

**NATIONS WITHIN AND WITHOUT:
A STUDY OF SEVEN POST-INDEPENDENCE INDIAN ENGLISH POETS**

by

ANJANA NEIRA DEV

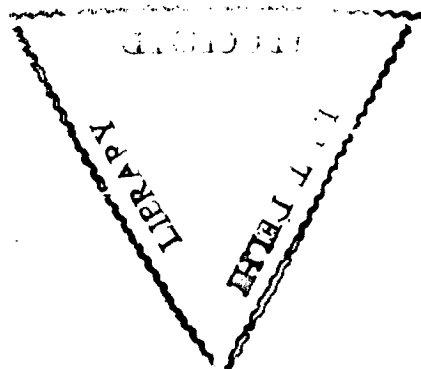
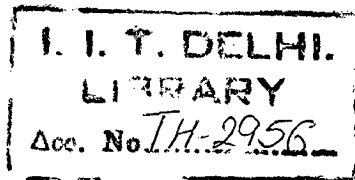
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

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by

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Nissim Ezekiel

Jayanta Mahapatra

A.K. Ramanujan

R. Parthasarathy

Keki N. Daruwalla

Agha Shahid Ali

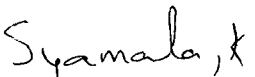
Sujata Bhatt

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CERTIFICATE

1. I am satisfied that the thesis presented by Anjana Neira Dev is worthy of consideration for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and is a record of the original bonafide research work carried out by her under my guidance and supervision and that the results contained in it have not been submitted in part or full to any other University or Institute for award of any degree/diploma.
2. I certify that she has pursued the prescribed course of research.


(Signature)

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Jayanta Mahapatra

Abstract

The articulation of being and belonging, in the context of the Indian nation, by seven post-independence Indian English poets, is the central focus of enquiry in this study. Every question about the nation is after all a question of identity, and since in the case of India the idea of the nation is a contested one, the story is very complex.

The scope of this study is the poetry written in English by Nissim Ezekiel, Jayanta Mahapatra, A. K. Ramanujan, R. Parthasarathy, Keki N. Daruwalla, Agha Shahid Ali and Sujata Bhatt. These seven poets combine to map India geographically, linguistically and culturally. By including both resident and expatriate poets, the study substantiates the claim implied in the title, that nationalism is not contingent upon geography and residence alone. All the seven poets are heir to a multiplicity of traditions and have access to dual (if not multiple) resources of language, location and culture. Their creative expressions reflect this complexity.

The methodology used has been a close reading of the poems against a theoretical background of the debates on nation, nationalism, national identity and critical responses of Indian English poetry to these issues. The study has relied primarily on the poets' own articulation of the issues related to identity and it is their voices that have determined the boundaries of the nation(s) they inhabit intellectually, emotionally, culturally and geographically.

Keeping the sociological debates in mind, the four identity markers of Home, Land, Language and Culture were isolated and it is these constituent elements of national identity that have been used to explicate the central arguments of this thesis.

The concluding statement of this study is a definition of a 'home' for each of the poets. An additional attempt has been made to determine what creates a sense of belonging, and the individual voice that each poet gives to this, and how far this voice is an articulation of the alienation that qualifies the predicament of identity.

A significant contribution that this study has attempted is to create a new yardstick to critique this poetry, which looks at it from standards that are an intrinsic part of the poets' attempts to craft a new poetics.

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