The Influence of Indian Philosophy on Indian English Writers

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Abstract: *Indian English literature, emerging from the colonial encounter, uniquely integrates indigenous philosophical traditions with the English novel form. This paper examines the profound influence of three pillars of Indian philosophy—Advaita Vedanta, Mahatma Gandhi's ideals of non-violence and truth, and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's radical anti-caste thought—on selected Indian English writers. Through a focused analysis of Raja Rao's Kanthapura and metaphysical novels, R.K. Narayan's Waiting for the Mahatma, and Arundhati Roy's engagement with Ambedkar in her fiction and non-fiction (including her introduction to Annihilation of Caste), the study demonstrates how these philosophies shape narrative structure, character development, thematic concerns, and linguistic innovation. Vedanta provides Raja Rao with a metaphysics of non-duality (advaita), transforming the novel into spiritual sadhana. Gandhian principles infuse Narayan's work with ethical realism and national awakening. Ambedkar's call for annihilation of caste empowers Roy and Dalit voices to critique graded inequality and imagine social justice. Employing qualitative literary analysis and close reading of primary texts alongside secondary scholarship, the research argues that Indian English writers do not merely borrow Western forms but indigenize them through philosophical depth, creating a hybrid yet authentically Indian aesthetic. The findings highlight the enduring relevance of these philosophies in addressing contemporary issues of identity, caste, and spirituality in postcolonial India. This paper contributes to postcolonial and comparative literary studies by underscoring philosophy as a creative force in Indian English fiction.*

Keywords: Indian English literature, Advaita Vedanta, Gandhian philosophy, Ambedkarite thought, Raja Rao, R.K. Narayan, Arundhati Roy, postcolonial novel, anti-caste literature, non-duality.