

Acknowledgements

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(Nidhi Jaiswal)

Preface

India's Independence gave birth to a new literary perception. In Indian Writing in English, social, cultural and political upheavals played a prominent role from the very beginning. Novel as a literary form serves as weapon to propagate and reform the evils of nation. It analyzes both historical contexts and emerging issues to explore cause and effect. Novel, which is a mixture of fact and fiction, describes the situation in artistic terms to convey its message. Fiction as a form clearly represents the feelings and sensibilities of Indians living in India and abroad. The founding fathers of Indian Fiction in English – Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R. K. Narayan laid the foundation for contemporary novelists by projecting ills of society with a vision of reformation. The 1980s and the 1990s witnessed the revival of the golden age of 1930s with the publication of Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981). It is important to note that all the major contemporary Indian English Writers who bagged the Booker Prize for Fiction i.e. V. S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga intertwine in their literary gamut social, cultural and political issues of Independent India. Rohinton Mistry, an Indian-born Canadian writer, is also one among contemporary novelists whose contribution adds glory to this tradition. He inter-mingles the political life of the nation with the personal lives of common citizens to arouse feelings of "pity" and "fear" but refusing the catharsis, making his endings anticlimactic.

The present thesis is an analysis of the novels of Rohinton Mistry from the perspective of social, cultural and political realities of contemporary India as depicted in them. Rohinton Mistry moved to Canada from Bombay in 1975. The diasporic strand of Rohinton Mistry gives him opportunity to construct an alternative social, cultural and political narrative of India from the perspective of Parsi minority in a

Hindu majority nation. He does not talk about Parsi community in general but represents the plight of Parsi community through the characters in his novels. His works are sensible representations of the predicament of Parsis and other minority communities. His novels are the novels of human suffering and the irony is that this suffering is, to a great extent, man-made. The literary journey of Rohinton Mistry presents a progression, expansion and understanding of canvas, concerns and agonies of cultural outsiders.

In order to analyze the novels of Rohinton Mistry in the context of social, cultural and political India, a comprehensive but uncomplicated scheme of chapter division has been followed. Chapter (I) – “Introduction” is introductory and expository in nature. It begins with a brief account of the notion of Diaspora, its origin and development. It then focuses on the coming of Parsis in India and how they established themselves in the Indian sub-continent. The chapter then gives an outline of Indian writing in English: its origin, phases and development. Finally, it locates Rohinton Mistry within these three aspects: Mistry as a Parsi, Canadian Diasporic, Indian English writer. Chapter (II) - “Changing Patterns of Culture and Politics in *Such A Long Journey*” is devoted to an analysis of the impact of tumultuous social, cultural and political situations of post-independence India on the lives of the ordinary citizens of the nation. Chapter (III) – “Critique of Power and Politics in *A Fine Balance*” deals with issues of castesism and communalism from the time of Independence to the aftermath of Indira Gandhi’s assassination. It describes game of power and politics and its effect on the everyday life of common people. Chapter (IV) – “Socio-Cultural and Political Events at the Local and the Familial in *Family Matters*” discusses issues of a middle class Parsi family in relation to the financial crisis the family undergoes. It also brings into focus themes of corruption,

immigration, inter-religious marriage, generation gap, Parsi purity and decreasing Parsi population. Chapter (V) – “*The Scream: A Gerontological Insight in Human Life*” depicts the agony of ageing and complaints of a neglected old man. Chapter (VI) – “Conclusion” has been conceived by way of conclusion and summing up.

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Although Rohinton Mistry left India in 1975 and does not often go back, the beauty and delicacy with which he has portrayed the experience of immigration, the immense pain of not being with once own people, no other author has done it so far. Some of the lines from the recent novel of Rohinton Mistry's "Family Matters" say about the aspect of immigration as a wrong and painful decision, the protagonist Nariman Vakeel, during a conversation with his son in law Yezad, expresses his happiness on Yezad's decision of not going to Canada. He says "Economics and politics on mistry's families. Politics form an important subtext to the main action of all three novels of Rohinton Mistry. These novels are written in the backdrop of India-Pakistan Second War and the period of Emergency declared during the time when Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister of India. The research paper tries to throw light on Rohinton's perception of the Indian Parsi society and culture from 1960 to1990 in Bombay. Pages: 136-137 | 164 Views 86 Downloads. download (375KB). frequency. Bimonthly. Online Journal. Indexed Journal.