

Indianness as Lokavad. A Marxist approach

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This paper aims at exploring the particular understanding of *Bharatiyata*, 'Indianness' as per Dr. Namvar Singh (*1927), a widely acknowledged and highly held cultural and literary critic of Hindi Literature, against the backdrop of his specific notion of *Dusari Parampara*. Namvar Singh inherited this term of the 'other tradition' from his mentor Hazariprasad Dwivedi and elaborates it along with his own concept of *Lokdharma* or *Lokvad*. Being one of the most prominent Marxist literary critics it seems obvious that Namvar Singh juxtaposes *shastriya* literature to *lokvadi* literature claiming the latter to be suppressed and neglected but still more 'authentically' Indian. Accordingly, Namvar Singh's interpretations of the writings of Premchand and Maithilisharan Gupt are formulated in this very spirit. Even his appreciation for the literary works of Muktibodh, Dhumil, Trilochan et al can be understood as part of the search for the outcasts, the true ambassadors of their times, who together form the pillars of the *Dusari Parampara*. But, Namvar Singh has also given interpretations of the 'mainstream' writings of the *Nayi Kavita* (in: 'Kavita ke naye pratiman', 1968) and *Nayi Kahani* (in: 'Kahani: Nayi Kahani', 1966) movements and though he might not have explicitly discussed them under the aspect of 'Indianness', they have been highly controversial at their times. In his various interviews throughout the years regarding modern Hindi literature, we find his *lokvadi* approach embedded by many a statement that seemed to inherently appreciate 'high art'. This paper aims to delineate the relationship between *Dusari Parampara*, *Lokvad* and *Bharatiyata* discussing the specific characteristics of Namvar Singh's cultured version of the Marxist ideology.