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EXPRESSION OF TRIBAL LIFE IN INDIAN ENGLISH FICTION

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Abstract:

Indian English Fictional writers have described the lives of tribal people. Literature is the reflection of the world. Tribal people have been facing many obstacles to cope up with the modern and post modern world. Hence it is very essential that we should ponder over the description of tribal life in Indian English Fiction. In the age of globalization tribal people have lost access to productive economies. Tribal communication is mainly in oral form. Their empowerment is equally important as the mainstream society. The just and ideal society is one in which every section of society is equal socially, economically, politically, and culturally.

Keywords: *Fiction, Tribe, Obstacles, Ponder, Postmodern, Sustainable Development, Empowerment, Globalization, Economies, Communication, Equality, etc.*

Tribal literature emerged in the postmodern period. In the process of globalization, tribals lost access to the productive economies. Indigenous people from India are known as Adivasis. They are inadequately represented in the systems of government. The description of tribal life in Indian English fiction is rare. The tribals lived a marginalized life. Tribal literature and culture links contemporary India with its past. It is a valuable source of sustainable knowledge. India is rich with a diversity of religions, arts, customs, races, traditions and languages. Tribal communication is mainly oral in nature. It offers cultural diversity.

Indian government and prominent social activists have encouraged the conservation and translation of the unheard voices of tribal literature. Sahitya Akademi, India's national Academy of Letters has developed the project of Indian Literature in Tribal Languages and oral traditions to preserve and educate people about this rich source of knowledge. It depicts the thoughts, feelings and worldview of the people.

The Strange Case of Billy Biswas is a compellingly thought provoking novel written by Arun Joshi. In this novel normal and abnormal, the ordinary and the extraordinary, illusion and reality, resignation and desire have been presented side by side. The protagonist Billy Biswas is a man of extraordinary passions. He gets everything he required in life-education, wealth, status, travel, and a loving wife. Billy Biswas is obsessed with primitiveness. He studies anthropology to explore the world of primitive people. He does not like modern life.

Kamla Markandaya has dealt with the problems of tribal people in her novel, The Coffin Dams. Clinton and Helen are separated because Helen thinks that Clinton lacks the essential human qualities as a human being. The important tribal character in the novel is Bashiam. He is an engineer by profession. The message which the novelist gives is that the tribal people should not oppose the modernity but they should welcome new technology and new ideas for their progress.

Manohar Malgaonkar described tribal problems in The Princes. Through this novel Manohar Malgaonkar has described the relationship between the tribal people and their rulers. The tribal people



are emotional and sensitive. Political leaders play with their sentiments. Maharaja of Begwad got the support of the tribal people. In return he did little for their welfare. It happens even today. Maharaja developed liking for them because they have shown absolute faith and loyalty in his leadership.

Gita Mehta wrote about tribal people in *A River Sutra*. She emphasizes the mysteries of India which does not need confirmation from the West. She has told truth about the long river of life. She has explored the diversity of cultures within India. Theme of love presented in the novel connects all people together.

The depiction of tribal people in novels makes it clear that they are economically and physically exploited and politically marginalized. Grave injustice has been done to them. It is very important to know tribal cultural practices and traditions because mainstream and tribal traditions are intertwined.

The tribal versions of Ramayana and Mahabharata provide us valuable insights of human life. In tribal versions Rama is a nayak, an avatar, a nomadic cultural hero. His brother Lakshman becomes main hero in many tribal stories. He is a calm, kind and cool man lacks aggressive behaviour. The greatest of Ramayana narrators Valmiki was a kirat tribal. In many tribal versions of the story Sita takes the avatar of Kali and kills Ravana. In Manipur and Mizoram Rama legend has influenced the folk dance and performance of the dramas. In Assam where hill women have specialized in weaving, Sita is characterized as a fine weaver.

Tribals have many versions of the epic Mahabharata. For thousands of years the primitive tribes of India lived in oblivion. They were not appropriately cared in the process of development and modernization. The stories related to the subjugation and assimilation of tribal people appears in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Lord Rama's acceptance of the hospitality of a Sabra woman and also his friendship with Guhaka Sabra is the instance of the organized culture. The stories in Mahabharata are allegorical. They narrate the innumerable contacts of the Pandavas with the tribal people. Pandavas have made some matrimonial alliances with them.

The policy of neglect and a mage of exploitation during the British period ruined the tribal people. Unrestricted exploitation of tribals pushed them into poverty. Therefore sometimes rebellion took place. In the constitution it was made clear that a policy should be followed for the equal development of the tribals with the non-tribals. The tribal people should be made self reliant; they should get economic independence so that they could live quality life. They should live a life with confidence and dignity.

Meaningful education can make a valuable importance in human life. A good education brings a good job and career. It also widens collective imagination and influences the way we think. Knowledge is the core of the education. The knowledge relevant to the contemporary developing India should be given through educational institutions.

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