



Chetan Bhagatification” of Indian English Literature.

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Indian literature is a multi-lingual literature, with contribution from different language regarded as official languages by different states. Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Gujarati, Kannada etc., are some major languages in the country. From the times of the British, English has become a major borrowed language. Many writers use English as a primary language for their writings. The list includes writers like R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand, Toru Dutt, Sarojini Naidu etc., and modern writers like Salman Rushdie, Shashi Tharoor, Arundhati Roy, Shobha De, Mahasweta Devi and Chetan Bhagat. Among the modern writers, Chetan Bhagat has been recognized as one of the best-selling novelists of the popular literature. In his novels, he takes up susceptible subjects which concern the society, ranging from the romantic love story to a deplorable condition of the present educational system. Bhagat has purposefully employed youth centered approach in his novels. In 2008, *The New York Times* called Bhagat "the biggest selling English language novelist in India's history". Bhagat, an alumnus of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmadabad, is seen more as a youth icon than as an author. *Time* magazine named him as one of the hundred most influential people in the World in the year 2010. Bhagat writes open-education columns for popular English and Hindi newspapers, including *The Times of India*, *Hindustan Times* and *Dainik Bhaskar*, focusing on youth, career and issues based on national development. Bhagat voices his opinion frequently at leading events. He quit his investment banking career in 2009, to focus on writing. On this parameter, Chetan Bhagat becomes supremely important.

A common perception is that Bhagat uses common parlance and that is a reason critiques don't like him. However, none can underplay his contribution to literature on this point alone. Many renowned bestselling authors who have also been well received in the world of literature have not used complex language. Bhagat has started a crusade against eradicating the evils of the society by his "sugar coated novels". Chetan Bhagat, in almost all his novels, highlights the problems faced by the youth. He presents before us a world which is full of optimism and comic elements. Chetan Bhagat has the rare acumen of giving comic treatment to a very serious theme. The main objective of this dissertation is to discuss the concept of social reflection and of modernity and how, through the delineation of the various characters, he portrays the contemporary reality.



In Indian English Novel, the barrier between the best-seller and high-brow has been demolished with the entry of New Generation Realist. Chetan Bhagat works are highly entertaining, very slick, real and sophisticated. He has changed the rules of the game as Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail”. This quote is apt to Chetan Bhagat. He is different from other writers to an extent.

Bhagat has introduced some unique trends in the Indian English literature particularly in fiction. He has focused the interest of the youth in a way that he addresses their everyday concerns, in a language they can relate to, and also consciously strives for a mass appeal which is the key to his success. He has written about their aspirations and in almost all his novels, he highlights the problems faced by them. Another major reason for his success is the choice of the theme. He writes about what he knows the best. In this respect we are reminded of Jane Austen, who made her avowed aim to write about the life she knew the best. Her canvass is marriage and man-woman relationship in the 19th century England. Bhagat too follows the same formula which brought him this mammoth success. “Get going or Get out of the way”, seems to be the motto in life of the young people. He has attempted to guide their ripe energies into proper direction. This is no surprise if they acclaim him as the youth writer. He gives voice to the feelings, emotions, opinions, and thoughts of voiceless youth. He motivates the youth to lead a life as they deem it fit based on their personality and nature but not as a blind follower. He wants to see a change in Indian youth thinks-about politics, culture, and education. His novels touch an emotional chord of the younger generation. They display the ambition of the youth, mixed with fears and tinged with tears. In an interview with *Wall Street Journal* dated July 20, 2012 he said: “I try to reflect India’s current time in the most entertaining manner. And in the process I try to deliver a social message. My books touch a chord I somewhere feels I am just being honest.”

Bhagat puts stress on the liberty of women. His woman characters believe in “an absolute, a perfect, a pure and a noble freedom”. He observed through the portrayal of the character of Aarti. His men and women observe morality in the warm heartedness of the human relations. They are epicureans in nature. Therefore, they take after pleasure. Their concern lies specifically in the innovation of education system and the society as a whole. They believe that success comes to those who crave for practicability not for mugginess in life. He has provided new scope, new dimensions and new life because of the diversity of themes related to different aspects of human life in his novels. He has opened the floodgates for a new movement in Postmodern Indian Writing. He writes the language which a large section of the Indian society understands. His stories are mostly told in a dialogue form which lends itself to the colloquial, off-hand writing style that he embodies. He takes up susceptible subjects which concern the society, ranging from romantic story to a deplorable condition of the present educational system. He opines that the purpose of literature is to raise a mirror to society and in the process of ensuring this, he has revolutionized the



postmodern literature. He brilliantly tapped the desk with his entertainment literature that is filled with the social awareness, keen understanding of cultural values. He dreams and aspirations of the youth in particular by using vocabulary comprehensible to common literates. The runaway success of his first novel was an indicative change of the taste of budding readers of India. The main stream publishers of literary fiction have failed to recognize as they put away his first novel for the colloquial and pedestrian English he has used, and its lack of literary flavor. Now, by his stunning and outstanding success they call “Chetan Bhagatification” of Indian English literature. Many complain that his books are of bad odour that pollutes the well-groomed aesthetic and literary tastes. Amish Tripathy, another best seller of popular fiction identified the signs of new trend in the readers. In an interview given to Shiela Reddy for *Outlook* dated July 18, 2011, he says, “I think India is changing, and people frankly don’t care for the kind of books big publishers were coming out with- stories of the British Raj or the struggles of NRIs. After a century, India is rich again, and people want to hear stories about themselves, about our call-centre generation, or a Punjabi marrying a Tamilian or our myths told in a modern way. A few of us have just been lucky to be blessed with stories that connect with this mood.”

Chetan Bhagat has created a new breed of readers in India. Those who have never had any interest in reading English novels are starting with Chetan's novel which is quite appreciable.

Chetan knows exactly who his readership is and what their needs are and he knows how to connect his works with them. Like the proverbial Pied Piper, he attracts the young readers by weaving a magic charm with his words. Through his writings he is not looking for literary awards or glory, in the said academic corridors, but he wanted to enthrall his young budding readers. He had started as an entertainer but what he writes or says is much what the youth thinks in our country today. The language he uses to frame his novels is accessible to readers whose first language isn’t English. His first person narration is more realistic. People who are not regular readers enjoy his books as they are in simple language and there is no need to grab a dictionary for every line. the changing image of woman,

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