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+91 99405 72462



+9163819 07438



ijmrsetm@gmail.com



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# The Contribution of Indian Literature in English to the Struggle for Independence

Dr. Janmejy Kumar Tiwari

Assistant Professor, KS Saket PG College, Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, India

**ABSTRACT:** From the very beginning, literature has been considered an important factor in public awakening. A new consciousness is communicated in the human community through literature. In the global context, many unforgettable events have been carried out through literature. The contribution of literature to the American freedom struggle, the French Revolution and many global revolutions has been unforgettable. Even in the Indian freedom struggle, the masses were mobilized through literature by the intellectual classes. He was told about the British policies, which the Indian public was still unaware of. As a result of these efforts, Indians overthrew the British Empire from India. Literature has played an important role in history. It has been used and is still being used as a tool of propaganda. At the same time, it would be safe to say that literature has played a huge role in pretty much every major revolution in history.

The American Revolution was heavily influenced by pamphlets written by Jonathan Mayhew, John Dickinson and Tom Paine, amongst many others. Tom Paine's two pamphlets- Common Sense and American Crisis – were read by over a million Americans and is credited with instigating the Declaration of Independence. Similarly, Voltaire, Montesquieu and Rousseau were instrumental in sowing the seeds of the French Revolution.

India is no exception. As we celebrate 71 years of Independence, it would behoove us to remember the role of pre-Independence literature in our freedom struggle. Newspapers like Bande Mataram, founded by Bipin Chandra Pal in 1905, Jungantar Patrika founded by Barindra Kumar Ghosh, Abhinash Bhattacharya and Bhupendranath Dutt, 1906, and Harijan founded by Gandhi in 1932 sought to make Indian citizens not only socially and politically aware but also unite them for one common cause. Pamphlets written and distributed across India provided critical information and served as propaganda against the British. However, many intellectuals of the time also considered it important to use fiction and poetry for a patriotic purpose and to create a nationalist discourse.

**KEYWORDS:** Literature, freedom, independence, struggle, contribution, independence, India

## I. INTRODUCTION

Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay was one such author who used literature to spread the message of patriotism. In Anandamath (1882), set during the famine in Bengal in 1770 B.C.E., Chattopadhyay highlighted various patriotic acts of and sacrifices made by his characters, ordinary people who left their homes and families to fight against subjection, and in service of "the Mother." He envisaged an insurgency against the British by untrained soldiers who succeeding in beating the more experienced British soldiers through sheer grit and determination, while embodying a sense of patriotism. The novel was banned by the British and the ban was lifted by the Government of India only after independence. Our national song, Bande Mataram was first published as a poem in this novel as the rallying cry of the characters who used it to give themselves courage and to urge people to fight against the British.

In a case of fact imitating fiction, Bande Mataram served this purpose during the freedom struggle as well. Despite being banned, the general public would recite the poem, or sing the song in front of British officials and many were carted off to jail for doing so. Due to its tradition of sacrifice and its success in bringing a country together against the British, in 1937, the first two verses of Bande Mataram were adopted as the national song by the Indian National Congress.[1]

In 1884, Chattopadhyay published Devi Chaudharani, which became an inspiration to women to take up the cause of independence. In this novel, he reiterated his belief that an armed conflict is the only way to win independence but he made a woman the protagonist and leader of the struggle. Anandamath also featured a strong woman character, and in both books, while women do take up arms, they fight while embodying the values of love.



Chattopadhyay had the foresight to understand that without the cooperation of women, the freedom struggle could not be entirely successful. As Shanti says in Anandamath while making her case to join the cause, “Which hero ever became a hero without the cooperation of his wife

As Gandhi’s popularity rose, so did his influence with many authors of the time using literature to portray his ideals. Chief amongst these was K.S. Venkatramani who wrote two important novels- Murugan The Tiller (1927) and Kundan, The Patriot (1934)- which dealt with the economic impact of Gandhism and the Civil Disobedience Movement respectively. In Murugan, Venkatramani captures the sacrifices of a village in their struggle for freedom. In Kundan, his protagonist, Raghu, finds himself so enamoured by the Indian freedom struggle and Satyagraha that he joins the movement despite his mother’s angry protest.

Another author influenced by Gandhi was Mulk Raj Anand. In Untouchable, the protagonist, Bakha, a sweeper, spent the day being beaten and treated unjustly merely because of his caste. However, he finds relief when he hears Gandhi’s speech, which gives him hope for a better future. In the speech, Gandhi says that even as “we are asking for freedom from the grip of a foreign nation, we have ourselves, for centuries, trampled underfoot millions of human beings without feeling the slightest remorse of our iniquity.” In his other books, The Village, Across The Black Waters, and The Sword And The Sickle, Anand further explores Gandhian ideology and the freedom struggle.[2]

In Raja Rao’s Kanthapura, a village organises passive resistance against the British in accordance with Gandhi’s philosophy. Kanthapura is a caste-ridden village but everything changes when Moorthy, a Brahmin, discovers Gandhian philosophy. As a result, he begins to wear khaki and fight untouchability. Due to his efforts and those of Rangamma, the educated widow he lives with, the people of Kanthapura begin to believe in Gandhian principles and Gandhi becomes akin to a god to them.

Such portrayal of Gandhian ideology in literature cemented Gandhi’s position as a leader. For those who were dealing with exploitation, Gandhi became a hero who would improve their lot and usher in a new era with a more equal society.

## II. DISCUSSION

The protagonists of pre-Independence literature were ordinary men and women who joined the freedom struggle and became heroes. They were not intellectuals or even educated. They belonged to different castes and classes, came from different parts of India, and spoke different languages. However, despite their differences, they believed in the same ideology- one which led them to give up everything in the quest for a better quality of life[3] and freedom, with the first step being independence from Britain. As a result, pre-Independence literature was instrumental in uniting people to a common cause.

Art and literature, played an important role in India’s freedom struggle. Both art and literature acted as a tool in India’s freedom struggle against colonialism. As part of the freedom movement, many indigenous industries and enterprises were set up. Indian art and literature flourished, and soon became a source of national pride. For example, Abanindranath Tagore through his paintings helped raise the consciousness of many. Through various journals, newspapers like Harijan freedom fighters like Gandhiji, Rabindranath Tagore raised important issues on the national platform.

Role of art and literature in India’s freedom struggle:

1. Evoking emotions: Art helped nationalist in their struggle by evoking emotions related to oppression or kind of injustice to people that they had been facing for a long time. It helped to increase the sensitivity among elite and bourgeoisie class towards the suffering of the common man by depicting their poor living condition and atrocities.
2. Raising nationalist sentiments: The nationalistic sentiment replaced what was earlier widely dominated by the portraits and songs or bhajans based on gods and goddesses only. It influenced people through painting battle scenes between Indian and British soldiers and portraying brutalities, to people singing and writing nationalistic poetries, plays, and stories. Fiction and poetry was used for a patriotic purpose and to create a nationalist discourse.
3. Overcoming linguistic barriers: Indian art helped in overcoming linguistic differences across the country in the form of visual and performing art. [4]Further, nationalist literature was in the local language that helped many common people to take part in India’s freedom struggle.
4. Spreading awareness: Writers and poets such as Rabindranath Tagore, Josh Malihabadi, Muhammad Iqbal, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Mohammad Ali Jouhar, and Kazi Nazrul Islam used literature, poetry and speech as a tool to spread awareness against the atrocities by British on Indians and to provoke the thought of freedom to encourage people to fight for the country.





5. Women participation: Women leaders like Begum Rokeya and Sarojini Naidu promoted the emancipation of Indian women and to encourage their participation in national politics. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's *Devi Chaudharani*, became an inspiration to women to take up the cause of independence. In this novel, he made a woman the protagonist and leader of the struggle. *Anandamath* also featured a strong woman character, and in both books, while women do take up arms, they fight while embodying the values of love.
6. Revival of cultural identities: When the Swadeshi movement started gaining momentum, Indian artists attempted to revive their cultural identities which were suppressed by the British. This led to the creation of the Bengal School of Art, led by the reworked Indian styles with a focus on nationalism of Abanindranath Tagore. An example of this is the painting of 'The Passing of Shah Jahan' by Abanindranath Tagore which evoked the recent past of Indian history which was being seen to be glorious. Many other artists like Jamini Roy and later SH Raza took inspiration from folk traditions.[5]
7. A tool of propaganda: Literature played an important role and was used as a tool of propaganda. Newspapers like *Bande Mataram*, *Jungantar Patrika*, and *Harijansought* to make Indian citizens not only socially and politically aware but also unite them for one common cause. Pamphlets written and distributed across India provided critical information and served as propaganda against the British.
8. Spread patriotic feelings: Art and literature was used to spread the message of patriotism and expose atrocities of British. In *Anandamath*, set during the famine in Bengal, Chattopadhyay highlighted various patriotic acts of and sacrifices made by his characters, ordinary people who left their homes and families to fight against subjection, and in service of the Mother. National song, *Bande Mataram*, was first published as a poem in this novel as the rallying cry of the characters who used it to give themselves courage and to urge people to fight against the British.

Thus, art and literature played an immense role in India's freedom struggle. It gave birth to many nationalist artists who tried to influence public psyche through their work. It not only led to a silent criticism of colonial atrocities but also acted as a force to unite mass against colonial forces.

### III. RESULTS

India is known for its rich art and cultural heritage. As society changes, so does the nature of art and literature. The origins of great religions such as Jainism, Buddhism, ancient and medieval times were known for their religious influence on Indian art.

#### Freedom Struggle and Indian Art and Literature

- The themes of the poems, folk songs and music of the time shifted to political awareness and social issues, which were previously mainly based on religion, Sufism and love.
- Writers/poets like Rabindranath Tagore, Muhammad Iqbal, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay used literature, poetry and speech as a tool to spread awareness against British atrocities on Indians and encourage people to fight for the country.
- Bankim Chandra also especially wrote such essays,[6] which forced his readers to ponder over the reasons for the present pathetic condition of his country. Bankim Chandra also brought out a magazine called *Bangadarshan* whose aim was to educate and inspire his countrymen as much as possible. Often the style of these essays was humorous and satirical, which entertained the reader and made him think. This amalgamation of entertainment and education manifested even more effectively in the novels.
- The novels were written for the re-awareness of the evil social customs and practices like untouchability, caste discrimination, prohibition on remarriage of widows etc.
- Despite his untimely death, Bharatendu produced a considerable amount of literature and wrote in various literary genres such as poetry, drama and essays. He brought out many magazines to make people aware of the condition of his country and society.
- The Bengal School of Art was established during the Swadeshi Movement of 1905, which originated in the then Calcutta and Shantiniketan. In the year 1906, to protest the partition of Bengal, Abanindranath Tagore painted *Bang Mata/Bharat Mata* in Western influence.
- The romantic style of 'company painting' was replaced by Raja Ravi Varma's paintings of Hindu gods, mythological scenes and Indian life. They were rebuilt in their printing press in the dozens and distributed as poster and calendar art to middle-class homes across the country.[7]



- A series of paintings were made by Nandalal Bose. These posters rejected Western material/style and, instead, used Japanese calligraphic strokes, natural colors and scenes from rural life. Example: Posters of Haripura-meeting of Congress Committee.
- Kalighat Painting Style: Artisans and craftsmen (patua or scroll painters) infused their traditional knowledge with European techniques. He made mementos on religious themes (oriental art) mixed with contemporary society-Babu culture (Western art).

Thus literature has played a very important role in the Indian freedom struggle. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when nationalist ideas began to emerge and the literature of various Indian languages entered its modern era, more and more litterateurs began to use literature for patriotic purposes.[8]

In fact, most of these writers believed that, since they are citizens of a slave country, it is their duty to create such kind of literature which will pave the way for national liberation while contributing to the all-round revival of their society.

#### IV. IMPLICATIONS

One of the most popularly discussed and yet many-a-time controversial figure of Indian politics is Mahatma Gandhi. There is hardly any area in the pre or post-independence era that he had left untrampled for the sake of Indian development and independence. He is such a socio-political figure who is barely impossible for someone to forget or ignore. He has influenced every aspect of human consciousness and there is hardly any discipline that he has left uncommented. He is an immense source of writing himself and has influenced different disciplines and very many writers from different fields like history, politics, philosophy, literature, sociology and so on, have him as their central themes. While musing on different books on Gandhiji, especially the then Gandhian Indian English Literature, one can easily sense that the then time was grossly occupied by a 'Gandhian consciousness' socially, culturally and politically, at least in the period from 1918-1922 in the anti-colonial against the British. There are vicarious studies and research works that Mr. Gandhi has found and is still finding himself into; but reading some of the basic books and going through certain phenomenon, I personally feel that the relationship between Indian English Literature and Gandhiji[9] is still left untold at certain historical, social and cultural ends and so I would like to make a modest attempt in re-inventing the Mahatma in the light of the then Indian English Literature. The first half of the topic as mentioned above: "Gandhian Influence on Indian Writing in English", finds an ample exposure in any of the books on History of Indian English Literature, but its second half: "An assessment of the effects of Developmental Communication, as used in the Political Campaigns by Gandhiji, portrayed by the contemporary Indian English Novelists" somehow sounds new to us. In conformity with the first part, Mr. M. K. Naik<sup>1</sup> comments, "Indian Writing in English literature of the Gandhian age was inevitably influenced by these (the then political and social) epoch-making developments in Indian life." He explains that Indian Writing in English (Fiction) in fact "discovered some of its most compelling themes" during the Gandhian era." This is a veritable truth and there rises no controversy about the countless eminent references to it. But the second half of the topic that deals with the "Development Communication" is, I feel, not much discussed on to that extent in literature that the first part has been.[10]

The word communication comes from the Latin word "communis" meaning commonness. That is, successful and effective communication is only possible when all the needed parameters for communication, like interest, motive, physical and psychological conditions of both listener and speaker, language are common. It is also a successful communication when either the speaker or listener through a dialectical process and argumentative technique, reaches a point where the other motivates one or both the views are synthesized. Trickling down the ages, it has been an ever-convinced fact that effective communication can bring about development. Browsing over the Western models and theories of communication, from the time of Aristotle to Nora Quedral, from a simple Shannon-Weaver's sender-receiver model to Raymond Williams, it proves that communication serves as the bottom-line for development and progress. Development is perhaps one of the most fiercely debated concepts in the contemporary social sciences that have evolved since the World War II. From a narrow economist term, it has outgrown into a comprehensive dynamic one, taking within its ambit natural environment, community, social relations, education, production, culture and welfare, though the approach of development depends upon local culture and National situation and not on outside models. Communication is an important input in development, is unanimously accepted by the sociologists, psychologists and economists, who say that proper use of communication can foster the pace and development of a country. Developmental Communication is thus a process of developing the society through not only affecting or influencing behaviours of individuals or groups towards certain desired goals and objectives, necessary for the



betterment and benefits of the entire society, but also reaching to the entire mass population of the country through proper channelised means. Developmental Communication is mainly concerned with the role of communication and information in social and economic development of an individual society or nation. In India, Bhattanayaka stressed that the essence of communication lay in achieving commonness and oneness. The Indian Concept of Communication is deep-rooted into the Primitive Age of the very Indian civilization itself, when Bharatmuni expressed his views on aestheticism discussing communication and literature, in his book *Natya Shastra*, also taken as the fifth Veda. Bharata insists that a 'Sahridaya', i.e. one who has one heart can understand the 'bhavas' and 'rasas' in a 'dhvani', i.e. in a text or form of speech. He asserts a need for 'Sadharanikaran', meaning simplification or identification of meaning, which will appeal to all kinds of people, irrespective of the literary barrier, and senses. This kind of communication is a support system to the Government or the developing authority, as the message can reach to every corner of the nation only because of its effective work-methods of channelizing and motivating the public in a simplest form.[10]

India has witnessed remarkable communicators who motivated the common people for betterment by classic communicative means in various fields. Musing back through the ages, we can bring into focus how the great men like the Buddha, Ramkrishna Paramangsha, and many others tried to enforce changes both in human and social aspects of life only by persuasion and communication. It is very surprising that I speak communication so much in presenting a literary paper and that also one which portrays Gandhiji's influence on Indian English writing. But it is a very interesting fact that even Gandhiji was one of the supreme communicators who could bring ignorants out of doors; make illiterates sing one song, gather all women at a venue and make children chant his name as God, at his single call. That Gandhiji was a classic media-man, is proved by his journalistic activities and his use of journalistic writings throughout his life. He very aptly exploited the nationalist press, and his own journals, 'Young India', 'Navijivan', 'Indian Opinion' and 'Harijan', though were restricted to the literary urbans of India, yet he well knew the secret of reaching out to the hearts of the millions in the rural areas by means of 'Padayatra' or mass procession and motivating speech. He was much an advanced social worker and was well aware of the power of communication. He weighed and measured the Indian colonial situation and the existing psychological and physical state of Indians and thus concluded that the accurate means to reach them was by the folk media and group communication. He achieved identification with the masses through "Sadharanikaran" or simplification of his message, through common religious symbols, Vedas, myths, and of course making his life very simple to establish an easy identification. Whatever Gandhiji's influence may have been on political and economic spheres of the country, there is hardly any doubt that he has left a deep impression on our literatures. He is a mine of themes for writers and commentators though he himself never worked on any literary topic or genre. Dramatic reconstructions of Gandhiji's life in film and fiction range from Richard Attenborough's academy award winning film, *GANDHI*, in 1982 to Indian English novels like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K Narayan. Gandhiji gave new strength and new confidence to Indian languages that suffered contempt, neglect, indifference, and disgrace for a long time. Gandhiji insisted on high thinking and simple living which was reflected and highlighted by the literary English authors of the time, who in their novels and short stories, portrayed the real picture of the then society from various sides, thereby presenting the influence of Gandhi on Indian villages and towns, letting us a scope to probe how Gandhiji's ways of developmental communication created effects on human lives bringing a sea change in their thoughts, views and living. Almost all of their novels represent events, which distinctly correspond to the examples of actual incidents, and teachings that Gandhiji in real life encoded during his visits at various places. The writers working in different languages in those days either were mostly persons who had come directly under Gandhiji's influence, many had even taken part in the freedom movements, or they were highly influenced by his ideals. Their writings were immensely burdened with Gandhian idealism, lifestyle, his teachings, and anti-colonial stands. Gandhiji was so much part and form of any literary genre of that period that he made appearance in many dramas, novels, stories and in poems. In most of the cases, the Gandhian writers, especially the novelists and short story writers, made Babu an important, guest character or they made a local Gandhi replica and presented him in the light of Mahatma. Not only did the Indians turn Gandhiji into a veritable cult but also a flesh & blood Rama or Krishna who could change the society by his single finger touch. P. Rama Moorthy in 'Gandhi's letters to the West' quotes: "For me there were only two God & Babu, and now they have become one."

Gandhiji had a multi-faceted personality. He has been the only Indian after the Buddha to attain worldwide fame. It would not be an exaggeration to say that he had performed many miracles during his lifetime and his message was a source of inspiration and strength to the people for all times. Gandhiji was a psychologist in one sense and an idealist on the other as he could feel the pulse of India and its people on whom he could exert a tremendous influence and preach his Gandhian ideology. He realized that India being a religion-oriented country with a majority of half-literate and non literate population can only be motivated and mobilized through a traditional mode of communication and in addition, Gandhian philosophy was mainly based on traditional and labour oriented technologies. The folk or



traditional arts of India have from the ancient times been used for moral, religious socio-political purposes. It is a classic communicative medium which appeals to the personal and emotional level of the people, avoiding any cross-cultural hurdles, expensive entertainment programmes and above all, the message is dispersed in a familiar format [11] and content in local and colloquial dialects to a homogeneous group, surpassing all literacy and socio-economic barriers. Gandhiji though not in-person but in ideologies, teaching, views, had reached the stage and in hearts of people through various forms of Tamasha, Jatra, Keertan, Nautanki, Pala, Yakshagana, Ramlila, Raslila, Puppetry, and Street Theatre, to name a few folk forms, at all corners of rural and urban India and of course the literary artists and art directors were behind to provide a firm support in popularizing Gandhiji. He was the one who could clearly mention that our India is our Sita 'maiya' (mother) and we are the Ramas who would drive the red-faced Ravana (British) away and bring back our mother. This very use of the Ramayana concept deep-rooted in the religious tradition of India ignited the dormant national consciousness and deeply founded the concept of freedom movement in the illiterates and by dint of this religious proforma, he could bring about a united upheaval in the country for its development. Moreover, his mission was backed by the messages that could remove social evils and vices from the country. Shahid Amin in his essay "Gandhi as Mahatma: Gorakhpur District, Eastern UP", says, "The 1910's movements and organizations of Hindi, Hindu Culture and social reform 'nagri sabhas', pathshalas (vernacular schools), 'gaushalas' (asylums for cattle), 'sewa samithis' (social service leagues) and 'sudrak sabhas' (reform associations) of various sorts provided the support and cover for nationalist activity all backed by popular Gandhi belief even in the rural villages and undeveloped regions. Each type of these socio-political movements served nationalism in its own way, but there was a considerable amount of overlapping in their functions and interests... Yajna (sacrifice) was performed; a Sanskrit Pathshala and a gaushala endowed with financial support from traders, arrangements made for the orderly running of Ramlilas and melas, and panchayats set up for the arbitration of disputes." [9]

The name Gandhi and his prescribed guidelines were means enough to resolve the village disputes.

Gandhiji gave new strength and new confidence to Indian languages which suffered contempt, neglect, indifference and disgrace for a long time. In his relation to art Gandhiji describes, "I can make no literary pretensions. My acquaintance with Gujarati, and, for that matter, any literature, is, for no fault of mine, next to nothing."

The inspiration and influence which our literatures of all languages have imbibed from him is well noted in the theater, folk activities and literary writings based on his life, preachings, and ideologies and of course his welfare activities nationwide. Such a medium produced an immediate feedback from the audience from all parts of the country, as things got well assimilated into their hearts and minds, and the whole of India could respond unitedly at his call. The anti-Gandhians might feel the above view as biased and unreal but it is a veritable truth that Gandhiji was represented as a sage by the Indian Congress in its political campaigns, policy wise and his accessories esp. the loin cloth, his stick and very nominal life style were modes that themselves spoke for the Mahatma and helped in establishing him as a saintly preacher and a sincere freedom worker. This worked havoc in the Indian minds especially in the village folk, who were basically religion bound and not at all conscious about the then political and economic domination of the country.

The literary writers of the period were also no exceptions to the above phenomenon. The writers working in different languages in those days were mostly persons who had come either directly under Gandhiji's influence and many had taken part in the freedom movements, or they were highly influenced by his ideals. Their writings were immensely burdened with Gandhian idealism, lifestyle, his teachings and anti-colonial stands. Bhabani Bhattacharya specifically sums up the elements that the then writers incorporated from Gandhiji: "In every Indian literature a new thinking emerged. There was to be shift of emphasis from the rich to the poor, from the intellectual to the man of character and inner culture, from the educated to the illiterate and the voiceless, and deep rooted in these revaluations was social reform."

Krishna Kripalani puts, "apart from its political repercussions, it was both moral and intellectual and at once inhibitive and liberating....Gandhi stripped urban life and elegance of their pretension and emphasized that religion without compassion and culture without conscience were worthless. He transfigured the image of India as she was poor, starving and helpless, but with an untapped potential of unlimited possibilities." [10]

Gandhiji was so much part and form of any literary genre of that period that he made appearance in many dramas, novels, stories and in poems.

Gandhiji's social activities were development oriented and his idealism was democratic, rural and homogeneous in nature. It was not only the literary writers who played an active role in reflecting the then Gandhi-mania of the entire country but also the nationalist Press and local newspapers and journals which portrayed the bhakti cult of the Mahatma





through different anecdotes, feature articles, soft news and of course, snippets, thereby proving the immense popularity of the political figure who was slowly turned into a divine entity, a messiah who was sure to bring a revolution in human history as Buddha or Christ could. Newspapers like the 'Swadesh', 'Aaj', 'Abhyudaya', 'Gyan Shakti' and local dailies, pamphlets etc all contributed accordingly and respectively in portraying the local reactions in favour of Gandhiji and thereby popularizing him. The myth of the Mahatma was a result of the projections of the existing patterns of popular beliefs about the worship of the holy miraculous sages in rural India. Gandhi-teachings became so popular that they were pronounced as everyday bread and butter facts and the more they got discussed the more did they gain in importance, magnitude, and matter. As a result of this many new things got assimilated in the name of the Mahatma and rumors made room in accordingly, thereby increasing his popularity by leaps and bounds, that neither the Mahatma nor the Congress circulated. Stories like Mahatma walking through the fire unhurt, the Mahatma bringing independence in 1921, Mahatma insisting vegetarianism and condemning fish and meat in people etc. were some common subversions made in Gandhi's name.

Gandhiji insisted on high thinking and simple living which was also reflected and highlighted by the literary English authors of the time, mainly Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayanan, who in their novels and stories portrayed the real picture of the then society from various perspectives, thereby presenting the influence of Gandhi on Indian villages and towns, letting us a scope to probe how Gandhiji's ways of developmental communication created effects on human lives bringing a sea change in their thoughts, views and living. Almost all of their novels represent events which distinctly correspond to the examples of actual incidents and teachings that Gandhiji in real life encoded during his visits at various places. The crux of the morale or bottom spread of Gandhism, which the novels often portray by vicarious means and events are:

1. Unity among all religions especially Hindu-Muslim Unity.
2. People should not adhere to extremist means of protest, i.e. they should be non-violent and not use domestic arms like lathis, sharp weapons, and stop picketing and looting places.
3. Stop the evil practices of untouchability, castism, enmity among classes, hatred, lying, swearing but spreading of brotherhood, love and unity among all races instead.
4. Stop consumption of tobacco, ganja-smoking, gambling, stop swearing, using slang, whoring, and beating the womenfolk at home, sex-crimes and the like.
5. Boycotting foreign goods, educational, economic and legal institution.
6. Take up the initiative to spin, weave, cultivate, study, learn and teach, control sex, family planning, lead a simple living, self-sacrifice and self-purification.
7. People will not betray their help-seeker; they should be honest, progressive and self-confident about their country, resources and abilities.
8. Believe in the truth, face the truth and apply it in life, realization of Swaraj, grace of God, strength of the united people when motivated towards one goal peacefully.[11]

Citing some examples from the Kanahapura, by Raja Rao, often called a Gandhian novel, my paper which is meant to act as a resource for the post graduate students reading Kanthapura, would strive to show how the novelist portrays the process of community development through Gandhian means and social teachings, in rural India, which above all was backed by the need to be independent from the British colonization and the development of the nation consequently, through effective communicative means and a will to make India a Gandhian country or Ramraj, garneted with everything very 'Indian' in nature.

The most important and common fact that we find in the Gandhi novels is that they talk of a distinct village, a representative of all villages in rural India and the rural folk same as others, immersed in their Gandhi- their savior, their God. Mahatma's image takes form within pre-existing patterns of popular belief and ritual action corresponding to their demographic customs. There are few who oppose him and are swept away in importance and deeds by the Gandhi followers and the whole lot take Gandhian as their life irrespective of any troublesome consequence. The procedure of development as said before was through group communication, through the political meetings held by the Mahatma or occasional visits by him at various places to perform a righteous deed for a great cause i.e. freedom. The other way was automatic trans-creation of religious slokas to Gandhi slokas or Gandhi Puranas, which found way to stages, temples through songs, Keertans and Jstras. Such was his popularity that things associated with him got his name attached to it as a suffix or a prefix like Swaraj was called as 'Gandhi-Swaraj' or 'Mahatma Swaraj' only because of his tremendous influence. Gandhi is now transformed into 'Mahatma', great souls, whose words are like that of the Lord and must be adhered to, and the authenticity or the purpose, the deep rooted meaning is never to be questioned. Such feeling was





common to most of the ignorant people and women folk of the village who went on chanting stories and songs about the Mahatma without even properly understanding them; such is the scene in R. K. Narayanan's *Waiting for the Mahatma*, where we find the hero Sriram becoming a blind follower of Gandhiji and joining the freedom movement but not at all understanding what Gandhian is actually about. There are people who still remain a Gandhian even if their leader leaves them or the Mahatma is defeated, severely criticized or if the Sahibs put them behind bars. In Narayanan's *The Vendor of Sweets*, Jagan considers himself a staunch Satyagrahi, spins the charka regularly, and equates himself with achieving Nirvana, like the Buddha, by following the principles of Gandhism. Bakha in Anand's *Untouchable*, is introduced before Gandhism in the end, as redemption from the social evils of untouchability and casteism. After listening to the speech of Gandhiji as a counsel from God, Bakha's life becomes more tolerable from the next day.[8]

Kanthapura sketches the step by step social development of a south Indian village Kanthapura, and its people, who following Gandhiji became successful not only in forming a Swadeshi or anti-colonial group and performing anti-colonial protests but also redeeming their village from the social evils of untouchability, Castesism, women backwardness, dis-unity and toddy or wine drinking. Gandhiji's popular effects are noticed when we hear him chanted in a Keertan or in a village-made swadeshi song, songs sung as preface to anti-colonial protests, as he is considered as the main Lord of inspiration behind all actions and all political activities. When the entire village carries out an anti-colonial protest against the Skeffington Estate, the coolies cry out, "Mahatma Gandhi ki jai!" and "we (the villagers) say 'Mahatma, Mahatma, Gandhi Mahatma!', and they put their mouths to our ears and say 'Gandhi Mahatma ki jai!'", as a source of inspiration, strength and will power. Kanthapura experiences a total reformation from a place with a common term, 'village' to a village in the real sense of the term, in the end, where there is no caste distinction, backwardness and religious fanaticism, but self-employment, women emancipation, love, social awareness and of course the pride of their Sthalapurana. The enthusiasm that Gandhiji generated, the expectations he aroused and the attack he launched on the British authority, had all combined to initiate the very first anti-colonial movements in the peasant India which could lead to the conceptualization of an over turning of the power structure not only in its international aspect between the British and India but also within the country where a peasant could now dare to violate a landlord, a farmer the unjust priest or police, or a high class - a pariah. The development is gradually noticed in form of the incidents through out the novel, from the mouth of the narrator, Moorthy and the village folk, all in an interesting and story telling manner. "So Moorthy goes from house to house, and from younger brother to elder brother, and from elder brother to the grandfather himself, and what do you think? He even goes to the Potters' quarter and the Weavers' quarter and the Sudra quarter, ....We said to ourselves, he is one of these Gandhi-men, who say there is neither caste nor clan nor family, and yet they pray like us and they live like us. Only they say too, one should not marry early, one should allow widows to take husbands and a Brahmin might marry a pariah and pariah a Brahmin."(p.15). Again, when we come to matters like keeping an uncorrupted spirit by the grace of God we see Achakka narrating: "Ah! says Range Gowda. 'And I shall not close my eyes till that dog has eaten filth,' but Moorthy interrupts him and says such things are not to be said, and that hatred should be plucked out of our hearts and that the Mahatma says you must love even your enemies." (p.75). The development is prominent and is bound to take place as we find the villagers equating Gandhiji with Brahma, Shiva and Krishna who were all Saviours in our Hindu mythology and anything said by them is bound to be true. The most interesting matter that one must note is that the entire change or transformation, social and civic, as carried on by Moorthy, the representative of Gandhiji, is done only by different modes of communication through group discussions, religious chants, Ramlilas, gram sabhas, etc. based on Gandhi-talks and no non-violent measures are needed or introduced. The Harikatha man, Jayramachar while telling a story from Hindu mythology tells "You remember how Krishna, when he was but a babe of four, had began to fight against demons and had killed the serpent Kali. So too our Mohandas began to fight against the enemies of the country. And as he grew up, and after he was duly shaven for the hair ceremony, he began to go out into the villages and assemble people and talk to them, and his voice was so pure, his forehead was so brilliant with wisdom, that men followed him, more and more men followed him as they did Krishna the flute-player, and so he goes from village to village to slay the serpent of the foreign rule. Fight, says he, but harms no soul. Love all, says he... He is a saint, the Mahatma,[7] a wise man and a soft man, and a saint. You know how he fasts and prays. And even his enemies fall at his feet."(p.18). All the village folk irrespective of their caste distinction now came up to the temple and swore the oath unanimously to serve the county "My Master, I shall spin a hundred yards of yarn per day, and shall practice ahimsa, and I shall seek Truth', and they fell prostrate and asked for the blessings of the Mahatma and the gods, and they rose and crawled back to their seats." (p.81). A certain village gossip reveals that girls, who are quite aged to bring up children, go to the universities and "talk to this boy and that boy and one, too, I heard went and married a Mohammedan."(p.33). Moorthy, the miniature Mahatma, in the story, experiences an epiphany and it is Gandhiji's loving touch and words that makes him a Gandhi-man, leading him to boycott foreign goods and quit foreign university. In a progressive meeting, Moorthy counsels a woman: "To wear cloth spun and woven with your own God given hands is sacred, says the Mahatma. And it gives work to the workless



and work to the lazy. And if you don't need the cloth sister, 'give it away to the poor'..... Our country is being bled to death by foreigners. We have to protect our mother" (p.23). Again, in the village Brahmins sit with the Pariahs in the meetings and eat and sing in the temple. Kanthapura now arranges for even adult Night Schools and Pariah Night Schools. Once in an anti-colonial protest, a Pariah saves a Brahmin and a Brahmin leaves way to a Pariah too. Thus, Kanthapura relates the story of a village, socially and morally uplifted, by the effective developmental communication processes of Gandhiji.

But Moorty, the village Gandhi, in the end, leaves Gandhism, joins the Nehru group and writes in a letter "Is there no Swaraj in our states and is there not misery and corruption and cruelty there? Oh no, Ratna, it is the way of the master that is wrong. And I have come to realize bit by bit..." (p. 183). Though the magical effect of Gandhiji was found bulleted through, to a certain extent, by the introduction of other idealisms, for the common people it was like the God imprisoned for His wrong ways and the huge mass of disciples found no soil under their feet, but still they managed to keep faith on the Lord as He still was the source of strength and existence in their lives. Though Moorthy leaves Gandhi and Kanthapura, yet the other village members stay back firm rooted in Gandhi and the narrator says, "They say Rangama is all for the Mahatma. We are all for the Mahatma. Pariah Rachanna's wife, Rachi, and Seethamma and Timamma are all for the Mahatma. They say there are men in Bombay and men in Punjab, and men and women in Bombay and Bengal and Punjab, who are all for the Mahatma. They say that the Mahatma will go to the Red-man's country and he will get us Swaraj. and Rama will come back from exile, and sita will be with him for Ravana will be slain and Sita freed, and he will come back with Sita on his right in a chariot of the air, and brother Bharata will go to meet them with the worshipped sandal of the Master on his head." (p. 183). The faith and religious coating on the bitter political truth is prominent and 'Rama', i, e the Mahatma, will go to England in the Round Table Conference and bring back 'Sita' i, e independent India from the 'Ravanas' i, e the British and Pt. Neheru i,e 'Bharata' will welcome the Mahatma as The Ramayana dictates. It was essentially a Gandhi-Purana that the ordinary village folk understood and because of such religious orientation, the majority of the people blindly followed Gandhi. Despite everything, it is an uncontested truth that it was Gandhiji who introduced the National consciousness among people irrespective of class, caste and religion, not only through religious coated speeches or political campaigns but also bringing the genuine realization of the need to be united against the British to fight back freedom by observing certain social, civic, psychological and behavioural changes in society.[6]

It was the body language, his way of life, the gestures, and philosophic chantings and of course, the motivating speech of the Mahatma that played havoc in the minds of the people and they took him as their God, their guide. Moreover, the persons who went near him were so very much influenced by him that when they returned to their villages, being inspired, they told and reacted more than that they have seen and invited people to join in the freedom movement lead by Gandhiji. It was like listening to a story of a great, wise man where it was the duty of the ordinary listener to co-operate and join him to give success to a great mission for the country. R. K. Narayanan's The Guide takes us back to the Natyashastra's philosophy, where the communication for certain development a 'Guru-Chela' relationship should be maintained and the ways of the Guru is to be taken as the ways of the Lord. Unquestionable faith and devotion leads to 'moksha' or union with God and thus whatever Raju, a railway guide utters becomes a Vedanta and his life a doyen for all common people. His sacrifice takes form of a divine contribution for the people of the earth. So Velan like the others is unwilling to believe Raju's past, that he was a fraud and prisoner after all, and thus acts obediently according to his holy words. So in all aspects, it is the communication in different forms that creates miracles and tends people towards positive development, only that it must be mass oriented and it must affect the receivers' psychology.[5]

Indian history never saw such an upsurge of faith, unity in action, united will, community feeling and social development, without any expensive spending as in the Gandhian Age from the grass root level. He himself was a means of communication for the people between the British and the Indians, as he had a well formed conception about the motherland and her people, their needs and their mind set which helped him to attain millions of disciples and act as a positive social worker with the help of traditional ways of communication. Scopes for further research lies in the fact whether Gandhiji's motives, ideals, teachings etc. and their consequences were right or not but it must be undoubtedly concluded that nothing but such tactful means of communication through the Folk media and myth was the only way to foster revolutionary feelings in the ignorant poor villagers thereby making them realize the need for change and self-development. It was my sincere effort to unveil the logic behind Gandhiji's use of myths, puranas, harinaam-keertans and padayatras as primary tools behind his freedom campaigns and what effects they produced in the minds of the people together with how he could bring certain social and ideological betterment in the villages, their social life and attitude towards life, at least as portrayed by the the-then literary writers.[4]



## V. CONCLUSIONS

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.[3]

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.

Nationalism was first used in the 18th century as a common way to define and promote a nation according to "ethnographic principles." Although the Roman Empire and the Holy Roman Empire had some nationalistic aspects, they were much more in favor of a so-called "world-state," spanning nations under one banner. By the 18th and 19th centuries, however, the French and American revolutions sparked a new age of nationalism that promoted a unified nation and its political and economic interests - namely, capitalism.

Indian Freedom Struggle carried into focus the concept of nationalism and one can deal with the subject 'Nationalism and Literature' very easily by relating patriotic writings as a manifestation of nationalist enthusiasm of the people against foreign supremacy which began to appear in the mid of 20th century.

The present paper reconnoiters the notions of nationalism and the nation in Indian English literature. The novelists like Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R.K. Narayan, K.S. Venkatramani, K.A. Abbas, Manohar Malgonkar, G V Desani, Bhabani Bhattacharya and many others portrayed influence of Indian independence movement and Gandhian idealism in Indian writing in English.[2]

Nationalism in Indian literature initiated at the time of 1857 revolt although its root arose in 1835 when Kylas Chunder Dutt wrote "A Journal of Forty-Eight Hours of the Year 1945" and Shoshee Chunder Dutt wrote "The Republic of Orissa: A Page from the Annals of the Twentieth Century", both project into future, describing battles of liberation against British, but end with dissimilar resolutions. Kylas Chundur Dutt fixes on a year more than a century later as the date of a crucial Indian confrontation with the British. By this time in the future, Indians would have reached the limits of their tolerance. His piece begins thus: "The people of India and particularly those of metropolis had been subject for the last fifty years to every species of subaltern oppression. The dagger and the bowl deals with merciless hand, and neither age, sex, nor condition could repress the rage of the British barbarians. Those events, together with the recollection of the grievances suffered by their ancestors, roused the dormant spirit of the generally considered timid Indians".

Bankimchandra Chatterjee (1838-94) significantly influenced the notion of Indian religion and secular nationalism through his writings. He uses religion as an important tool to rise the people against colonial rulers. Bankim proclaimed that the idea of western nationalism reinforced the spiritual values of Indian nationalism. His novel, Anandamath (The Abbey of Bliss 1882) is set in the late 18th century and portrays the Sannyasi Rebellion. This novel stirs many people to sacrifice their lives for the struggle of Independence. The novel was banned by the British regime.

Rabindranath Tagore in his poem, "where the mind is without fear" writes:- 'Where the mind is led by thee into ever-widening Thought and action into that heaven of freedom my father, let my country awake'. The theme of nationalism also represented in Tagore's Gora (1909). Tagore's concept of nationalism doesn't ignore human quality in day-to-day social life. He believes that every Hindu should sacrifice his life for the fulfillment of freedom. His another book The



Home and the World set upon the same ideas expresses the numerous aspects of the anti-colonial nationalist struggle in India against the colonial regime. He proposed of nationalism on humanitarian ground instead of nation. "It is my conviction that my countrymen will truly gain their India by fighting against the education which teaches them that a country is greater than the ideals of humanity". He opposed the ideas of the nationalism imitated from west.[1]

Another important novelist during Indian Independent movement is Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004). He came into the influence of Gandhi and therefore he moved himself from Bloomsbury to Sabarmati. His first novel Untouchable (1935) delineates one day of the life of an untouchable character Bakha. Anand's Coolie (1936) and Two Leaves and a Bud (1937) are also the study of the marginalized and oppressed downtrodden. Raja Rao's classic novel Kanthapura (1938) represents the life of Moorthy in a simple village. He wishes to break the orthodox traditions of Indian people.

Manohar Malgonkar contracts with the painful drama of the partition in an inclusive way in his novel A Bend in the Ganges. The novel portrays realistically how the 'complete freedom movement' was altering in the terrorist movement. This movement was a symbol of national unanimity for India which was organized and designed to overthrow the British rule from the Indian soil. This freedom movement engenders into communal hate and violence during the partition. The struggle between the Indian nationalism and the British colonialism change in unfortunately to the dreadful.

As Meenakshi Mukherjee writes in her novel The Twice Born Fiction that "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". By writing this she says that literature is an expression of nation's mind in writing. The national events have a great influence upon the literature of a country. The national events and happening exerted a powerful influence upon the creative writings of Indian English literature. Independence movement has been a major event asserting national identity in Indian political panorama. Its impact upon the minds of Indian English writers has been so potent and permanent that no writers living during this period could avoid their writing on it. Not only writers of 30s and 40s but writers of post-independence era retrospectively delineated all the phases of freedom struggle in their writings.[8]

In Indian English Literature the later part of 20th century many writers reconsider 1857 struggle in their fiction. The bulk of literature in the free India contains 1857 war as their subject matter, but couple of fiction need to be cited here to show how British was insensible in their activities and they are snob in their narration. Manohar Malgonkar's fictional Nana Sahib Autobiography The Devil's Wind (1972) represent the rebellion of 1857. The Devil's Wind is a first person account given by the Nana of Bithoor about his life and his role in the revolt of 1857. The novel also depicts the atrocity and brutality of the colonial officers. The Last Mughal (2006) written by William Dalrymple depicts the real face of imperialism by showing the cruelty of the Britishers such as the killing of all of Zafar's sons and the destruction of cherished monuments in Delhi and other cities of India. Ruskin Bond's A flight of Pigeons (1978) looks at the events of 1857 both from the British and Indian point of view and debates the contrasts of colonial relations.

Many other novelists in Indian literature like K.A. Abbas, who discusses about the issues of nationalism and untouchability in his novel Tomorrow is ours: A Novel of the India of Today (1943), he delineates through a female protagonist called Parvati. Bhabani Bhattacharya's novel So Many Hungers (1947) sets in the circumstances of Bengal famine and Quit India Movement of 1942. His characters are profoundly impacted by Gandhian philosophy. The main character of the novel is Kajoli, a village girl who arises as a new and educated woman in Gandhian sense. She discards the profession of prostitution enforced by the surroundings on her. She begins to sell the newspaper in order to look after her family.[9]

In her essay 'Nationalism and the Imagination' Gayatri Spivak expands upon her previous post-colonial scholarship, employing a cultural lens to examine the rhetorical underpinnings of the idea of the nation-state. In this gripping and intellectually rigorous work, Spivak specifically analyzes the Indian sovereignty in 1947 and the tone of Indian nationalism, bound up with class and religion that arose in its wake. Spivak was five years old when independence was declared, and she vividly writes, "These are my earliest memories: Famine and blood on the streets. She also talks about the role of mother tongue and the relationship between language and feelings of national identity. She concludes that nationalism colludes with the private sphere of imagination in order to command the public sphere. The writers in almost all the Indian languages and Indian Writings in English, particularly play chief part in producing the





nationalistic and anticolonial reactions during colonial era. The fiction written in reaction to colonial manipulative regime stimulated the soul of the people of India. They created the longing for the freedom among the masses. They played important role in liberation from the chains of slavery. There are many poets, lyricists, novelists, essayists, orators and journalists who fearlessly write against the British government. In short, the nationalistic movement put into indication the process through which a transition to modern nationhood was sought to be made in India rather than the colonial occupation.[10,11]

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+91 99405 72462



+91 63819 07438



ijmrsetm@gmail.com

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