CHAPTER-1

Indo-Anglian Poetry
INDO–ANGLIAN POETRY

At present Indo-Anglian poetry claims international recognition. Indian versifiers have been writing verses in English for over a century and a half. But it is only natural that critical attempts should have been made from time to time to build up a new tradition of poetry through an alien medium.

A tradition must have a beginning somewhere but no end. Indian verse composers composed poetry in English as early as 1839. In this way the Indo-Anglian poetic tradition was enriched by some individual major or minor poets from 1628 to 1950. Because of their poetic merits or techniques some of these poets became famous abroad. Whereas others are notable for their curiosity value and historicity. Kashi Prasad Ghose is a renowned name in the history of Indo–Anglian poetry for his historicity. Toru Dutt became popular among the foreign critics for her poetic greatness.

It may be said that Anglo-Indian poetry came into being with the publication of Henry Derozio's Poems (1827) and The Fakeer of Jungheera (1828). His poem The Fakeer of Jungheera is the
first milestone in the development of Indo-Anglian poetry. Not only the Fakeer of Jungheera but many of his poems written in his early age are full of poetic motives and dedicated sentiments. As a versifier he was fully influenced by Romantics such as Byron, Scott, Moore, Shelley and Keats. V.K. Gokak rightly says, – “The first quarter of the 19th century was the period of incubation for Indo–Anlian poetry and Derozio was the moving spirit then.”

Derozio played a very important role in shaping the literary and intellectual life of Bengal.

The diligent and ambitious Indian writers started to write soon after Macaulay introduced the English education in India in 1835. In this respect H.M. William says, – “Indian writing in English has a solid tradition behind it stemming from the decision to use English as the medium of higher education-----.”

After this poet after poet started writing verses in English. Among these poets there are some outstanding names such as Toru Dutt, Aurobindo Ghose, Sarojini Naidu and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. Here we may ignore Rabindranath Tagore simply because he was the translator of his own works in English verses. These pre-independence period poets laid the foundation of Indian English poetry with their poetic talents.
In praise of these poets P. Lal, Pradip Sen, Anita Desai, Deb Kumar Das, Jai Ratan, Asis Gupta and Kewlian Sio issued a statement in December 1961. The statement was – “Sri Aurobindo happens to be our Milton, and Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu, Manmohan Ghose and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya our Romantic singing birds. They provide sufficient provocation to experiment and give a definition to the needs of the present.”

Toru Dutt, born at Ram Bagan, Calcutta in a respectable Bengali Christian family, was the real innovator in the field of Indo-Anglian poetry. She was such a natural poet as rendered a real stamp to Indo-Anglian verses and provided with the most singular service of putting Indo-Anglian poetry on the international literary map. If we ignore Derozio as an Anglo-Indian poet who is not at present a renowned poet, Toru Dutt would be the first dedicated and noteworthy poet of Indo-Anglian poetry. Her ballads are the first important landmark in the history of Indo-Anglian poetry. There is no doubt in it that her poetic achievement is marvellous in her Ballads. Because of these ballads she is counted among the poets like Sarojini Naidu, Manmohan Ghose, Aurobindo Ghose and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya who all sang in their full throat.
Toru's *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan* appeared posthumously in 1882, made public some of the excellent characters of Indian epic and culture. Since her childhood she had been much interested in the songs and legends of India which she had heard from her mother. After coming back to India from abroad she began learning Sanskrit in order to understand the true spiritual heritage of India and presented it in her own writings. So Toru's ballads aptly present poetic description of life in ancient India and mythological characters. Toru's original volume consists of nine ballads. *Savitri* is the first and the longest poem of all these ballads. It is a narrative poem based on legends of *Savitri*. In addition to these nine ballads she has introduced different stanza forms in this volume which shows her craftsmanship. In *Prahlad* she used eight line stanza, in *Sindhu* quartrain, in *Our Casurina Tree* eleven line stanza, *Baugmaree* and *Lotus* sonnet and in *Dhruva* and *Royal Ascetic* and Hindi blank verse. Like Sarojini Naidu she has a remarkable sense of form, rhyme and rhythm. The last stanza of *Sindhu* is an apt example of her rhyme pattern:-

"What is the sequel of the tale?  
How died the king? – oh man,  
A prophet's words can never fail –  
Go, read the Ramayan."

*(Sindhu, p. 142)*
Toru Dutt belongs to the tradition of Indo-Anglian romanticism. In Toru's ballads literary tendencies may be examined. The English Romanticism played a vital role in the output of Indo-Anglian poetry. Not only Derozio and Toru Dutt but also many other Indo-Anglian poets were influenced by the Romantic versifiers i.e., – Wordsworth, Byron, Keats, Shelley and Scott. In this respect Prof Gokak says, – “Indo-Anglian poetry was born under a Romantic star. It learned to lisp in the manner of Byron and Scott in the verse of Derozio, M.M. Dutt and others. It began with verse-romances and lyrics written in the Romantic vein”.

We may call Toru the first Indo-Anglian Nature poet. In her Nature poems she expresses a romantic feeling for Nature in Indian setting. She described in her poems all the beautiful landscapes in the true fashion of Keats such as — the description of trees, flowers, gardens and fields, forests and hills, brooklets and different types of birds – e.g. Kokila and papiha are among them.

We may not ignore Toru as a lyric poet. She was, infact, the melodious song bird Rambagan, “the most of the singing birds.” Toru's shorter poems are full of lyrical qualities. Our Casuarina Tree is an apt example of it.
It is unfortunate that Toru gave a strong foundation to Indo-Anglian poetry but she belonged to the second generation of the poets. Although she has no place in the history of English Literature but she will always be missed as the pioneer of the tradition of Indo-Anglian poetry. Narsingh Srivastav says, – “In Toru Dutt we find a voice representative of Indian life and culture as a whole”.

After Toru Dutt her cousin Romesh Chunder, born in 1848, worked in the development of Indo-Anglian poetry as the translator of Indian poetry into English verse. All the same Romesh got fame in Indo-Anglian poetry by translating two Indian great epics the Ramayan and the Mahabharat from Sanskrit to English modern verse. Like Milton's Paradise Lost Romesh divided these two Indian great epics into twelve books each in English verse. Romesh Chunder's couplets naturally divided up into quartrains with alternate rhymes. All the more Romesh Chunder was a skilful versifier but not a real poet.

Man Mohan Ghose, an elder brother of eminent Indo-Anglian poet Aurobindo Ghose, born in 1869, having lived in England “the nursing mother of his Muse” had mastered the complication of English language. He was a born poet and started his poetic career as a lyric poet at the age of seventeen. He went
on writing from 1900 to 1924. In his lyrics he used different types of themes such as – love, nature, season, death, man, beauty, pain evil and the home – sickness of the soul. But love, Nature and Death are the major themes of his lyrics. He was not only a lyric poet but also a romantic, elegiac and meditative poet. Man Mohan's Life and Death published posthumously in 1926, won high critical praise from English celebrities and audiences. W.B. Yeats described this volume as “one of the lovely works in the world.” There are thirty five poems in this volume. ‘Song of Britannia’ is the only poem of this volume which shows Manmohan as an Indian.

In Manmohan's poetry there is nothing Indian as we find in Toru Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo Ghose. It is only because he spent his early life in England and had no taste for Indian mythology, so he got no inspiration in Indian life and culture and did not write poems on Indian themes only. Manmohan's mostly themes and images are based on Western and universal. If Man Mohan had studied Sanskrit, he might have been better than Toru and his poetry might have not been so completely Western. Though there is nothing Indian in his poetry but it can't be gainsaid that his sensibility is not Indian. So Manmohan Ghose is also not less important in Indo–Anglian poetry because he has displayed an extra-ordinary excellence in handling various verse
forms and complicated rhyme-schemes. In this respect P.C. Kotoky rightly says, “It was he who first gave Indo-English poetry a European bias. His poetry unlike that of many other Indo English poets, has no superficial emotional exuberance. As a poet Manmohan has grace and restraint, and shows a genuine poetic quest and a fine and cultivated feeling for poetic values.”

It is revealed by his daughter, Lotika Ghose that he wanted to compose some narrative poems on Indian subject under the title of Indian Idol but he could not complete it.

Rabindranath Tagore, ‘one of the most elusive poets of the modern times’, first gained for modern India a place on the world literary scene, has been called ‘the Sun of India’ and the sentinel of the east. Because of his universality of appeal, Tagore is not a poet of Bengal only but also of India and of the world. The whole world hails him as a world-poet and singer because his poetry has distinctive place in the world as an epitome of Indian mind. There is no doubt in it that Rabindranath Tagore is the greatest and the most versatile genius of India. His Gitanjali made him an international literary celebrity. This great work brought him the Nobel Prize, the greatest award of the world. So undoubtedly Tagore's Gitanjali is an authentic Indo-Anglian poem.
Tagore, born on May 6, 1861, is a prince amongst poets. He is a prolific poet and left no genre of literature untouched. Tagore is primarily a Bengali poet and he has composed more than seven thousand poems of which only a few of them were translated into English. Like Manmohan Ghose he is one of the greatest lyric poets of the world both from the point of view of quality and quantity. His lyrics were originally written in Bengali but went into the making of the English *Gitanjali*. In his lyrics the influence of Jaidev, Kalidas and Vaishnava poets is quite evident. Tagore was not only influenced by the Indian lyricists in his lyrics but also by the English lyricists like – Shelley, Tennyson and others. His chief claim of being an Indo-Anglian poet is based on *'Gitanjali'*; a collection of lyrics on God, Man and Nature. Tagore's *'Gitanjali'* is mainly a collection of one hundred and three devotional lyrics and his world fame rests on this work.

As a lyric poet Tagore's range covers more than a period of sixty years. The distinguishing quality of his lyrics is that they are not literary lyrics like those of Sarojini and Manmohan. They have song-like quality and are 'songs' of matchless beauty and deep feelings. The words and sounds of his songs come out from his heart as naturally as colours of flowers. We can divide his lyrics into four types – love lyrics, Nature lyrics, religious lyrics
and lyrics which deal with theme of childhood. Tagore's 'Gitanjali' is a product of Indian culture, Indian sentiments and Indian soil. In 'Gitanjali' we find the nature of life, the mystic joy, a desire for death, the waiting of heart of the poet. This work is a collection of mystical lyrics in which the poet is concerned with the relationship of Man, God and Nature. Indianess and her traditions are deeply rooted in 'Gitanjali'. But it is also not devoid of romanticism, for Tagore has introduced romanticism in most of his poems in 'Gitanjali'. Tagore was among the earlier Indo-Anglian romantic poets. It was he who took Indo-Anglian romanticism to its Zenith finding it brick from Toru Dutt and leaving it marble. Tagore reminds us of Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley in the essence of his romanticism though it carries his own unmistakable stamp.

Undoubtedly, Tagore has full command over English language. The lyrics of 'Gitanjali' are prose-poems. But it is poetic prose of the lust and noble kind. Tagore was, infact, a tireless experimenter in verse forms. He experimented with a number of material form but his English lyrics are all prose-poems. In this way Tagore gave Indio-Anglian poetry a new form prose-poem.

Like Wordsworth Tagore believes that Nature and God are one and the same. The English Gitanjali owes a great deal of
Nature. In his poems he draws all sorts of beauties and charms of the earth and the sky, the moon and the stars, the sun and the sunrise, trees and hills, birds and flowers. These natural scenes attract his poetic imagination. Rabindranath’s poetic range was from romanticism to mysticism. The romantic phrase of his poetry was its earlier phase and it gave way to mystic and spiritual phase. In Indo–Anglian poetry Tagore and Aurobindo started a tradition of mysticism but Tagore is different from Aurobindo in his mysticism. Like William Blake he is not a primary mystic but his mystic experience is literary. In this respect Father Fallon rightly says,—

“A misunderstanding must be dissipated. Tagore's reputation as a predominantly ‘mystic’ poet should be exorcized.”

In a nut shell Tagore will be remembered as lyricist but his reputation as mystic poet dwindles.

Sri Aurobindo is the one unconstably outstanding figure in Indo–Anglian Literature. He was born in Calcutta on 15 August 1872 in a well-to-do Bengali family intimately connected with the Bengal Renaissance. His father, Sri Krishnadhan Ghose who was a popular civil surgeon, imparted him an entirely Western education. His meternal grandfather, Raj Narayan Bose, was an ardent nationalist. At the age of seven Aurobindo was sent to England along with his brothers – Benoy Bhushan and Manmohan.
At Manchester he took some private coaching by the Rev. William H. Drewett and Mrs. Drewett who grounded him well in English, French, Latin and History while Dr. Walker the High Master pushed his interest in Greek studies. In this way Aurobindo and his elder brother Manmohan were exclusively educated in England as English children and English became his natural means of expression and he lost his mother tongue. Aurobindo was a brilliant student. He won ‘Bedford Prize’ for History and the ‘Butter Worth Prize’ for Literature. With the help of scholarship he sought admission in King's College, Cambridge. After a brilliant academic career at Cambridge, he passed the I.C.S. open competitive examination which he could not finally join. After returning to India in 1893, he got an appointment in the service of Maharaja of Baroda and worked in different departments till he joined the Baroda College and ultimately became Professor of English and Vice-Principal. During this period he started learning Sanskrit and other Indian languages such as – Bengali, Marathi and Gujarati.

As an Indo–Anglian poet he has, the unusual distinction of being multifaced genius. His poetical achievement is of higher order than that of his fellow poets of the older generation. Aurobindo has a perfect command over the English language and his technical achievement as poet is of high order. He is the only
Indian Yogi who is wedded to poetry so inevitably. His poetic career covers a span of sixty years from 1890 to 1950. During this period he produced a lot of poems. Aurobindo started his literary career as lyric and romantic poet. There is no doubt in it that all the five older poets including Sri Aurobindo are basically lyrical. But there is a lot of difference between Aurobindo's earlier or later lyrics. His lyrics reveal his poetic power at their best.

Sri Aurobindo's first volume of poems 'Songs to Myrtilla' is a collection of his early poems, mostly lyrics, songs and devotional poems on a wide variety of themes ranging from youthful romantic love of personal homage to ancestors. Many poems of this collection are written under the romantic decadent. 'Island Grave' and 'Night By The Sea' show the influence of Keats, Shelley, Arnold, Omar Khayyam and Swinburne. This influence is only because Aurobindo spent formative years in England which had seen the flourishing of decadent trends in English poetry. A large number of poems of this collection are devoted to love-theme. Love is a major theme of Indo-Anglian poetry. Sri Aurobindo is an unexceptional poet of love. Like Aurobindo Manmohan Ghose, Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, Harindranath Chattopadhyay has given us love poetry. Sri Aurobindo is not a Nature poet nor Nature is a dominant poetic subject for him but the poems of
‘Songs to Myrtilla’ abound in references to the charms of Nature. Beautiful descriptions of flowers like rose, the lily, the cowslip occur in poems which are romantic and sensuous. He had the power of revealing images vividly and even whole panoramas in few decisive, luminous phrases. If Toru Dutt is a poet of trees, Aurobindo is a poet of seasons. Aurobindo's presentation of Nature is lucid energetic and poetically strong. This shows his poetic imagination and sensitivity to seasons. ‘Urvasie’ and ‘Love and Death’ are blank verses and approach to the theme of Indian mythology. Of all the Indo–Anglian poets he alone could attain proficiency in the use of blank verse. His blank verse reveals his poetic greatness.

His later lyrics are ‘Six Poems’ (1931), ‘Poems’ (1941) and ‘Last Poems’ (1952). Aurobindo's range as a lyrics poet is, infact, wide. His lyricism is deeply grounded in vedic inspiration and realization of Dhvani (the sound). He had different concept of lyric poetry than those of Manmohan Ghose, Tagore and Sarojini Naidu. He composed lyrical poems not only for singing but also for realizing deep spiritual rapture. His lyrics reveal his poetic powers at their best.

Sri Aurobindo was, infact, a pioneer poet and enriched Indo–Anglian poetry through his versatile genius and multi-dimensional
personality. Like Spenser we may regard Aurobindo the poets' poet because he started a tradition of mystic and symbolist poetry which came to be followed by a number of Indo–Anglian poets later on. He is an Indo–Anglian poets' poet because of his poetic power and enormous impact on other poets. His later lyrics are high permeated with mysticism, sublimity and spontaneity of expression. Like Emerson he is a poet-philosopher and his poetry is philosophical. It is true that philosophical poetry, like mystic poetry, is difficult to achieve, but not impossible. There is a lot in his poetry to lead man to the restoration of his original spiritual identity. In this respect Gokak rightly says, – “Though not quite expected by the reader, Sri Aurobindo's contribution to the poetry of man is of vital importance. He was a prophet of life and no mere is of escapist into a world of Nirvana. He believed in the inevitable transformation of humanity into a race of higher beings and worked for it.”

Aurobindo was not only a poet but also a Yogi and a patriotic revolutionary. He was a pure Indian and had a patriotic feeling for his country. In 1908 he was arrested in connection with Alipore Bomb Case. During this period of trial he had the mystic experience of Narayan Darshan that changed the course of his life and gave a renowned place in the Indo–Anglian poetry.
Sarojini Naidu, popularly known as ‘The Bharat Kokila’ or “The Nightingale of India”, is counted among the sweetest Indo-Anglian singers both at home and abroad. Sarojini was born at Hyderabad (Decan) on 13th of January, 1879 in the distinguished Chattopadhyay family. She was the eldest daughter of Dr. Aghorenath Chattopadhyaya who was a man of versatile genius. Her mother, Varada Sundary, was a religious lady. Sarojini passed the Matriculation Examination of the Madras University at the age of twelve. After passing this examination, she left for England in 1895 for higher studies. In England, she studied first at King's College, London and subsequently at Girton Cambridge.

Sarojini Naidu is, infact, an outstanding name in the history of Indo-Anglian poetry. She was a born poetess and singer. It is not surprising than that she started warbling and chirping at the early age of eleven. At an early age of thirteen she composed a long narrative poem in 1300 lines in imitation of Walter Scott's 'Lady of Lake'. She wrote poetry regularly in the early age of her life. Sarojini Naidu was primarily a lyric poetess. The most outstanding feature of her poetry is its passionate lyricism. The lyrical quality of her poetry is what that earned her the title of ‘The Nightingale of India’ and ‘Bharat Kokila’. In the very beginning of her poetical career she found a place in the
international circle as an English writer in lyrics. In her perfect lyricism and mallifluos melody she is, infact, the nightingale of Indian imagination. Her lyrics are simple, direct and sensuous. They have a bird like quality and came to her heart as naturally as song to a bird. Sarojini's Muse is lyrical. In praise of her lyrical quality V.N. Bhushan rightly says, – “Mrs. Naidu is almost the first Indo–English singer to have wide reputation both here and abroad. And that is because of two prominent characteristics of her poetry. She is the first and a melodist of higher order – using nothing but winged words and making even ordinary words sound musical by placing them in peculiar contexts. Combined with this is the pure Indian complexion of poetry.”

Sarojini Naidu's poetical career extended from 1890 to 1920. Some of her poems were published in 1901 in the “Indian Magazine”. But Sarojini's real fame got established with the publication of the first volume of her poems ‘The Golden Threshold’). This collection was published in England in 1905 by William Heinemann. It has been denominated after the name of her house at Hyderabad. This collection contained forty poems and was divided into three parts twelve ‘folk songs’, ‘six songs for music’ and ‘twenty two poems’. After this volume Sarojini shot into fame and marked the advent of a new period, in the history of
Indo-Anglian poetry. Since then she has come to be called ‘The Nightingale of India’. After a gap of six years duration in 1912 she composed second volume of her poems, ‘The Bird of Time’. It was published in England by her previous publisher. This collection was dedicated to Sarojini’s parents. Sarojini borrowed the title of this volume from the famous lines of Omar Khyyam. The lines are–

“The Bird of Time has but a little way.
To fly – and lo; the bird is on the wing.”11

Sarojini’s ‘The Bird of Time’ contained 46 poems – ‘12 songs of Love and Death’, ‘10 songs of the Spring time’, ‘8 Indian Folk Songs’ and ‘16 Songs of Life’. ‘The Broken Wing’ was the third volume of Sarojini. It was published in 1917 by her older publisher. This collection contained 62 poems and was divided into four parts – ‘Songs of Life and Death’, ‘The Flowering Year’, ‘The Peacock Lute and The Temple’, Later on by some anthologists the poems of these three volumes were put together in one big volume under the title of ‘The Sceptered Flute’. It was first published by Dodd. Mead and Co in America there after in India by Kitabistan, Allahabad in 1943.
Sarojini Naidu has revealed the charm and grace of Indian life in her poetry. In England she came in close contact with English poets and critics like Arthur Symons and Edmund Gosse who had praised Toru Dutt for her Indianness and advised her to take up Indian theme. Sarojini caught the idea. Just after coming back to India, she started to compose Indian lyrics in English and presented the rich Indian life in several phases in her poetry. Sarojini has written beautiful lyrics on festivals and faiths, customs and traditions, flowers and fruits, fairs and bazaars and artists and dancers. She had also mentioned many sweet themes of Indian social life. In her lyrics she has very poetically given the panorama of Indian life. The bangle is the mark and symbol of woman's chastity. In her beautiful poem ‘Bangle-Sellers’ Sarojini has very beautifully described the bright colours of bangles in the following lines –

“Bangle-sellers, are we who bear.
Our shining loads to the temple fair.
Who will buy these delicate bright.
Rainbow-tinted circles of light!
Lustrous tokens of radiant lines.
For happy daughters and happy wives.”

(‘Bangle-Sellers’)
In this way the advice of Edmund Gosse gave a new turn to her poetry and Sarojini like her predecessor Toru Dutt and successor Tagore became a poetic interpreter of Indian culture, life and dreams. Sarojini Naidu's poetry shows the phase of Indo-Anglian romanticism. W.B. Yeats called her a pure romantic. As a romantic poetess, Sarojini was fully influenced by Keats, Shelley and Tagore. Like Keats she “looked upon fine phases like a lover.” Like Keats she responded to sensation and, therefore, sensuousness is as much a feature of a poetry as of the poetry of Keats and like him she responded to the beauty of Nature, its colour and magic. English romantic poets who gave shape to Indo-Anglian romanticism, were a product of Romantic Revival, a return to Milton and Elizabethan's. The Elizabethan age called “a nest of singing birds” and infested with romanticism, lyricism and glow of imagination. Keeping this view in mind one may say that Sarojini Naidu is a singing bird – belonging to the flock of Elizabethan poets. Since Derozio no Indo-Anglian Indian poet has been inspired by patriotism but for Sarojini Naidu who reveals her love for India not in the spirit of propaganda but as a genuine urge. From 1914 to 1949 she was active in the freedom struggle of India. She did write some nationalistic poems such as ‘The Gift of India’ and ‘An Antheme of Love’. When India got freedom she was appointed the governor of U.P. She died in Lucknow on March
2, 1949. In this way the nightingale is now no more but her songs are still alive.

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, the younger brother of Sarojini Naidu, is one of the five renowned older Indo-Anglian poets. Like Toru Dutt, Manmohan Ghose, Sarojini Naidu and Sri Aurobindo, Harindranath is also an outstanding poet in the history of Indo-Anglian poetry. He was born on 2nd April, 1898 in Hyderabad in the distinguished Chattopadhyaya family. Harindranath inherited his parents' love for poetry, music and literature. His infancy was a happy one. Harindranath started writing poetry in English at the early age of eight. In his autobiography at one place he wrote about his poetry, - “I dwelt more and more ----- in the innermost recesses of the heart from where poetry comes. Words and phrases became an obsession; thoughts floated across the mind like clouds, some delicately tinted, others stormy, but past all their movement I began to grip more firmly the thought of horizon-----”.  

Harindranath's poetry is in the tradition of Indo-Anglian romanticism of which his sister, Sarojini Naidu is the greatest exponent. Harin's romanticism is manifested in the mystical strain of his poetry and its lyricism, in his imaginative capacity and sensuousness, in his emphasis on personal experience in poetry,
in his theme of love, Nature and life and romantic imagery. Of all the older Indo–Anglian poets, Harindranath alone has enriched Indo–Anglian poetry with new themes. Harian's entire poetic career is a search for form, so he is a poet of prolific pen than Sarojini's or Toru's. His poetic range is versatile and he has composed poems on a wide variety of themes. Like his sister, Harin is mainly a lyric poet. His lyrical talent is seen in his lyrics which are simple, sensuous, richly musical and direct. The lyric is his dominant poetic form but he composed sonnets, longer poems and blank verse also. His lyrics are sensuous, brief, tender, passionate, musical and natural and full of lyrical subjectivity. His lyrics are not shallow or slight. They are full of thought and meaning. Harindranath resembles Shelley in his idealism and lyricism. Harin was primarily a lyric poet but he was also a mystic poet. Before Harindranath, Tagore and Aurobindo were prominent Indo–Anglian mystic poets. Harian's father was also a mystic in his vision. These prominent personalities must have left the shadow of his mystical learnings on the delicate mind of Harindranath. He is not only a lyric poet and mystic poet but also a philosophical poet. His poetry contains reflections on philosophical subjects of time, Eternity, Birth and Death, God and Nature, Body and Soul. Dr. K.R.S. Iyengar comments on Harindranath as poet and says, "Verbal and material facility is Harindranath's main strength, and
also when the inspiration is dry or the content thin, his fatal weakness, as a poet. Although he is not unsusceptible to mystical states, he is not primarily a mystical poet, nor a philosophical poet either.”14

Harindranath has given to Indo–Anglian poetry numerous collections of his poems. ‘The Feast of Youth’ is Harin’s first book of poems. It was published in 1918 and gave an instant success to the poet. This collection reveals the impact of Blake on Harin. The latter’s review of this collection in the Arya of November, 1918 is a good introduction to Harin as a poet. Harin’s ‘The Magic Tree’ was published in 1922. His book ‘The son of Adam’, published in 1946, is a simple book of poem for children. Harin's material and verbal facility is also seen in this collection. ‘Edgeway And The Saint’, published in 1946, is a slim volume and contains two sections. The first ‘Edgeways’ contains twenty two poems. In the Prelude’ Harin says:–

“I, poet, dip my pen
In mine own blood to write my songs for men.”15

(‘Edgeways And the Saint’)

The second part ‘The Saint’ is written in a little immature style. Harin's another book ‘Spring of Winter’, published in 1955, is a well-known and the most attractive collection of his poems.
There are 209 lyrics in this collection and most of the lyrics are love-poems. His ‘Marks And Farewells’ published in 1961, is a mature work in poetry. There are 61 poems in this brief and tight collection. We may call this collection “brief bursts of songs” and “gems and gems”. ‘Virgins And Vineyards’, published in 1967, is his latest collection of 101 poems. It presents his art of phrase-making, his poetic excellence and concern for the verbal expression.

In a word Harindranath is the voice of India's song-destiny and one day, when others of his kind are forgotten, he will still be missed as the high-peer of Shelley, the sun-treader.

Actually Indo–Anglian poetry sprang up for the first time in association with cultural Renaissance in Bengal. It was for the first time that an assault of English on the fortress of Indian culture took place. Bengal was the birth place of Indo–Anglian poetry. In this way Indian poetry in English came from Bengal. Toru Dutt, Manmohan Ghose, Aurobindo Ghose, Sarojini Naidu and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya were the Bengali poets. But they were all Bengalis with a difference. Toru Dutt and Manmohan spent their formative years in France and England. Sarojini and Harindranath were born up and grew up in Deccan.
British and Indo–Anglian poetry have run side by side. In this respect Prof. V.K. Gokak says, – "It starts as romantic poetry simply because it was born under Romantic influences. It becomes victorian because English Romantic poetry became victorian. It decided to go through a period of ‘Decadence’ because the nineties were a period of Decadence in English poetry. After Decadence came Georgianism and Indo–Anglian poetry, loyal as always, suddenly became Georgian. When English poetry went modernist, Indo–Anglian poetry had no alternative but to do the same" 16

The period from 1876 to 1900 and from 1925 may be called the period of Indo–Anglian Romanticism but it does not mean that we do not find neo-romantic poetry. The history of Indo–Anglian poetry is developed from new-romanticism. From Henry Derozio to Sarojini it is the trend of romanticism that is noticable in the poetry of the period. Toru Dutt was the first authentic neo-romantic poet and Sarojini Naidu the last Indo–Anglian romantic. In the mean time Aurobindo Ghose, Tagore and their poetic disciples gave mystical direction to Indo–Anglian poetry. Sri Aurobindo pervails the Indo–Anglian poetry from 1900 to 1950. The period of neo-modernism in Indo–Anglian poetry starts after 1950 and there is sudden change in poets' attitude, outlook, themes, imagery and the use of the English language.
Of course Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu and Sri Aurobindo composed some good poems but they seem to be dated today. An authentic Indian English poetry came into being only after 1960. It is only in 1960 that Indian English poetry began to exist independently with a stamp of originality and authenticity. The poets who came into prominence by virtue of their poetic achievements are Nissim Ezekiel, Kamla Das and A.K. Ramanujan. These poets produced their books of poems in 1960. Between 1960 and 1990 Indian English poetry has not only flourished in the country but also has been recognized as the third World Literature in English today.

Dom Moraes, the most successful of the new poets, deserves to be ranked among the best Indo–Anglian poets even on the basis of his poems written before he became a British citizen. He is, in fact, regarded a true Indo–Anglian poet as his poetry shows his intense involvement with his native country. He gave a new kind of freshness to his poetry and made a praiseworthy contribution to the tradition of Indo–Anglian poetry. It can't gainsaid that he was the foremost forerunner of the new poetry in India.

As a boy Moraes was passionately interested in poetry and in writing poetry. He got his early education at a Catholic Missionary School before going up to Oxford. Moraes favourite
form was sonnet but he was also lyric poet of love, nostalgia and romanticism. In respect of his lyrics Iyengar says, — “His lyrics have a subtle and vibrant quality, the familiar is touched with the allusive light of romance, the unfamiliar is brought near and grows intimate, being touched by understanding.” Dom Moraes published five volumes – ‘A Beginning’ 1957; ‘Poems’ 1960; ‘John Nobody’ 1965; ‘The Brass Serpent’ and ‘Poems’ 1955-65. His first collection of poem ‘A Beginning’ gave him fame as an original poet in Modern Indo-Anglian poetry though he had no connection whatsoever with the Writers Workshop tradition. By the help of this collection he got honours in British Literary World as the Hawthorndon Prize. Moraes was the first non-English writer and the youngest at the age of eighteen to have been awarded the Hawthorndon Prize.

Nissim Ezekiel, a modern poet of International repute, is the first major Indo-Anglian poet of Post-Independence era and perhaps the best, so far. Like Dom Moraes he is an original poet. After the demise of Sri Aurobindo, Ezekiel, of Bene-Israel origin and a permanent expatriate, in the Indian scene, is the first major poet who represents, more or less, the change of an era in the history of Indo-Anglian poetry. Nissim Ezekiel, a Jew, born in 1924, received his education at Wilson College, Bombay and at
Birkbeck College, London. He was a Reader in American Literature in Bombay University. As a professor of English at the University of Bombay, he has made ample contribution to the teaching of literature. He is a notable member of the Indian branch of the poets. Ezekiel is regarded as a poet with roots in rural India and his relationship with the country of his adoption is also fundamentally deep that he represents a dimension of Indianness which others who claim ‘umbilical connection’ with the country find so natural to articulate in an altogether different manner. Despite his foreign origin, Ezekiel is pure Indian poet. In an interview to Dr. John B. Beston, University of Hawaii Ezekiel says about his Indianess, – “I regard myself essentially as an Indian poet writing in English. I have a strong sense of belonging, not only to India, but to this city. I would never leave Bombay – it's series of commitment.”

In his early career as a poet Ezekiel came under the influence of W.B. yeats, T.S. Eliot and other British poets of the thirties. He has published eight volumes of poetry. He came into notice with the publication of his first book of poems, ‘A Time To Change’ in London 1951. Coming back to India he published other volumes of poems – ‘Sixty Poems’, in (1935), ‘The Third’ in (1959), ‘The Unfinished Man’ (1960). His volume ‘The Unfinished Man’ is a
borrowing from W.B. Yeats. ‘The Exact Man’ was published in (1965), ‘Hymns in Darkness’ in (1976), ‘Latter Day Psalms’ (1982) and ‘Collected Poems 1552-88’ in (1989). In his second last volume ‘Letter Day Psalm’ he made an attempt to write moral poems or religious poems and shows himself as religious poet. Ezekiel has composed a projected series of ten ‘Poverty Poems’, of which the second and the third are published in Scholar Critic Vol-1 No. 1 – January 1981. Ezekiel's range is very wide and he has variety. The fact is that contemporary India is among the major themes of Ezekiel's poetry. His poetry embraces a wide range of themes. No Indian poet in English has touched so many themes simultaneously as Ezekiel has done. Ezekiel advises his fellow poet about new themes in these words:-

"Turn inward
Scrape the bottom of your past."19

Ezekiel outshines all his contemporaries through his poetic art and craftsmanship. It shows in some of his important poems such as – ‘Back ground’, ‘Casually’, ‘Enterprise’, ‘Philosophy’, ‘Island ’ and ‘In The Country Cottage’ contain five line stanza form, either ababa or aabba rhyme schemes. ‘The Visitor’ has a six-lines stanza form and his famous poem ‘Poet, Lover, Bird Watther’ contains two stanzas consisting of ten line each. In the
praise of his craftsmanship Adil Jussawalla says, – “Nissim Ezekiel
is perhaps the first Indian poet consistently to show Indian readers
that craftsmanship is as important to a poem as its subject matter.”20

Ezekiel is, in fact, a secular poet and his conscious effort to
write moral and religious poetry gave him reputation. His ‘Latter
Day Psalms’ was selected for the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1983
and he was awarded the Padam Shri in 1988.

Like Moraes and Ezekiel, P. Lal, the founder of the Writers
Workshop, has a definite contribution to Indo-Anglian poetry. He
is undoubtedly a sensitive and accomplished lyric poet. He has
kept romanticism ‘intelligently virile’ and love is the basic
principle of his poetry. Lal’s love poetry has a wider range and
represents a new kind of romanticism. Apart from love, lyric-grace
is one of the most well-known features of his poetry. The lyric-
grace gets an impetus in his love for bees, flowers (particularly
rose), apples and birds. Lal lives in a ‘rose world’. Lal says, –
“The poet lives in ‘rose world’ that communicates syllables more
splended than life. It is a world of No welcomes and no farewells
and in the husk of things / stripped you see the white rose. It’s
akin to Keats’ aspiration for the World of Nightingale. Lal’s
devotion to roses is utterly sincere and his poetry needs to be
judged and appreciated on its own terms for the moral tenderness
for birds, bees, roses, apples and people.”21

(39)
In this way Lal has accorded greater autonomy to the emotional life and contributed a lyrical and romantic dimension to modern Indo-Anglian poetry. He has composed several volumes of verse in English and many valuable translations of Indian scriptures. Lal is a patent example of dissociation of sensibility in Indo-Anglian poetry e.g. “Famine” in ‘Yakshi From Didarganj’ (1969). It is unfortunate that Lal's contribution as a poet has not been properly acknowledged. He is mainly known as a publisher of (Writers Workshop, which he founded in 1958) and of course, a good translator.

Pritish Nandy is one of the most prolific Indo-Anglian poets. He has composed many collections of verses. But out of the vast number of his poems, there are only few poems which would definitely stand the best of time. His poetry strikes the note of protest and experimentation in Indo-Anglian poetry. In his introduction to Indian poetry in English Today (Sterling Publishers 1973) he categorically examines, – “The sixties was the critical decade for Indian poetry in English. The dynamics of a new sensibility which were released during the late fifties gathered force during these ten years and were finally shaped into a definite movement. It was determined by a quest for roots.”  

(40)
Pritish Nandy wants to reveal the modern Indo-Anglian poets' Indian culture, tradition and employ Indian metaphors in their poetry. Nandy has the chivalry to compose love poetry and reflect on the contemporary social political scene, in a new and original style. His love poetry brings present, past and future to a spherical combination and emphasizes on consummation but not on renunciation. Nandy's love poems are profane in nature and have an essential dream like quality submerged with violence. Not only that his poems have a sense of urgency and an intense desire on the part of lovers for union. Nandy's two volumes of poems – 'Riding the Midnight Rivers' and 'Marks To Be Interpreted In Term of Message' contain a good deal of love prose-poems. The main feature of Nandy's love poems is that most of the poems are prose-poems. There is no doubt in it that Nandy composes in free-verse and quite a few of his contemporary Indo-Anglian poets show their craftmanship as a poet of prose-poems.

A.K. Ramanujan, comparatively older than the rest of the contemporary poets, born in India in 1929, lives in Chicago, America at present. In America he works as a professor of Linguistics and Dravidian studies. He came in to notice with the publication of 'Strider'. It was published in 1966 by the Oxford University Press. It won him the Poetry Book Society
Recommendation Award. With the help of this volume he took his place in selected band of Indo-Anglian poets. The first poem of this collection is about striders, the name of water insect in New England. His second volume ‘Relation : Poems’ was published in 1972. Both of Ramanujan's volumes are the heir of an interior tradition. His deepest roots are in Kannada and Tamil past. Ramanujan's poetry exemplifies how an Indian poet in English can derive strength from going back to its roots. In poems after poems Ramanujan goes back to his childhood memories and experiences of life in India. His poetry is not made to give us information, but to awake a complete living experience.

In Ramanujan's poetry one comes across a good deal of evocations of family life. In this respect Parthasarathy rightly says, - "He has given a focus to his Indian experience so that the poems emerge as a sort of microcosm of his family history. They are in effect, a microcosm of the Hindu family which has enormously contributed to the stability psychological health of the society for centuries and ensured the continuity of a rich traditional culture."23

Although he is a Hindu, yet he has no conventional attachment to community. Instead, Ramanujan has a sharp eye for illusions and delusions of Indian life and often feels strongly about certain aspects of Indian life and situation. His range is narrow
and limited and has no broad patterns of experience. Ramanujan's themes centre round the family, relations, insects and Tamil tradition. To become more effective as a contemporary Indo-Anglian poet, Ramanujan has to widen his thematic range in the changing context of Indo-Anglian Poetic Scene.

Like A.K. Ramanujan R. Parthasarthy, one of the most widely known Indo-Anglian poets, also tries to evoke his Tamil past. Parthasarthy is an English-educated Tamil Brahmin. Though he is Tamil-born, he has spent many years in Bombay, some times in Calcutta, and now lives in Delhi. The whole India is in a way aware of him and one hopes that he should talk of the whole of India, not his Tamil Nadu alone. Some ten anthologies have included selections from his work which until 1976 was uncollected and has now been published in 'Rough Passage' (1976). 'Rough Passage', in three parts, is the longest autobiographical poem in Indo-Anglian poetry. It is much more than only an autobiographical poem, for what is conveyed in it is not the life history of Mr. R. Parthasarathy but his poetic personality. In his preface to 'Rough Passage' Parthasarathy writes, — "By revision and elimination — so that more than one text of the poem exists — I have at last composed, but perhaps not completed it. 'Rough Passage' is that book. It should be considered

(43)
and read as one poem. In it twenty year's writing has finally settled.”

The second impression of 'Rough Passage' published in November 1980, has two new poems – 'Trials 15' and 'Home Coming 15'. In this work he composed a vast number of poems on different occasions and divided into three sections – 'Exile', 'Trial' and 'Home Coming'. In 'Rough Passage' Parthasarthy, "Writes about the traumatic experience of visiting England and his search for and discovery of Indianess, his Tamil Past, and discoveries of love.”

Parthasarthy's important images are 'wall', 'tree', 'snow', 'stone', 'glass' and 'city'. He is undoubtedly one of the most scrupulous Indian poets who have a keen sense of art.

Though Parthasarthy could not win the Commonwealth Poetry Award for 1977, he was highly commended by the judges for his book. Exactly a decade ago, however, he had been awarded the Ulka Poetry Prize, sponsored by 'Poetry India', in 1966.

Kamala Das, of all the contemporary Indo–Anglian women poets, has achieved a great fame. She is the first Indo–Anglian poet to challenge the critics who maintained that Indians could not produce creative work in English poetry. Kamala's this
challenge worked as an inspiration to other Indo–Anglian poets. As the innovator of ‘prose-poems’ in Indo–Anglian poetry she has created her own niche in Indian writing in English. Kamala Das was born in Kerala and brought up in Calcutta. She also lived in Delhi and Bombay. In this way she felt the pulse of the whole country. Poetry is in her blood because both her mother and grandfather were the Malayalam poets. She has often been labelled as a ‘confessional’ poet and, in fact, in tone and structure her poetry may be called ‘autobiographical’. Kamala Das started her poetical career as a poet of love in 1965 with a slim volume of verse ‘Summer in Calcutta’, which was followed by three more volumes, the ‘Descendants’, ‘The Old Play House’ and other poems and Collected poems Vol.-1. She is mainly a poet of love from women's point of view but the centre is not the blind worship of the husband but the consummation of love. Kamala Das's poetry, thus could be divided into three categories, – Positive poems, Negative poems and poems about her grand-mother and ancestral house, leaving aside a few poems on some minor observations. Her poetry becomes a search for the essential woman who is subject to the unhappy and often soil destroying pressures of male domination. In her three volumes of poems the woman persona of Kamala Das plays the different roles of sad women, sad wife, mistress of lusty men, reluctant nymphomaniac, silent Devdasi.
and love-lorn Radha. In this respect K.R.S. Iyengar rightly says, “Kamala Das is a fiercely feminine sensibility that dares without inhibitions to articulate the hurts it has received in an insensitive largely man made world.”

Kamala Das's short lyrics are marked by authenticity, depth of feeling and emotional delicacy. Some critics have consistently compared Kamala Das with Judith Wright, an Australian woman poet. Love is a major theme of both – Kamala Das and Judith Wright, although the idea of love differs as does the intensity and manner of its quest. Judith Wright writes of love and sex without the tension that Kamala Das's poetry reflects and voices.

Kamala is, in fact, the only modern Indo-Anglian poet who successfully employed a myth in her love poetry. She is the fourth Indo-Anglian poet to have been awarded by the Central Sahitya Academy for her book of verse, collected poems (Volume-1) in 1985.

Like Kamala Das, Gauri Deshpande is another Indo-Anglian poet with an established fame. Gauri Deshpande's poetry is the same as that of Kamala Das'. Her first volume of poems is 'Between Births', published in 1968 and the second one is 'Lost Love'. It was published in 1970. Her second volume contains 32 poems. There is a great difference between Gauri Deshpande's first and
second volume. In her first volume she has composed poems mostly on 'Death' and shows death in four sections but in her second volume she has composed quite different poems. In this volume she writes about love and sex, loss and search, memory and nostalgia. Gauri Deshpande's thematic range is not wide. Her main themes are — Love and Death. In her poetry imagery is not very satisfying – the only recurrent image is 'rain'. The diction in her poetry is unoriginal. 'The Criminal' is her only poem with regular rhyme scheme and stanza pattern. Gauri Deshpande's some poems may be called prose-poems.

Along with Kamala Das and other women poets Gauri Deshpande has come in for criticism on different counts at the hands of critics and reviewers.

At the climax of this chapter we can't ignore Prof. V.K. Gokak, a professor of English and a leading poet, has written poetry and criticism in English. He has composed two volumes of English verses. His first volume 'The Song of Life' was published in 1947 and the second one 'The Life's Temple' was published in 1965. His more recent collections are grouped under 'Man and Nature', 'India', 'Meditations', 'Translation' and 'In Life's Temple'. Gokak first composed poems in Kannada and then translated into English like Tagore who first wrote poems in
Bengali and then translated them into English. Tagore's *Gitanjali* is a classical instance of it.

Although Gokak's range as a poet is not widespread in Indo-Anglian poetry but as a critic he has a great repute in Indo-English poetry. He has criticised almost all the Indo-Anglian poets. Not only that he has also written a lot on the history of Indo-Anglian poetry.

In a nut shall the main purpose of Indo-Anglian poets is to produce Indian myth and images in English language through their poems. So why should they talk of cupid when our mythological god of love, Kamadev is there? Why should they talk of Cleopatra, or Helen, when our Shakuntala, Sita and Draupadi are there? Why should they talk of Nightingale or Daffodils, when our cukoo and lotous are there?
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