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Anglo-Indian fiction: A study of the ruling class in diaspora

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Abstract

The British contingent in India was a large group of ‘dislocated’ people living under an alien sky. For many it was no better than a life of self-imposed exile. The living space the British in India fashioned for themselves and the identity they struggled to uphold were very close to what is known as diasporic in modern vocabulary. It is expected that Anglo-Indian fiction can be a rich source for verifying the ruling class in a diasporic situation. It is not surprising that the body of population defined as ‘diasporic’ is identified mostly with the people dispersing from the old colonies to the western hemisphere during the era following the World War II. However, seen from the basic principles that make the diasporic environment, there are not many valid reasons why Anglo-Indian fiction too cannot be treated as such. Despite political advantages the British enjoyed in India, their life was of a floating nature. Memory of home occurs passim in their works. These conditions coupled with identity crises are very cardinal in identifying diasporic writings. The present paper humbly proposes to verify if the diasporic elements do make some substantial contribution to the making of Anglo-Indian fiction. If they do, the subgenre may emerge as one of the first and the largest body of diasporic writings the world has ever produced.

Key words: *Anglo-India Fiction, Diasporic Writings, Colonial Discourse, Identity Issues*