CONTEMPORARY LIVING INDIAN ENGLISH POETS : 
S. C. DWIVEDI, D. C. CHAMBIAL, SURESH NATH AND 
R. C. SHUKLA – A CRITICAL STUDY

Purpose of Study

Indian English poetry has gone a long way in the acquisition of the status of the mainstream literature of modern India. British Indian Poetry or Anglo Indian poetry as termed earlier took its strides forward during the eighties of the 18th century and is continuously gaining maturity along with widening its popularity. It has flourished as a literature which has a direct bearing on the history of modern India. According to some scholars Indian English poetry came into its own only after the departure of original speakers of English. The concern of post independence poets lies in their relationship to and alienation from the realities of their society. This poetry is realistically reflecting the din and hubbub, the confusion and indecision, flashes of beauty and goodness, hopes and aspirations, faith and skepticism of our age. In brief new poetry in English has established itself as an adequate medium to express Indian situation in all its multiplicity. The period of last three decades has been most productive one. A casual glance at a good anthology of Indian English poetry can unfold a score of names that are well established in the sphere. Nissim Ezekiel, Kamla Das, A. K. Ramanujan, Dilip Chitre, Keki Daruwala, Jayant Mahaparta, Shiv K. Kumar, Gieve Patel, Arun Kolatkar are such poets who have acclimatized English language to our cultural overtones. Many more voices are emerging on the literary horizon and carving their niche distinctly. These poets gifted with creative zeal and trained in poetic skills are lending
utterance to their individual pursuits. Though less publicized, they have imbibed great poetic sensibility. We can discern a development in their attitude and perception of things. I propose to study such few new voices that are distinguished by their creative urge and superb craftsmanship. They are S. C. Dwivedi, D. C. Chambial, Suresh Nath and R. C. Shukla.

S. C. Dwivedi, the first poet of this study, is also a translator and critic honoured with Rahul Sankrityanan and George Abraham Grierson Award and an Honorary D.Litt. for his distinguished achievements in literature. A large number of his poems are published in reputed journals like The Poet, Metverse, Creative Writing & Criticism. Scholarly command on various literatures and languages has imparted his poetic criticism a brilliance of thought and expression. At home in Sanskrit, Bhojpuri, Hindi, English and American literature, he is marked by his skills to incorporate folk spirit in his poetry. Rich in Vedic allusions and images his poems are replete with universal truth and appeal. Influence of Sanskrit literature is perceptible in his poetry. Spiritualism and renunciation, social and individual stresses and psychological and behavioral complexes are dealt with remarkable clarity and insight. In his Epiphanies and Other Poems the poet observes our mundane world in the light of Vedas and the Upnishads. Following remarkable rhythmic patterns and versification, he has expressed true Indian mind and soul. He constantly moves between perceptible and imperceptible, illusory and real world of human consciousness.

D. C. Chambial, a prolific writer of English, Hindi and Pahari, is a living legend. An author of six collections of poems, Chambial is a
poet and short story writer as well as great academic, literary critic and initiator of mapping Himachal Pradesh on the literary scene. Widely acclaimed and awarded internationally for his creative genius, D. C. Chambial has a passion of poetics. Three books on poetic criticism of Krishna Srinivas, O. P. Bhatnagar and Shiv K. Kumar is a testimony of his deep analytical powers. As an editor of world acclaimed elite literary journal POETCRIT he has contributed immensely to the enhancement of literary culture. His poetry is permeated with love for common man. It presents a spectrum of longings, struggles, suffocations – all mixed together with victorious strides, solidarity and sycophancy-lamentations and yearnings. It is a timeless conservation, happening in past, future and present thus eternal in its entire ethos. Starting his literary journey by Broken Images, collection of poems published in 1983, he is incessantly making long strides contributing originality to Indian English Literature.

Suresh Nath, third poet of proposed study owns three volumes titled Bubbling Life But... (1997) and Betrayal (1998) and What Can I Do? (2001) besides other poems published in various leading journals and magazines. His critical essays on functions of poetry and poets namely on O. P. Bhatnagar, P. Lal, S. C. Dwivedi and Ikeda published in Writer’s Workshop reflect his analytical insight. His poetry is full of simple joys and sorrows, hopes and tribulations. In spite of being well versed in the imagery of established poets he has remarkable originality of thought and expression. Written in autobiographical strain, his poetry unfolds a highly sensitive soul that yearns for a touch of true love and concern. The deep pangs of agony
find universal connotation through vibrant notes of his poetry. It seems to correspondent with the stability that emanates from self realisation and self complacency. He presents an integrated picture of the complexities of mundane life. All these poems, beset in Indian atmosphere speak of Indian life in varied shades, such as faith in Indian traditions, ethos and depiction of Indian mythology in relation to present age. His knowledge of literary devices and criticism of the east and learned elites in Sikandrabad, a small town of Uttar Pradesh, he has received unparallel veneration for his dedication to his profession and social cultural ethos.

R. C. Shukla, a bilingual poet, appeared on the horizon of Indian English poetry with his first collection of poems entitled *A Belated Appearance* published in 2000 and established himself as a poet of remarkable creative potentials after the swift publication of other three collections. An admirer of T. S. Eliot, W. H. Auden, Shiv K. Kumar and Jayant Mahapatra he has superb originality of thought and expression. He has endeavoured to distinguish himself with his communicative skills, his rich and new imagery and experimental forms of delineation. His collection of poems, *The Parrot Shrieks*, is a trilogy about love between man and woman. In the conceptualisation of Eros at different stages he has penetrated deeply into the gossamers of female heart. These poems are scrupulous expression of what he himself has seen around him. In fact they are unpretentious consequences of his observations of the drama of love. No Indian poet in English has so far written a trilogy on a single subject of man woman relationship, which is both optimistically rewarding and also
pathetically depressing. A number of images are coined to articulate complexities of love in psychological overtones.

Besides being blessed by Muse these poets have a great point in common. They have been teaching English poetry as professors in college and university. Perfectly well versed in English language and literature they use this medium to express themselves. They are very apt and precise in their vision of everyday life and give them utterance in an unobtrusive personal voice. The most significant thing is that they have chalked out their distinct modes to speak of their relation to Indian milieu. All these four poets being originated from humble backgrounds represent true Indian spectrum. They reveal an emotional reaction to the modern dilemma arising from the poignant conflict of tradition and modernism, rural and urban and superstitious and scientific outlook. They have touched basic human instincts through introspective speculations. The proposed research work aims to explore their poetic ventures and contribution to Indian English Poetry. Taking into account their entire poetic corpus I intend to trace their literary growth from the beginning to the present state of maturity. It will be interesting to know whether the seeds of literati were sown in their very childhood or were cultivated under the influence of Milton, Wordsworth, Eliot and Tagore etc. which they taught in the classrooms. Undoubtedly they are conscientious artists gifted with wide range of knowledge, sensitivity and ability to transform their feelings into vibrant notes of poetry. Proposed study innovative in its kind, will unfold a new perspective of Indian English poetry.
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SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY
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Critical Books


**Secondary Sources**


**Journals**

- Contemporary Vibes, Chandigarh.
- Creative Writing & Criticism, Sikandrabad.

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