PART-IV

PROBLEMS OF INDIAN WRITERS IN ENGLISH

4.1 LANGUAGE : AS A PROBLEM :

English is a foreign language. We are foreigners to it. The deep penetration of English speaks of the British legacy. Since English is an alien language, Indian writers face some problems and it is quite natural. Indian writers in English have achieved a lot notwithstanding difficulties. Indian writers in English have always faced difficulties. The first difficulty of Indian writers in English is that the medium of expression. The Indian writer in English must be able to use his chosen medium accurately, it means, he has to use grammar correctly and has to use appropriate idiom. As Raja Rao himself pointed out in his preface to his novel Kanthapura English is not a foreign tongue, in India but it is only the language of intellectual makeup not of our emotional make-up. His suggestion is that the Indian writer in English should learn to write Indian English and not 'Babu English' i.e. the English of Oxford and Cambridge educated Englishmen. Though we use Indian vocabulary the syntax should be of English. Since language is rooted in culture Indian writers in English face the problem of language because they may not get equivalent words in English. So, sometimes, they have to coin new words. Their (Indian Writers’) writings should have rhythm of English. It is very difficult to express Indian sensibility in foreign tongue, nevertheless, Some eminent Indian writers in English like J. Nehru, Tagore, Gandhiji, R.K. Narayan, Mulk, Raj Anand
have overcome problems and achieved international reputation Raja Rao is also one among them.

4.2 PROBLEM OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PREJUDICES:

Another problem is that prejudices against English. The people are under the wrong impression that since English is a foreign language it is very difficult for the Indians to write creatively in English, presumably Indo-Anglian literature would also be of inferior worth. Such prejudices have diverted the talented writers' attention towards regional languages. Though they have the ability to produce good writings in English they have not been able to do it. In the name of Indianness some writers are turning towards regional languages only.

Such Prejudices Imply that-

- the people think that only those who write in regional languages have a monopoly of the levels of experience and even readers respond to it.
- those who write in English have neither artistic ability nor integrity of the kind so easily taken for granted in the other writers and worst of all.
- their readers are no more than a herd of gullible sheep who can swallow any stuff.

Narasimhaiah says such ill mannered generalizations will hurt the feelings of our writers who have achieved greatness whether in English or in regional languages. It is natural that the mindset of the people of any region is
that they do not take pride in writing outside one's own state one's small village, caste, family or oriented as we are, any good that may accrue to anyone else than oneself, National pride is a virtue in relation to parochialism.

4.3 THE SHADOW OF ENGLISH WRITERS:

The third obstacle that Indian writers in English face is the imitation of English writers. It is very difficult for any writer to come out of the influence of English literary tradition says C. Paul Verghese. Even the poets of other countries like the USA, Australia and Canada cannot come out of the influence of English poetic tradition. Neither American nor Australian poetry can be distinguished from English poetry as far as the style and language is concerned.

An Indian poet in English like the Australian or the American poet cannot ignore English poetic traditions. He may not consciously imitate them, but is unconsciously influenced by the English poetic norms. If an Indian wants to write poems in English he cannot follow Indian poetic tradition. What is important then is that the Indian poets, use of English should be adequate for him to express his personality or his experience. In acceptable literary traditions only the writers who know about English poetic traditions and his poetic experience can achieve this. Sarojini Naidu could achieve this greatness because she acted upon Edmund Gosses advice to cultivate Indianness- "to reveal the heart of India"- in her theme and treatment and not try to imitate the English classics mechanically.
4.4 SOME OTHER DIFFICULTIES:

Indian writer had to face many other difficulties because some publisher were indifferent, unwilling to publish their works. Because of the conservative and nonadventurous nature of the Indian publishers and risky investments the writers had to persuade them then they would accept Indo-Anglian works with great caution. Then, there is the dearth of literary criticism, literary criticism will help in producing standard literature and for the recommendation of the works to the reading public. Indo Anglian literature has suffered on both these counts. Even standard works have tended to remain depressed because of lack of any significant tradition of literary criticism; and the reading public has been in a dilemma that which works to read and which works to reject as poor or worthless. It is because of the lack of guidance the reading public is turning towards English literature instead of Indo-Anglian literature. It has been observed that the reading public is under the wrong impression that Indian writers in English are not worth much time or energy. However in recent times popular periodicals like 'The Illustrated Weekly of India and 'The Literary Miscellany' of the workshop school of poets, have rendered valuable service in this connection.

"Indian English writers work obviously work under a kind of creative tension with which writers writing in their native languages are not confronted. Besides the tight rope walking on the linguistic front, Indian English writers have to contend with another difficult choice :writing for a foreign as well as native clientele ,the former require them to explain uniquely
Indian thoughts and situations, the latter treating such explanation of the obvious as inartistic and an excrescence, placing the writer on the horns of a uniquely a situational dilemma."

"The Indian English writer has to choose his own blend of tradition-both Indian and English—and individual talent, the capability to synthesize them and forge his experience into a unique artistic amalgam meeting the dual requirements—an inevitable and exacting requirement incontrovertibly."

"Meenakhi Mukherjee's chapter; 'The problem of style in 'The Twice Born Fiction' (1971) has some examples of such discussions.

The problems of authenticity, in the case of fiction writers, was two-fold; (a) they were writing in a Language that was not their own, and (b) they were writing in English about people who do not normally speak or think in English. The first problem was not as important as the second because, if a writer was not at home in English he or she would not attempt creative writing in English at all.

The second problem was more real and serious but the general view was that the novelist had solved it by means of experiments in style. These experiments could be classified under three heads:

1. The introduction of words from the Indian languages through transliteration (e.g. koi. hai?, nahin, burra sahib, etc.).


2. Experiments in diction and imagery through literal translation from the Indian languages (e.g. 'a rain of flowers' ‘always the same Rammaya’ May she have a hundred male issues ‘a rich whispering like a crowd at evening worship’- all from Raja Rao's The cow of the Barricades).

3. Experiments in syntax (fashioning English syntax on the syntactic lines of Indian languages). E.g He had one servant, two servants (Raja Rao in The Cow of the Barricades).

The point to note about these linguistic features is that they were all part of these fiction writers' attempt to Indianise English or in other words to evolve an Indian English to suit their purposes. They were mostly innovations by the writers themselves and not transcripts of actual Indian English speech or writing. Even if we do not accept the view that these innovations were assertions of identity on the part of the colonial or post-colonial subject, we must at any rate grant that they were techniques adopted by the writers for artistic purposes, to achieve authenticity either for the entire narration (as for example in the case of Kanthapura) or for individual characters (as in the case of Anand and many others). In any case, to repeat the point made earlier, such uses of Indian English do not necessarily reflect actual Indian English usage.

The stylistic divide I wish to consider in this paper is different from the ones discussed above one definition of style could be that it is the exploitation of different existing varieties of the languages in question. It follows then that the Indian creative writer has at his or her disposal the multiple layers or varieties of Indian English with all their social and cultural moorings and that
these provide the writer the opportunity not only to individualise characters but more importantly, to delineate social class distinctions as well as the desire, fulfilled or frustrated, to achieve mobility. I venture to say that this particular, linguistic fact—the existence of different layers or kinds of Indian English—has not been exploited in a significant way or to a considerable extent by Indian fiction writers in English.\footnote{Mohan Ramanan, P Shailaja, 2000, English and The Indian Short Story Essays in Criticism, Orient Longman, p-54-55.}

We find magic casement in Raja Rao's works also like in Keats' poems. Keats' poems are fed on myths. Even if you want to bring fact of history home you cannot bring it unless it is mythologized. Hence Indians are accused by westerners that Indians have no sense of history. It is ironical that some of the better historians look at history as myth just in order to enhance its value while for a public man like Jawaharlal Nehru even myth becomes history.

The name Kanthapura itself has grown out of 'Kantha' meaning 'Romantic wife' in Sanskrit poetry but tested in the fire of Gandhians movement when it got transferred into Kashipura the other name for holy Benarus. The mythifications are tributes to the novelist celebration of feminine principle.
PART V
FINDINGS

1. A lot of work has been done on various aspects of Raja Rao's novels. But, for the first time, a comprehensive linguistic analysis of Raja Rao's novels has been done at phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic and stylistic levels.

2. "Raja Rao has thought much about the problem of appropriate language of expression. When he began his literary career in the nineteen thirties, it was after a good deal of serious consideration that he decided to write in the English language. Though he thought that Sanskrit was extremely rich and suited most naturally to his needs, yet he did not use it because he felt that it was beyond his competence to do so. He found French only next to Sanskrit as a suitable language for his requirements, but he could not choose it because "it's like a harp (or vina); its delicacy needed an excellence of instinct and knowledge that seemed well-nigh terrifying. At one time Raja Rao wanted to write in Kannada, his mother-tongue, but soon he discerned its deficiencies and its unsuitability to his purpose, and so he abandoned it. Explaining this in an interview, he affirmed; "Kannada needs modernising. When I started writing I found Kannada to be very limiting. For example, if I wish to say "a young lady came to interview me," I would not have known how to say it in Kannada at that time, for there was no such thing as the "interview" and young ladies never interviewed! The
whole idea would have been foreign and I would have been writing in a language where there was no relation between the language and the idea expressed... So Kannada was not good enough for me.”

Inevitably, Raja Rao was left with no option but to adopt English as the language of his creative writings, and he did not fail to notice the greatness of this language and its power of catalyzing his impulses. However, he wanted to adapt it to Indian sensibility and his own demands. He attempted to adjust it to the Indian emotional make-up and thus to transform it into Sanskritic English. He was inspired to do so by the example of the Irish writers like Yeats, James Joyce and others who created in Irish English to suit their purposes. Explaining his view on this point, Raja Rao writes in the Foreword to Kanthapura.”

3. His novels have uniqueness not only in philosophy and Indianness but also from language point of view because some of his novels have not only Kannada sentence structures juxtaposed with English sentence structures. The language is also unique in his novels.

4. These novels are worth of study because there is mingling of Kannada and English, eastern and western cultures, language etc. So, an attempt has been made to do linguistic analysis of Raja Rao’s novels.

5. Deliberate use of the influence of mother tongue can be observed in some of his novels. For, though he spent most of his life in France and the USA he did not adopt the style and form of English writers purposely. Because
the themes of the novels were of India, he used the mixture of the regional language and English.

6. Raja Rao created such characters who are unique and likewise he has given names to them.

Names of the people based on their Professions:

Barrister Shastri

Names Indicating Relationships:

Pandit Venkateshia’s daughter-in-law Laxmi

Identifying people based on their residence:

Corner house Moorthy

Names of the people based on their appearance:

Nose Scratching Nanjanna

Names of the people based on their habits:

Waterfall Venkamma

6. The coinage of some idioms and translations of some Kannada words, names and abuses are noteworthy.

Eg. To crush it in the seed.
    Son of concubine.
    Corner house Moorthy.

7. Poetic quality can be observed in some of his novels. Though the novelist has written many verses he has not followed prosody, because they were
created contextually. It can be observed in the following folk song. How important Goddess Kenchamma was for the people of Kantapura.

**Kenchamma, Kenchamma,**

Goddess benign and bounteous,

Mother of earth, blood of life,

Harvest-queen, rain-crowned,

Kenchamma, Kenchamma,

Goddess benign and bounteous

8. Raja Rao’s style is unique in the sense he has tried to develop a variety of Indian English. He has written Kannada novel in English because words are Kannada but organization is English especially in Kanthapura.

We find Kannada syntactic structure from the beginning itself in the novel. Here the writer has tried by means of sentence structures to reproduce the Kannada language spoken in the area of Karnataka.

Eg: High on the Ghats is it, high up the steep mountains that face the cool Arabian seas, up the Malabar coast is it, up Mangalore and Puttur and many a center of cardamom and coffee, rice and sugarcane.

9. Inspite of living in a foreign country he has tried to bring local colour in some of his novels. He is Indian both in sensibility and temperament. Though living in France he has written about Indian life.

10. He has tried to glorify Indian culture by suitting language to culture. Because he talks about haircutting ceremony, nuptial ceremony, seventh month ceremony and funeral ceremony.
11. Lengthy paragraphs are noticeable in his novels especially in Kanthapura. The Skeffington Coffee Estate rises beyond the Bebbur Mound over the Bear’s Hill, hanging over Tippur and Subbur and Kantur, it swings round the elephant Valley, and rising to shoulder the Snow Mountains and the Beda Ghats, it dips sheer into the Himavathy, and follows on from the Balepur Toll-gate corner to the Kenchamma hill, where it turns again and skirts Bhatta’s Devil’s fields and Range Gowda’s coconut garden, and at the Tippur stream it rises again and is lost amidst the jungle growths of the Horse-head Hill. Nobody knows how large it is or when it was founded; but they all say it is at least ten thousand acres wide, and some people in Kanthapura can still remember having heard of the Hunter Sahib who used his hunter and his hand to reap the first fruits of his plantation; and then it began to grow from the Bear’s Hill to Kantur Hill, and more and more coolies came from beneath the Ghats, and from the Bear’s Hill and Kantur it touched the Snow Mountains, and more and more coolies came; and then it became bigger and bigger, till it touched all the hills around our village, and still more and more coolies came—coollyes from below the Ghats that talked Tamil or Telugu and who brought with them their old men and their children and their widowed women—armies of coolies marched past the Kenchamma Temple, half-naked, starving, spitting, weeping, vomiting, coughing, shivering, squeaking, shouting, moaning coolies—coollyes after coolies passed by the Kenchamma Temple, the maistri before them, while the children clung to their mothers’ breasts, the old men to their sons arms, and bundles hung over shoulder and arm and
arm and shoulder and head; and they marched on past the kenchamma Temple and up to the Skeffington Coffee Estate – coolies from below the Ghats, coolies, young men, old women, children, baskets, bundles, pots, coolies passed on- and winding through the twists of the Estate path- by the Buxom- papal bend, over the Devil’s Ravine Bridge, by the Parvatiwell Corner- they marched up. The maistri before them, the maistri that had gone to their village next to their village, and to the village next to that, and that is far away, a day’s journey by road and a night’s journey by train and a day again in it, and then along the Godavary’s banks, by road and by lane and by footpath, there he came and offered a four-anna bit for a man and a two – anna bit for a woman, and they all said, ‘Is there rice there ?’ and he said,’There is nothing but rice around us’ ; and they all said, ‘That is a fine country, for here, year after year, we have had neither rain nor canal- water, and our masters have left for the city’ ; and so he gave them a white rupee for each and they said, ‘This is a very fine man,’ and they all assembled at night, and Ramanna the elder said, ‘Now we will go, a four- anna bit for a man and a two-anna bit for a woman,’ and they all said, ‘ There, there’s rice’ ; and the pots become empty of water and the sacks began to grow fat with clothes, and the pots on their heads and the clothes in their arms, they marched on and on by the Godavary, by path and by lane and by road; and the trains came and they got into them, and the maistri bought them a handful of puffed – rice for each and a little salted gram for each, and he smiled so that they all said, ‘It will be fine there, a four- anna bit for a man and a two-anna bit for a woman,’ and the
maistri said, ‘You will just pick up coffee seeds, just pick them up as you pick up pebbles by the river.’ ‘Is that all, maistri?’ ‘Of course, what else? And the Sahib there, he is a fine man, a generous man—you will see....’; and the trains moved on with the coolies, men women, children; then plains came with dust and desert and then mountains rose before them, blue mountains, and the trains sneezed and wheezed and snorted and moved on; and the coolies all came out at Karwar and marched on, by the road and street and footpath, and they passed this way beneath hanging mountains, and that way over towering peaks and the streamlets hissed over their shoulders and purred beneath their feet, and they said there were tigers and elephants and bears in the jungles, and when the children cried, the mothers said, ‘I’ll leave you here with the tigers; but if you don’t cry, I’ll take you over the mountains where you can have milk like water—just like water,’ and the child stopped crying; and the nearer they came, the harder become the road and the stiffer the maistri, and when they had all passed by the Kenchamma hill, the young men, old men, old women, children and mothers, the maistri stood at the back, and when they had all passed by the Estate entrance, one by one, he banged the gate behind him and they all walked up, coolie after coolie walked up they walked up to the Skeffington bungalow.

12. Though Raja Rao lived abroad, he was Indian in temperament and sensibility. Raja Rao used the novel which is a western art form to express Indian sensibility. His novels are Indian. So, they express the Indian sensibility. Through this western art form Rao has achieved a rare
synthesis of the East and West by suiting it to express Indian sensibility. We find Indianess in his novels both in theme and treatment. For example; Rangegouda addresses Moorthy as Moorthappa. He wanted me to be his dog's tail. Here literal translation of the idiom is seen. Instead of saying he wanted me to follow him. Rangegouda says like this.

One cannot stitch up the mouths of others. So let them say what they like. His wife Usha was a god like woman.

Swear before me I am not the criminal! Dasi is very ill father, but her word is my word and my word is her word Subbachetty.

13. Besides using fricatives f, v, θ, ḍ Rao has used retroflex stops t, d, n, l in his novels. So we find the mixture of English and Kannaa speech sounds in his novels.

As some characters are from Karnataka these speech sounds are common. So Rao has used these speech sounds also in his novels.

14. Kannada syntactic structure can be observed at the beginning itself in the novel Kanthapura. Here the writer has tried by means of sentence structures to reproduce the Kannada language spoken in the area of Karnataka.

Eg: High on the Ghats is it, high up the steep moutains that face the cool Arabian seas ,up the Malabar coast is it,up Mangalore and Puttur and many a center of cardamom and coffee, rice and sugarcane.