

## **Portrayal of Crime, Violence and Corruption in Indian Fiction With Specific Reference to English Literature**

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The research entitled Crime, Corruption and Violence in Indian fiction in English with special reference to Aravind Adiga's the '*The White Tiger*' Vikas Swarup's '*Six Suspects*' and Vikram Chandra's '*Sacred Games*' is a research quite different from other studies. It is special in many ways because focus has been centralized all these things which have not been treated in isolation earlier. While selecting these novels for the study, the history of Indian Fiction in English has been taken into account. Many novels written earlier have been looked into to trace out the treatment of these themes.

Indian fiction in English is a great contribution to the genre of fiction, because it manifests many faces which were less attended and thought to be irrelevant. Literature, society and culture are so closely related that it is very difficult to isolate one from the other. Literature has acquired different forms and all the old views and concepts trickily associated with it have fallen down leaving up meaning of the old ideology and hence it must indeed be re-situated within the field of general cultural production. But evaluation is made about literary work within the conventional critical discourse in order to 'define' the 'artistic merit' of a work and to position it in relation to 'the canon'

The understanding and interpretation of literary genres such as poem, novel or drama depends on readers' self experience of the genre/s which depends on their earlier experience. The argument proposed by Saussure has been obliterated in the studies of 'discourse' which underscores that "location, meaning and sense of knowledge of the world in language" is "the source of our sense of reality and responsible for producing meaning". It is commonly argued that literature mirrors the society or reflects it.

We all know that literature mirrors society. What happens in society is reflected in the literary work in one form or other. The rise and development of the form of novel is closely associated with realism. Realism is the reflection of social life and problems in fiction presented through the creativity of imagination. The term 'Realism' is used by the literary critics in two ways : (1) to identify a literary movement of the nineteenth century, especially in prose fiction, beginning with Balzac in France, George Eliot in England, and William Dean Howells in America and (2) to designate

a recurrent mode, in various eras, of representing human life and experience in literature, which was especially exemplified by the writers of this historical movement. 'Realism' as a concept has passed through many changes in the course of time. By the end of the Nineteenth Century in the European literature it was on the verge of extinction and was gradually replaced by naturalism.

The development of Indian fiction in English shows certain themes at particular stages: 1) Historical romance, 2) Social and political realism and 3) Psychological introspection. But after 1980 Indian fiction in English took different turn and new perspectives have to be formulated to study it. The study of contemporary literature requires knowledge of different disciplines and approaches in order to understand its pervasive and enlarging scope. It requires the understanding of sociology, history, anthropology, psychology, philosophy, ethnography, cultural studies, epistemology, modern and post-modern concerns, colonial studies, law and jurisprudence and many other disciplines of social science in order to enter into the internal world of any creative writing. It is in this vast perspective that the present study intends to explore the select novels. Social realism is the major thrust of the Indian novel in English in India. Many social issues, domestic, family, political and socio-economical were taken for discussion in the earlier novels.

In the beginning of the first decade of the twenty first century novel has taken live problems namely crime, corruption and violence in India in its scope. In the present study attempt has been made to critically examine in the selected few novels. In India novel as genre was very well in practice in the regional languages and it was rich in content and well developed in technique before actual writing fiction in English started. Novel is an ideal form for delineation of people, culture and society. Many Indian novelists were concerned with human life, culture and society to be preserved it in creative writing in Indian English Literature as is seen in all the Indian languages. This concern is presented in Govardhanram Madhavram Tripathi in Gujarati, Bhudev Chandra Mukherjee and Bakim Chandra in Bengali, Dadanathakalita in Assamese, N. H. Kulkarnee and Hari Narayan Apte in Marathi, Roman Pillai in Malayalam, Galagnath in Kannada and Kishorilal Goswamy, Devaki Nandan Khatri and Gangaprasad Gupta In Hindi.

The socio-political scene in India was charged with the strong fervor for freedom and there was a mass anger against the British rule and imperialism. After Gandhi's arrival from South Africa in 1915 he exercised a great influence on the novelists who wrote fiction between 1920 and 1960 broadly. This is explicit in the writings of K.S. Venkaataramani's *Murugan*, *The Tiller*, and *Kandan, the Patriot*. A.S.P. Ayyar, another brilliant writer could not follow the ideology and turned to the ancient Indian history. He introduces the treatment of history in the Indian novel in English.

In the 30s, three great Indian novelists appeared on the literary scene : Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao who changed the whole scenario of the Indian novel in English. Many new trends delineated in novels during this period have their roots in social reality, contemporary political activities for freedom, revolt against imperialism, ideology, caste discrimination, etc. The novelists were socially conscious. Anand's numerous novels form a fictional chronicle in which his eclectic humanism and his humanitarian compassion for the underdog are persistent themes. R.K. Narayan lives in his Malgudi, a fictional place where people and society enjoy great sense of contentment. Raja Rao is quite different in his mental makeup and philosophical drives, compared to the other two discussed above. He produces Indian ethics, spirituality and Gandhian ideology in his novels.

With the dawn of independence the novelists gave up the hostile spirit, spiting the British presence. They began to delineate in their novels the individual's quest for self in all its varied and complex form along with his problems and crises. This pattern is found in Anita Desai, Arun Joshi, Nayantara Sahagal, G. V. Desani, prominently. However, the social realism that was a strong current in the earlier novelists is further continued. In the post independent India, Indian English literature became free from social and political issues and the nationalistic temperament.

Contemporary Indian writing acquires special significance in a world increasingly identified as a global village. It is necessary to discuss social condition and social context with emerging culture in the global context. The Indian fiction in English produced in 1980 and 1990 is very distinct from the preceding period. The success of the Indian English fiction in 1980s is assigned to the six factors: first, the writers no longer suffer from a sense of black-inferiority and this generation is politically alert and linguistically articulate about the minority culture of contemporary Britain ; second, books on all kinds of Indian subjects became commercially profitable for British publishers; third, in Canada, multiculturalism emerged and emigrant writers were paid more attention; fourth, the feminists-literary movement became strong; fifth, regionalism and sectarianism got established and sub-culture was highlighted; sixth, due to the rise of Rajiv Gandhi in politics, who revolutionized computer technology, English medium schools and education emerged and the middle class participated in the change.

Since the late 1980s and into the twenty-first century, the young and dynamic men and women have carved out their place and received accolades for their new styles and subject matters. Salman Rushdie, a winner of Booker Prize, received accolade for his 'Midnight's children' (1981) with magic realism and contemporary socio-political picture expressed with his artistic excellence.

Crime novel is a subgenre of fiction and very popular among some readers and critics also. It deals with crime in its basic form. The credit for development and popularization goes to Edgar Allan Poe's 'tale of ratiocination' Raymond Chandler was a practitioner of hard-boiled detective fiction in America and made the form very popular. Noir or crime thriller focuses more on "the crime and the criminal committing it". Detective fiction is another form of crime fiction. Its purpose is to resolve the mystery, therefore sometimes it is called mystery novel. The major artists were Agatha Christie, Margery Allingham, Ngaio Marsh and Dorothy L. Sayers.

In the contemporary social condition violence has increased as crime increased as the patience is lost and intolerance is increased. Literature produces awareness against crime, corruption and violence. This awareness has been promoted by sensitive writers and novelists through their realistic and imaginative creativity.

Language is a social phenomenon and expresses the reality of society and its members in varied columns. Within the scope of the argument it is necessary to look into the concept of culture also. In fact culture is a broad and complex term defined in social ways.

The glimpses of detective fiction one observed in the early period of Indian fiction. S. K. Chettur's *Bombay Murder* and Kamala Sattrianadhan's *Detective janalic* are the examples. Crime, Corruption and Violence in all forms are present in Indian fiction in English but the degree of presentation varies as its emphasis varies in the treatment. Corruption in Indian political structure has begotten emergency in 1975. Its reflections are found in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight children*. Nayantara Sahjail's novels '*A Situation in Delhi*' (1974), *Indira Gandhi : Her Road to Power* (1982). Rohinton Mistry's *Such a long journey* prominently.

Violence in rural and urban areas is equally presented in Indian fiction in English from the beginning. But violence is more critical and crude in the urban locations. Violence and crime are centralized in the partition novels with horror and brutality unseen even before. Violence, crime, horror, brutality, bloodshed of partition appeared in subsequent partition novel. Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1958), Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* (1975) and Malgaonkar's *A end in the Ganges* (1964) are known for the depiction of violence during partition. Violence in its different forms also appears in Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Robinton Mistry, Arundhati Roy and many others who followed their stream of writing and later Ruchir Joshi and Aravind Adiga treated it prominently in their novels. Vikram Chandra has written his first novel *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* in 1995 and was brought out Penguin Books in India. It is based on the autobiography of James Skinner. His third book is *Sacred Games* published in 2006 and is received warmly as his earlier works. It is an epic thriller covering the underworld life of Bombay. *Sacred Games* is also a crime novel that discusses political situation in

India. It moves around a single character, Ganesh Gaitonde, an underworld don, who has created enough problems for the police department.

Aravind Adiga is another young novelist who made his name by winning the Booker Prize for his *The White Tiger*. Beside this novel he wrote *Between the Assassination* and *Last Man in Tower*. Adiga wanted to become a writer in his life. He was influenced by Salman Rushdie, Ellison, James Baldwin and Richard Wright and their writings were the source of inspiration for him. *The White Tiger* presents a grim picture of the rich and the poor people. The rich exploit the poor, discriminate and throw away when their work is accomplished. Crime, corruption and violence are spread in the novel. The protagonist, Balram is called an anti-hero or villain for the crime he commits in killing his master, Mr. Ashok.

Vikas Swarup is a diplomat turned novelist who has magnetized the attention of the academic critics and general public as well. So far Vikas Swarup has written three novels. His first novel *Q & A* which has been critically appreciated by many academicians was developed into film. It was shortlisted for the Best First Book by the Commonwealth Writer's Prize and won South Africa's Exclusive Books Booker Prize 2006 and the Prix Grand Public at the 2007 Paris Book Fair. It won the Best Travel Read (Fiction) at the Heathrow Travel Product Award 2009. This novel was transformed into the film entitled 'Slumdog Millionaire' directed by Danny Boyle and won many awards. His second novel is *Six Suspects*, 2008, a crime novel based on the crime and underground activities in the UP. It has been scripted into the movie. His third novel *The Accidental Apprentice* published in 2013 is supposed to be picturized by Sriram Raghavan. His short story 'A Great Event' has been included in *The*

*Children's Hours: Stories of Childhood*, an anthology of stories about childhood.

The third novelist selected for the present study is Vikram Chandra. He is one of the promising young novelists who has been critically examined for his contribution to the development of the Indian Fiction in English by discussing current trends. Though he belongs to a educated family, he has shown his instinct for the writing of the innovative themes and development of contemporary characters. So far he has written one book of short stories and two novels. He has won many prestigious prizes for his writing.

## **CONCLUSION**

The human society should exist on peace and harmonious relations but its natural organization is disturbed by means of crime, corruption and violence. Even we go back to the history of the primitive culture in the course of civilization we find that crime, corruption and violence have their roots in the evolution of the human society.

The novelists in the world have concentrated on delineation of crime, corruption and violence in their respective countries. “ Though there are descriptions of it in the most ancient literary works like the Bible, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata etc., the purpose of the description is to highlight the good values the humanity needs to cultivate and to moralise the readers” .

In the contemporary India, as well as the world crime, corruption and violence are prominent aspects in the culture of everyday life and on the rise though social and legal attempts have been made to restrict their scope and provision of legal punishment against them are formulated. These novelists are the sensitive human beings pained at the social structure, impact of culture and increase in their numbers. Literature is basically realistic and presents the characters and events taking place in the society.

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