begins selling the newspaper.

Nationalism and the Imagination by Gayatri Spivak expands upon her previous post-colonial scholarship, utilising a cultural lens to examine the rhetorical underpinnings of the idea of the nation-state. Indian nationalism in the wake of the country's independence in 1947 is examined in depth by Spivak in this engrossing and intellectually rigorous book. "These are my earliest memories: Famine and blood on the streets," writes Spivak, who was just five years old at the time of independence. Speaking of national identity, she discusses the significance of one's mother tongue. Nationalism uses the private realm of imagination to control the public realm, she concludes.

Bal Gokhale's fellow student at Fergusson College, Gangadhar Tilak (1856–1920), was the leader of Indian nationalism's revolutionary response to British rule. *Kesari* ("Lion"), Tilak's Marathi newspaper, was a literary thorn in the British's side in the city of Poona, India. After Tilak was imprisoned in 1897 for seditious writings, he was dubbed the Lokamanya ("Revered by the People") and turned to orthodox Hinduism and Maratha history for his nationalist inspiration. The popular Ganesha (Ganapati) and Shivaji festivals were founded and promoted by Tilak in Poona, the former capital of Maratha Hindu glory, in the 1890s, after he urged his fellow countrymen to take greater interest in and pride in pre-British Hindu India's religious, cultural, martial, and political glories. His life was dedicated to agitation aimed at driving out the British from India and returning India's people to *swaraj* (self-rule or independence). Tilak had no faith in British justice. For all his success as an organiser of the nationalist movement, Tilak alienated the Muslim population of India by advocating for stricter religious practises, which only worsened already-existing tensions between the two religions.





### **Phases of Indian nationalism: Gandhian and Nehruvian**

This success in the growth of Indian nationalism in identifying the Congress with the masses and national freedom with the betterment of their condition is portrayed differently by Gandhi and Nehru. Gandhi, in his own way, gave the nationalist movement a social-democratic flavour. A combination of his personal patriotism and the country's long history of nationalistic tendencies have shaped his views on nationalism. For him, nationalism was the result of the psychological unification of the geographical area, which had been influenced by past tradition, culture and history. "It also emphasised the people's shared identity.

First, he set out to alleviate poverty and disease through self-help and self-regulation. He left a lasting impression on the village's social and economic landscape with his blueprint for constructive action to congressmen. Gandhi emphasised the importance of establishing a regular schedule to instil a sense of hope and determination in the peasants. Oddly enough, it was in rural India that Gandhi's influence produced the first tadpole wriggles of modern-day aspirations for progress and development.

He promised the people that they would have more access to shelter, food, clothing, equality, and clean water than they did at the time. Preserving democracy could benefit greatly from the Gandhian philosophy of socio-economic solemnity and serenity. A non-violent opium of Gandhi's philosophy is not what I'm trying to convey. To be sure it does numb the socio-economic appetite and quell the revolutionary thirst it provokes. Because of Gandhi's mass appeal, a new era of social and economic progress was made possible. As a result of Gandhi's work, Indian nationalism's social democratic aspirations were greatly enhanced.

### **Conclusion**

Colonialism and anticolonial sentiments were largely influenced by the Indian writings in English as well as the writings in other Indian languages. Indians' spirits were enlivened by the literature written in opposition to the colonial regime's manipulations. They stoked the public's desire for individual liberation. They were crucial in the fight to free the slaves. Poetry, lyricists, novelists, essayists, and journalists in the United Kingdom have no qualms about expressing their disapproval of the British government. In other words,



the nationalistic movement outlined the steps necessary to move India away from colonial rule and toward modern nationhood.

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**DEAR Dr. Indu Prakash Singh**

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