

THE COMMONWEALTH LITERATURE

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Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to bring in light the meaning of the term of the Commonwealth Literature as well as the origin of the Commonwealth Literature. At the same time, the paper tries to explain the English language; the term that provides a ground to the term the Commonwealth Literature and also marks the causes why writers from the colonies of Britain attracted to contribute to the writings in English fewer than two different titles, i.e. The Third World Society and the transplanted New World. The paper also tries to bring the role of the writers to the fore in the process for the reconstruction.

Keywords: commonwealth, literature, writing, english

One of the most important consequences of British imperialism has been the legacy of the English language in the former colonies of the Empire. This legacy has proved as a mixed blessing and surely a medium which makes it possible to speak of a unity running through the literary production of different which was basically different from one another i.e Jamaica and New Zealand, as India and Canada. The writing of each of these countries have been strongly influenced by English cultural norms. At the same time English language, being a language of the colonizer, was a problematic medium for the commonwealth writer. The St. Lucian poet Dreerek Wal Cott encapsulates the essence of the problem in one of his poems entitled '*A Far Cry From Africa*'. In it the poet addresses the sense of cultural schizophrenia he feels.

This dilemma is present in a greater or lesser degree in all commonwealth literature in English and texts from New literatures in English (a term which interchangeably used with Commonwealth literature). Usually it deals with writing in hybrid models that demonstrate some king of cross-cultural fusion between English and the Value-systems of the local culture.

The nature of the local cultures varies, but it is impossible to identity two main types, for example, the disrupted Third World Society and the transplanted New World society. The former category symbolizes the primarily oral ancestral cultures of Africa and the part scribal, part-oral cultures of the Indian sub-continent, as well as a variety of myth-centered in South-East Asia and

other parts of the world. All of these societies suffer from a disruption of age old tradition during the period of colonialism and in the post-independence era is need to reconstruct. Here the age-old traditions become a corner stone in the process of rebuilding thus, in the same sprit in West Africa, writers like Wole Syinka and Chunia Achebe have insisted that the artist or writer plays a crucial role in this process of reconstruction and his part as a modern-day equivalent of that of the grit, or oral repository of the tribe's history. Here they use aimed at representing their own community. Achebe has insisted the importance of the artist's role as a teacher. These writers, in the works like *A Dance of the Forests* (Soinka) and *Arrow of God* (Achebe) like many of their west African contemporaries, have tried to re-examined the historical past of their societies.

In the latter category, i.e. that of the transplanted New World society, belonging the cultures of Canada, Australia and New Zealand has had to adapt transform or subvert Old World natural forms so as to make them relevant to different social situations. For example, the Canadian writer Margaret Atwood dramatizes the problem of constructing an identity in a new land in a poem entitled *Progressive Insanities of a Pioneer* in which the settler finds himself a point on a sheet of green paper proclaiming himself the centre, but actually not. In her next novel entitled *Surfacing*, Atwood offers a more positive approach to the same theme here the spiritual odyssey of a contemporary Canadian woman who has constructed false identity for herself. women and Canadian are represented as the sufferers from a common victim syndrome and craving for transformation by becoming 'creative non victims'.

The notion of transplantation also proved of less value in the contemporary period. The writings of the commonwealth writers are the product of both disruption and transplantation; this can be classified as both The Third world and New World.

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