

Focusing on Anger :
Anger in Contemporary Indian English Poetry

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An old wise maxim goes, “when angry count up to ten; when very angry, count a hundred.” But on reading Vijay Vishal’s book under review *Anger in Contemporary Indian English Poetry*, one may contemplate saying, “When angry, take a pen and paper and start writing a poem.” Precisely because anger is a purging emotion and a poet’s righteous anger, never personal or subjective, is objective and hence corrective. Poetry is not “an intellectual luxury” avers Vishal; it is a purposeful activity conscious of the contemporary reality.

Dr Vishal’s work dwells on the emotion of ‘anger’ as employed by three contemporary poets – R.K Singh from Dhanbad, I.K.Sharma from Jaipur and P. Raja from Pondicherry (now Puducherry). These well-known poets represent a sizeable segment of the country from the North to the South and ‘anger’ which is a common human passion, has compelling representation in their poetry. Anger has the potential to become a catalyst of change by awakening “the social psyche”(Vishal, 15).

Each of these poets uses different stylistic devices and techniques to lodge his protest. For example, violence is a ‘common’ everyday occurrence to which we naturally react with anger, rage or anguish. Our mode of expression may vary and our targets may be different — one may be angry at the administrative machinery; another, at the beasts in human garb; still others for the pain and suffering of victims, but the sentiments behind these experiences are comparable.....

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