

## **Review of Literature:**

**Criticism in Indian writing in English :-** When we think of criticism in Indian writing in English, the names of K.R. Srinivas Iyengar, Meenakshi Mukherjee, C.D. Navasimhaiah and M.K. Naik flash in our mind.

- 1) K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar, educated at the University of Madras, was University Professor and Head of the Department of English at Andhra University, Waltair from 1947 to 1966, thereafter he was Vice Chancellor Andhra University (1966-68), Dean, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi Branch; and Vice President (1969-77) and Acting President (1977-78) of the Sahitya Academy. During four decades devoted to critical Endeavour, Iyengar has published more than 30 independent works and edited a dozen and a complete checklist of articles, papers, reviews etc. by him would include not less than a couple of hundred times.

He has written extensively on British, European and Indo English literature. Among his chief critical studies are '*Lytton Strachey*' (1938); '*Indo Anglian literature*' (1943). '*The Indian contribution to English literature*' (1946). '*G.M. Hopkins*' (1948), '*Indian writing in English*' (1964, 1973), '*Francois Mauriac*' (1963), '*Shakespeare: His world and his art*' (1964), '*Rabindranath Tagore*' (1965) '*Vivekananda and the Indian Renaissance*' (1970), '*Sri Aurobindo: A Biography and a History*' (2 volume ) and '*On the Mother*' (1978). His collections of critical essays on literature and education include '*The Adventures of Criticism*' (1962) and '*Two Cheers for the Common Wealth*' (1969). His two volumes of verse- '*Tryst with the divine*' (1974) and '*Microcosmographis poetica*' (1978) have clear affiliations with Aurobindoan poetry. His latest poetic work '*sitayana*' (1986) is a fine transcreation of the Ramayana story in elegant English verse. His book on the Mother received the Sahitya Academy Award in 1980.

His numerous articles touch upon diverse subjects ranging from Tamil literature to Tolstoy, Greek tragedy to W. Soyinka and Lope de Vega to modern American Poetry. His most significant achievement is his pioneering work in the field of Indo – English literature in which he is a leading authority. He showed great vision in championing the cause of this literature during Pre – Independence days when even its existence was only grudgingly conceded. His

encyclopedic range, rich scholarship and lucid presentation have made him one of the most outstanding of the modern Indo – English critics.

2) M. K. Naik is a familiar name in criticism of Indian writing in English. He is more than a critic. He wrote, criticized and translated a bulk of Indian writing in English. He has written ‘A History of Indian English Literature’, Published in 1982 by Sahitya Akademy. He was greatly impressed by Bertrand Russel for his simple, lucid and elegant style.

3) Meenakshi Mukherjee earns a significant recognition in Indian criticism in English. A Bengali student in Patna and the US, and teaching at various colleges and Universities across India, Prof. Meenakshi Mukherjee was enabled by her multilingualism to perceive very early, the difference in sensibility of Indian writing in English and Indian’s writing in the regional languages. Along with her husband and intellectual collaborator Prof. Sujit Mukherjee, she brought to the field of translation, academic attention and critical insights on the one hand, while building and consolidating on the other hand a discourse on Indian English literature. In 1979 at the new university of Hyderabad when Prof. Mukherjee found an opportunity to frame a course for the M. A. English students, she decided to include Indian language novels in English translation. The opposition to the idea of using ‘translated (Indian) texts in an English M. A. programme’ she had already encountered at traditional universities where the objection never seemed to apply to English translation of Homer, Sophocles and Brecht. Teaching Indian texts in translation in the English class Mukherjee found that student responses to texts were more confident when they had a first hand exposure to the culture. She critiqued the way English literature was being traditionally taught in India – totally ignoring the context in which the text has been created and canonized, and the context in which it was being received.

Deriving partly from the interdisciplinary expansion of literature into cultural studies than beginning in some American and British Universities, Mukherjee saw in this direction a way of bringing to English literatures studies in India the highly charged interrogative and transforming discourse of colonialism. These are experiences she shared in her paper, ‘Mapping a Territory : Notes on framing a Course’ in 1988. English literary studies in India were at that point set for a change as young teachers returned from the west to teach in Indian Universities. Mukherjee’s paper was in fact part of a seminar, ‘The study of English literature in Indian : History, Ideology and Practice’ organized by the English Department of Miranda House, University of Delhi and

subsequently published in *'The Lie of the Land : English literary studies in India'*, edited by another great scholar Rejeshwari Sunder Rajan.

Mukherjee who traveled constantly between Indian states, University, languages and texts and between India and the rest of the world was able to bring together the research and writing taking place in different parts of the country not only in English but in the regional languages as well. Her book, *'The Twice Born Fiction : Themes and Techniques of the Indian Novel in English'* (1971) is one of the earliest attempts to come to terms with Indian English fiction as a literary phenomenon and the first comprehensive work by a single scholar. There had been a collection of essays before this, born out of the first national seminar in Indian writing in English held at the University of Mysore in 1968. Mukherjee ruthlessly tore through ill formed and prejudiced criticism of Indian English literature. She hailed K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar's *'Survey of Indian writing in English'* (1962) as pioneering work and welcomed William Walsh's rigorous and uncondescending evaluation of R. K. Narayan in *'The Human Idiom'* (1964). The bibliography to *Twice Born Fiction* is a revelation of the extensive Indian scholarship already in progress but which had until then never been brought together like this. *'Twice Born fiction'* actually started the process of canon formation and discourse building in the new genre.

Given her movement towards Indian Bhasha literatures from a location within English studies, Mukherjee is in many ways a 'comparativist' energized by the discourse of post colonialism. *'Early Novels in India'* (2002) are seminar papers edited by her, under the aegis of the centre for comparative literature, Kerala University and sponsored by the Sahitya Academy. In the introduction to this volume Mukherjee shows how the essays contest the 'Clichéd premise' that the novel in India was a borrowed genre – a direct outcome of British education, and foreground the 'complex question of plural heritage' and 'the multiplicity of other determinants'. Long before this, in her 1985 book *'Realism and Reality'* : the novel and society in India Mukherjee had in fact set in motion explorations in this direction. In fact Mukherjee's scholarship is post – colonial in essence as it shows the veins in Indian literature that have assimilated and transformed western influence rather than simply derive from it.

## **Critical Contribution of C. D. Narasimhaiah :-**

### **Life & Works :**

4) C. D. Narasimhaiah was widely known and highly regarded as professor. Professor Narasimhaiah has been a major influence in moving English studies in India out of its colonial morrings. Born as a son of small town shop-keeper in Ramanagaram in May 1921, closepet Dasappa Narasimhaiah had learnt English from a village accountant. He was educated in the Universities of Mysore, Cambridge and Princeton to become the doyen of English literature. He was a professor of English at Maharaja College from 1950 to 1979 and its Principal from 1957 to 1962. He held Rockefeller fellowship at Princeton and a Fulbright visiting lectureship at Yale, USA. He has been the recipients of every major award that an academic could hope for. Prof. C. D. Narasimhaiah has taught in various Universities in India and aboard including Australia, UK, USA and Sri Lanka. He has been a Resident Scholar in Bellagio, Italy, Switzerland, Rome and Hawai.

Professor C. D. Narasimhaiah was one of the youngest professor who served Mysore University for nearly three decades from 1950 to 1979. A stanch nationalist, C. D. Narasimhaiah was single handedly responsible for making Indian writing in English a legitimate subject of study in the departments of English all over the country. As an academician and administrator, he strived to build the institutional structures essential for the growth of a new discipline in the academia. As a scholar, he wrote widely on Indian writers such as Raja Rao, Sarojini Naidu, Nehru and Gandhi extensively. He has been editing a journal called 'Literary Criterion' over the last few decades in order to provide a forum for discussing matters pertaining to Indian writers and other Common Wealth writers writing in English. CDN founded 'Dhvanyaloka' a centre for English studies and Indigenous Arts in Mysore, which is committed to promoting discussion and debate on matters literary and cultural. His contribution to Common Wealth studies has been globally acknowledged as was evidenced in the recent felicitation organized by the Association of common wealth literature and language studies in August, 2004. The Karnataka Government conferred the Rajyotsava award on Prof. CDN in 1987, while the Government of India honored him with the Padma Bhushana in 1990. The other fellowship held by CDN included : Indian Institute of Advanced Studies (1968), Leeds University, UK (1971-72); Texas University, USA (1972-73 and 1975-76). Peradeniya University, Sri Lanka (1979); Flinders University : Australia

(1980). He was a Resident Scholar, International Research Centre, Italy (1988). He was also fellow of the International Institute of Arts and Letters, Switzerland (1970); fellow of Leonardo da Vinci Centre, Rome; Fellow of Wisconsin University, USA (1971). He was consultant to the East West Centre, Hawaii (1974-75 and 1987).

Prof. Narasimhaiah's important books included 1) *Jawaharlal Nehru : A Study of his writing and speeches* (1960). 2) *Writer's Gandhi* (1968). 3) *The Human Idioms (The art of Jawaharlal Nehru)* (1969). 4) *The Swan and the Eagle* (1969). 5) *Raja Rao : Novelist* (1993). 6) *Moving frontiers of English studies in India* (1977). 7) *The Function of criticism in India* (1987). 8) *Indian Critical Scene : A controversial Essay* (1990). 9) *'N' for Nobody : Autobiography of an English Teacher* (1991) and 10) *Imagined common wealth* (1995). The University of Mysore (2001) and University of Bangalore (2003) had conferred honorary doctorate degree on Prof. CDN.

### **Critical Contribution :-**

5) Prof. C. D. Narasimhaiah was one of the leading personalities in the field of Indian English criticism. For decades, C. D. Narasimhaiah had laid the standards for critical study of Indian writing in English. Ananda Coomaraswamy asks, 'What has India contributed to human welfare'. He himself answers 'Indianness'. C.D.Narasimhaiah successfully blends the best of East-West poetics. Born to a semi-literate shopkeeper, he grew up listening to the folk tales and songs from his mother and folk version of Ramayana sung sonorously by his father. W.G.Eagleton, his teacher at Maharaja's college, Mysore arranged scholarship for his study at Cambridge University and young Narasimhaiah was assigned to F.R. Leavis as supervisor of his studies. He visited America on Rockefeller scholarship. At Princeton he used to meet Einstein, the scientist who inspired him to recover wisdom of ancients. He also perceived the spiritual streak in American Literature, though the nation is known to be interested in materialistic pursuits.

6) C.D.Narasimhaiah's visits to Australia were illuminating, kindling interest in commonwealth literature. He was able to comprehend the common features of aborigine philosophical ponderings and Indian perspective. As he himself states in his address on being conferred D.Litt by Bangalore University in 2005, "Aurobindo in my own country taught me to reject Aristotle's

kindergarden theory of Catharsis and look for the *rosa*, *dhvani*, *auchitya vichara* to realize through them the *purusharthas* of *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, *moksha*.

7) Global exposure, keenness to focus on the best in east and west theories enabled C.D. Narasimhaiah carve a niche for himself and emerge as a pioneer holding the torch of literary appreciation aloft, shaping a new class of literary critics. While K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar wrote to justify the existing order to substantiate his own stand, Narasimhaiah dismantled that order to offer strength to his way of criticism. The former was sincere and transparent, while the latter was a passionate critic, maintaining remarkable consistency.

8) Narasimhaiah had functioned with a purpose, of acquiring respectability and reputation due to Indian writing in English. He understood the significance of humanism and adopts scientific humanism of Nehru in his works. “The function of criticism for Narasimhaiah is elucidation and evolution” [Narasimhaiah, *The Function*, p-87]. His humanism turns him anti-colonial. His opposition to imperialists is on account of his being a humanist and a great patriot. His passionate plea for according due regard to indian aesthetics is purely due to a conviction that culture and criticism go together. Culture for him incorporates one’s spiritual experience. “It is almost axiomatic that literature is primarily a cultural pursuit... Literature and cultures have been interchangeable terms...” [Narasimhaiah, p-20 1].

9) Hence, his regard for Shakespeare, T.S.Eliot and Raja Rao. His approach encourages comparative study of writers, texts and literatures. He details the manner in which a British writer’s text may be viewed and appreciated in the light of *rasa* and *purusharthas*. He goes on to elaborate how *rasa*. *dhvani* theory can be extended to include salient features of western aesthetic theories.

10) He analyses Blake’s famous poem ‘The Tiger’. It is of interest to note that Blake was an engraver, like our own goldsmiths who give a shape and life to ornaments. The Tiger has been created in the foundry where the anvil and the hammer have been effectively employed to give it a shape infusing life. C.D.Narasimhaiah convincingly asserts that ‘The Tiger is an *udbhavamurthi* and not a mere artifact *utsavamurthi*. The *chinmaya ananda* of the creator of such a wonder is presented in the line: “Did He smile his work to see?” The critic declares that wonder *vismaya* deepens fusion of emotions *rasaikya*, culminating in *adbhuta* (explicit wonder)

intensifying the insightful mystery: “Did He who made the lamb make thee?” Narasimhaiah delineates how Wordsworth fails to create *ahlaada* (pleasantness) in *Daffodils*. Unlike Blake who is totally involved in depiction of the process and impact of creation of *Tiger*, Wordsworth drifts away in gay abandon like the dancing daffodils and pretends to present a pleasant poem. T.S. Eliot and Coleridge were justified in their criticism of the poem. Narasimhaiah’s emphasis on native critic is not based on narrow parochial view or misplaced regard for the nation. For him culture is a source of identity, personal and natural, which are inalienable. He rightly observes, “What one has in mind is a shared tradition, a community of interest, a set of values people live by, all of which gives a sense of identity to individuals and nations.”

11) Narasimhaiah’s love for Indian philosophy stems from his idea of a literature that would be purely Indian in sensibility. “A zest that springs from a sense of purpose and strength of conviction, vibrates through Narasimhaiah’s criticism. One may disagree with him, but his ideas are infectious because they are sincere.” (Bandana Sharma and L.R.Sharma, p-86). A discerning reader will find that C.D.Narasimhaiah is at his best as a critic of Indian English fiction.

12) His autobiography ‘*N’for Nobody*’ reflects his abiding love for English studies in this country. It is not a book of confessions. He pulls a joke at himself at times. His lecture delivered as a part of Sahitya Akademi’s *Samvatsara* lectures series brings out his innermost thoughts about Indianness of Indian English literature. He gives an exquisite account of Nehru’s contribution to this country in this regard. “To a bare intellectual understanding of India, he added an emotional appreciation”. (Narasimhaiah, p-191) He showers encomiums on the first prime minister of India.

13) As the lecture progresses he himself says, “From the ‘lofty heights of Vivekananda, Tagore and Nehru let me come down to the plains, to see how our novelists function.” [Narasimhaiah, p-251]. He wonders what makes a writer choose a language to exhibit his creativity. It should come naturally. A writer should endeavour to enrich his grasp of the idiom.

14) Narasimhaiah’s assessment of Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao is apt and unbiased. He sums up admirably Anand’s art, “Mulk Raj Anand is a novelist who is not interested in portraying the beauty or ugliness of life and poverty and suffering, but the

heartlessness of the few which thwarts the promising life of the helpless young.” [Narasimhaiah, p-29]. About R. K. Narayan he states, “His world was South Indian middle class which he knew how to handle in fiction, not for an audience 6,000 miles away as his jealous detractors accused him but for his own English knowing countrymen....Himself a product of the Hindu middleclass, sharing their beliefs and superstitions in a small town, he had qualified himself to be a writer of that class and the provincial town.” [Narasimhaiah, p-29].

15 )We admire Narasimhaiah’s astuteness when he declares, “Narayan’s sense of the comic is sustained, not by the Dickensonian kind of exaggeration, but rather some thing home-spun and close to, what one may find in the Tenali stories in Telugu.” [Narasimhaiah, p- 311. As he says, Raja Rao’s three well known novels sum up his main contribution to Indian English novel.

16) The language in *Kanthapura* makes one feel quite at home, because most of us speak that way in our own mother tongues. People in the west and India come to know what India is really through ‘The Serpent and The Rope’. “Raja Rao has demonstrated in convincing terms, in terms of fiction that is, that human relationships, no less than man’s union with the absolute; are not the result of bridges on rivers or bridge parties but temporary suspension over gurgling space” and alone with silence. The enactment of this truth is the lasting contribution of Raja Rao.” [Narasimhaiah, p-35-36].

17) Narasimhaiah dismisses the works of all prize winning writers for their artificiality, lack of Indian sensibility and unabashed liberties taken with English language. He praises the creative imagination of Toru Dutt. ‘The Lotus’ is a simple poem with abundance of feminine charm and delicate idiom. Aurobindo’s overhead poetry witnessed in ‘Saviiri’ is explained with illuminating examples from the epic. Narasimhaiah advises an indian critic to go back to his own tradition and make literature yield benefits like kamadhenu or kalpavriksha - the more one knows how to seek, the more one gets.

18) He goes on to apply the rich concept of rasa, dhvani and purushartha, the Indian value system and evaluate Shakespeare’s *Tempest* and Blake’s *The Tiger*. Thus, CD. Narasimhaiah has initiated a new mode of literary criticism as regards Indianness in Indian English literature.

19) Any attempt to understand the contribution of C.D.N, as he is affectionately and reverentially called, as a literary critic will be incomplete without a reference to Dhwanyaloka, a Saraswati Kshetra, conceived and nurtured by him painstakingly, with loving care for the benefit of visitors, scholars in search of material and guidance, and well-wishers who felt sanctified in the balmy presence of the Acharya. Located in the midst of pristine beauty of nature, this hallowed place is an ashram where learning and dissemination of knowledge goes on eternally, silently, soothingly. Sharing food and information collectively under the cool shades of pleasant trees is an unforgettable experience. Dhwanyaloka is spiritual fountain slaking the thirst of the seeker and student alike. The Acharya's blessings radiate from a leaf on a tree, fragrance of flowers and lyrical ripples in the pond there.

20) C.D.Narasimhaiah has given a shape and conferred recognition and reputation on Indian English literature, which was earlier known as Anglo-Indian Literature, through decades of selfless service rendered with peerless patriotic fervour. He inculcated a sense of adventure to explore, examine and evaluate Indian English Literature by blending the best of East- and West and native theories. His modesty, novel approach and work heralded a new era in post —colonial literary criticism.

For decades now, C. D. Narasimhaiah has laid the standards and parameters for critical study of Indian writing in English. Coolly, soberly and with detachment from the excitement of the moment, he has sought to evaluate the work of India's author in English. Along with the pioneering writers themselves, CDN as Prof. Narasimhaiah popularly known, has made a signal contribution in establishing Indian English writing, not only as an academic discipline in the Universities but also as one of the country's own literatures.

**Conclusion** :- Criticism in Indian writing in English is abundant. But it has remained the most neglected part. It is in this context that C. D. Narasimhaiah's contribution need to be studied. So the researcher aims at the study of C.D.Narasimhaiah's critical contribution to Indian writing in English. Narasimhaiah has shaped a new class of literary critics. He firmly believes that culture and criticism go together. His advice to Indian critic to go back to his own tradition and make literature yield benefits like Kamadhenu or Kalpavriksha can be a right direction to the critics in the modern world. His contribution to Indian writing in English is like a pole – star which can guide to the men of letters.

**Choice of the subject with Reasoning:** So far Indian Writing in English is concerned, the critical contribution made by the scholars and critics is equally noteworthy and vigorous. Now a days it became a part of literature. While evaluating and analyzing the literary works these critics have employed new and fruitful native critical theories. It proved as guiding manual and milestones for understanding literature and its technique. K.R.Srinivas Iyengar, C.D.Naraimhaiah, and M.K. Naik emerged on contemporary Indian English literary scenario as three scintillating giant stars. It appears that no work has been done in that context, accordingly, it is researcher' attempt to focus on literary critical contribution of C.D.Naraimhaiah.

**Scope and limitation of the subject:** Indian English literature has captivated the scholarly and critical attention in the Indian and foreign Universities. The salutary development in the realm of Indian English literature is the growing interest of Indian English writers in the Indian literary and critical tradition. It is in this context that no research has been done. C.D.Naraimhaiah has initiated a new mode of literary criticism as regards Indianess in Indian English literature. The researcher will attempt to focus on this aspect Naraimhaiah's contribution. There are certain limitations in the research work, but all possible efforts will be made to overcome these limitations.