

# A Critical Study of Indian Socio Religious Strain As Revealed In the Relevant Writings of Em Forster Rudyard Kipling Aldous Huxley and William Somerset Maugham

1 . Prof.Dr.Narendra Kumar Singh, 2. Md. Parwez Alam  
(M.Phil, English)

*HOD Department of English G.L.A. College  
Nilamber Pitamber University, Medini Nagar (Daltonganj) Palaumu  
Haji Jamil Ahmed Road Bhandaridih, Giridih, Jharkhand PIN code 815301*

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## ABSTRACT

Indian religion and philosophy appeal the Western scholars in general and literary writers in particular due to its depth and wide interpretations. It is not an exaggeration to believe that Eliot's 'The Waste Land' cannot be understood without the profound knowledge of Oriental Philosophy. The same is the case with the writings of EM Forster, Rudyard Kipling, William Somerset Maugham and Aldous Huxley.

E. M Forster is a literary milestone in as much as an honest and authoritative glimpse of socio religious India is concerned 'Unity in Diversity' is a very brief summing up of India as a whole diversity is very apparent. The South Indian differs sharply from the men of Kashmir in culture, language and way of living. Even then the cross current of unity surges within their psyche and the building force is the Indian philosophy. This philosophy has gone very deep in the mind and the heart of your faster after his two successive visit in 1912 and 1921. His third visit to India is not relevant because he came to attend the P.E.N. Conference in 19 41 after his 'A Passage to India' was published.

Rudyard Kipling was a prolific writer. He is a poet, journalist, a novelist and a writer. He was born in Bombay. Charles Williams says : " He will talk of England in a way that destroys all England greatness, and makes her seem always what she has only sometimes been-one of a horde

of semi -barbarians fighting for the richest pastures."1

" Fluttered folk and wild-

Your new-caught, sullen people's  
Half-devil and half child." \*2

Attitude was partly domineering and partly that of a benevolent despot. He preached that the cleaners were not to expect gratitude for their pains:-

"Take up the white man's burden

1. And reap his old reward" \*3

His knowledge about India finds true expression in his Kim. It goes without saying that Kim is a philosophical novelle and the philosophy once again, is Oriental (Buddhist philosophy). Similarly, Eliot quotes this philosophy in his magnum opus The Waste Land :

" La La

To Carthage then I came

Burning , burning, burning

O Lord Thou pluckiest me out

O Lord Thou pluckiest burning. " \*4

William Somerset Maugham's talent is manifold. His analysis of India is not in the tradition of Mr. E .M. Forster and Huxley. He was extremely shocked to see the poverty of Asia in general and in India in particular. In his Essays entitled 'The Beast of Burden'. He compares the Chinese coolies with the beast. The poverty has compelled them to stoop down to that level. In India also he comes across the same situation. This is one of the reasons that the enchanting beauty of Taj Mahal fails to attract his attention.

What attracts him is the down-trodden , down-to-earth condition of the common Indian. Even then he finds that the people here are not fed up with life. They enjoy it. His important novels are ' Liza of Lambeth', 'Of Human Bondage' , Cakes and Ale and 'The Razor's Edge' . Liza of Lambeth' is the completest specimen of the naturalistic novel in English. Here he gives a picture of life which has long cease to be, but in spite of the novel remains remarkably fresh and lucid. But in 'Of Human Bondage' Maugham plays the role of the impartial spectator as a boy and as a young man. Though the views expressed by him in it are out-dated, yet it has got its value because here the author expresses his honest , unflinching acceptance of his belief in the meaninglessness of life. Life is like a ' Maya' and a sensible man must accept this aspect of life so that he must keep himself away from the drag and dross of life. It is an autobiographical novel and contains one of the most touching accounts of loneliness in English fiction . 'Cakes and Ale' which is witty, malicious , satirical comedy, is highly entertaining.

Aldous Huxley is an amazing writer, people read him widely thinking that he is a cynic when he is really a satirist . We are amazed by his wide learning which prepared the way for such a large scale novel as 'Point Counter Point' for the anger of 'Brave New World' for Christian and Hindu philosophizing of ' Ends and Means', 'Eyeless in Gaza' 'The Perennial Philosophy'. Whatever one may think of this latter non-violent asceticism , Huxley is always an amazingly literate and readable author ,who is stimulates even when he irritate.

The profound impact of socio- religious thinking of India gave their writings a unique understanding which is in a true sense, the widening of the mental horizon.

#### REFERENCES

1. Poetry at Present by William Charles Fourth Essay on Rudyard Kipling Page no 42 Oxford University Press 1930.
2. The White Man's Burden A poem by Rudyard Kipling Stanza 2 Line no 6 to 8
3. Ibid Stanza 5 Line no 35 to 36
4. ||| The Fire Sermon Last lines The Waste Land Date of Publication(1922) Publisher: Boni & Liveright By Thomas Stearns Eliot