

## R V PATHAK'S VIEWS ON INDEPENDENCE AND LITERATURE IN INDIAN LITERATURE

### Abstract

The chapter aims to bring forth the less discussed and depicted aspect of Indian literature in general and Gujarati literature in particular, i. e. influence of independence on literature.

The focus here is to look at the portrayal of independence and its impact on the people of India from the point of view of a Gujarati critic Ramnarayan Vishvanath Pathak. He talks about the Indian Independence from an objective view and how Indian authors have penned very less about it from the critical point of view.

**Keywords:** R V Pathak, Indian Independence, Gujarati Literature, Indian Literature, Influence of Independence

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In 1954, this subject 'Influence of Independence on Literature' was much in discussion. A journal called United Asia invited one or two experts of each spoken language of India to discuss this subject. Most of the experts believed it is too early to judge or talk about the influence of Independence on literature as it has been not long since we got freedom. Secondly, people of India are disappointed as the real Swaraj does not match with the image they had in their mind. And third, the Independence brought many unfortunate turns of events along. These experts believed Independence does not have any influence on literature.

RV Pathak agreed with the concept that many unfortunate events took place after the Independence. However, he differs at two levels:

1. Independence does influence literature per se. Pathak, though agrees with the thought that Independence does not have influence on literature, it does have an impact on literature as an institution and its study and practice in some genres. For example, the type of research work. These days, he states, we have sizable research coming up on the Bhagavata and the Ramayana, revisiting our national literary traditions. Institutionalization of regional universities could be considered as an outcome of the Independence. Sahitya Akademi was instituted in our country; the practice of giving away the awards to the best literary works was initiated; Lokbharati University got established, and there was a spread of education.
2. As for those responsible for the chasm between Swaraj in idea and Swaraj in reality, Pathak's objective view on the Independence is at variance with many of his coevals. He clearly states that our Independence is so much more like a historical accident. People got disappointed with the way free nation state existed then as the feeling of oneness could never form itself in principle in the collective consciousness of Indians. History has it that when a nation fights for its freedom against a common enemy, the whole nation unanimously joins in the movement. However, such unison never took place in India. The moral tone that brings the whole nation together to attain Swaraj was not the case with the Indian freedom struggle. Various intellectuals were sorely divided on modes of political strategies and only few of the total of Indian population took active part in Gandhi's movement of Satyagraha. Apart from other reasons, one major reason for this was that a huge chunk of native human resources was thrust into the war fighting for the British on international fronts on the one hand, and on the other rest of the people were resisting British rule at local front. In fact, as a result of these struggles, the moral index of people should have improved and strengthened but in reality, the divided fronts, opposing political strategies, and banishing native systems of knowledge, polity, economy, governance, life skills from the so-called progressive India only depleted and exhausted people's morale and faith. Modern India could not grow on its roots. It was in this disorderly condition when Freedom happened to us that took away the opportunity of replacing British control with native systems in all spheres. Instead, the newfound independence continued with such frameworks as would unleash in Indian citizens selfish and unwholesome tendencies leading to rampant black marketing, and corruption among other evils. This clearly showed us how feeble 'moral tone' the people of India had. So, the fact of not having the real Swaraj in Idea was lying within as much as it lied without. · Division in the society persisted even before the Independence: Social and economic divisions of caste, labor, and the poor were used as political means instead of improving

on the real situation. Gandhi had often warranted against this in his talks and writings. Gandhi was not in favor of any remedial mechanism that would set one faction against the other. The division in society was also in this sense as to how many really perceived Gandhi's model as practical and worked for its realization and those who dismissed it as nonprogressive or not enough secular in Western sense. However, there was impact of Gandhi on the collective consciousness of people but those who responded to his call and took part in the struggle for Swaraj were practically less in number. Pathak suggests, under Gandhi's leadership the feeling of attaining Swaraj did grow stronger but this feeling was not felt by all in a uniform way as the whole nation stood divided in two sections: those who were willing to sacrifice everything for nation's freedom and those dead people who were consciously active in not acting for nation's freedom. This class of morally dead was steeped in private profit and even the Gandhian darshan was not capable enough to change their deformed nature. Even today, our society is divided in these two segments at deeper level though at surface we talk about this division in terms of caste or class.

Regarding literary practice and study, RV Pathak in another essay 'Sahitya-samiksha' says that the critique of our ancient texts and poets like Vyasa, Bhavabhuti, Kalidasa and Shudrak should be done time to time. This helps one check what new a critic must add to an already existing strong tradition; which inadequacies or faults of the preceding critics could he or she resolve; which literary/critical errors could the aspiring learner of the discipline redress. Pathak also accepts the need for our critics to critique great Western poets like Homer, Shakespeare, and Tolstoy from the Indian perspective. This framework can help us survive our ancient heritage. It will also be helpful for us to come out of our view of seeing things from Western framework only. Same ideas are found in K.C.Bhattacharya's essay 'Swaraj in Ideas' wherein he says that our attitude towards western framework should be critical in nature instead of docile acceptance of superimposed framework.

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