

Social Consciousness: Societal Evils in Contemporary India from Chetan Bhagat's Perspective in Revolution 2020

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ABSTRACT

The paper entitled “Social Consciousness: Societal Evils in Contemporary India from Chetan Bhagat's Perspective in Revolution 2020”. Chetan says that though writing in a developing country youngsters are failing to getrecogorize Chetan Bhagat, the creative writer in the field of Indian English Literature has portrayed the mechanical life of youngsters in his novel Revolution 2020. He has always been very careful and aware with most of the issues related to the society. He has also given some ideas to solve the problems through his characters in his novels. The paper brings forth the empathetic life of youngsters and the political problems in a vivid manner. It shows the life of the protagonist and the burden faced by them through relatives and society. *Revolution 2020* is a fascinating and a fast-paced story of love, betrayal, and corruption. It is set in the sacred city of Varanasi and it reveals the darker side of India's education system and the uncontrolled corruption it involves. In this novel Gopal, the protagonist of the novel is changing the traditional education system with the support of the MLA Shukla.

Keywords: Societal, Contemporary, Getrecogorize, Corruption, Exploitation, Patriarchy, Globalization, Corporate life style, developing and Burden.

I. INTRODUCTION

Revolution 2020 is the fifth novel by Chetan Bhagat. In this novel, Bhagat has exposed in detail some sensitive issues of contemporary India, like the rotten education system and dishonesty as well as bribery in public life. Bhagat is known as the voice of India's raising entrepreneurial class. He rocked the contemporary Indian sensibility with his thought provoking insight in shifting paradigms of human conditions knotted in labyrinth of love, corruption and

ambition. His creative vision *Revolution 2020* is justification of the fact how the unbridled ambition have irrigated the creepers of corruption in which ‘love’, the only consolation for human survival is going to prove a weak stem. The novel reveals necked reality of our nation.

The post-Independence Indian situation is a sad saga of degeneration, decay of moral values and corruption rampant in the society. The politicians, academician, bureaucrats, public representative have opened an era of corruption, dishonesty and hypocrisy that has percolated down to the grassroots levels. This everyday Indian reality has been brilliantly portrayed in Chetan Bhagat’s novel *Revolution 2020*. (222)

ChetanBhagat is usually considered to speak on behalf of the Indian entrepreneurial community. Every one of his novels has been bestsellers and has gained huge readerships worldwide. His novels have known to rock Indian sensibility, by providing thought provoking insights as a result of delving into the ever changing paradigms of human conditions that find it entangled in the maze of love, corruption and ambition in his novel, *Revolution 2020*. This research paper attempts in examining a detailed account of the happenings of Indian society, mainly in the fields of education and politics.

CORRUPTION – The various ingredients that make contemporary Indian society seem despicable were pointed out by Bhagat in his fifth novel, *Revolution 2020*. Chetan Bhagat delves deep into a very serious malaise of Indian society – corruption. The despicable and uncouth reality of Indian society has been laid threadbare in this novel.

The novel talks about how the basic inception of corruption in modern times can be traced to opportunistic leaders, who are consumed by ambition, and use corruption as a means to fuel their ambitions. The bleakness existing in Indian society, according to Bhagat, is due to political bankruptcy, social sins, malpractices and crimes of various hues. *Revolution 2020* discusses in detail about how the Indian government aids in corruption. Bhagat's book talks about how government employees and political leaders

Actually operate, which lead to untold corruption everywhere. Corruption, the dark side of Indian society that Indians are generally accustomed to, manifests itself in the rotten educational system, coupled with the dishonesty and bribery that exist in public life forms the essence of this novel(2).

The protagonist comes from a humble background that faces tremendous pressures in life. The novel describes him as an ordinary person with a slight paunch. It goes on to add that the protagonist lost his mother at the age of four, and his father owned only disputed agricultural land.

Like Samir in *Five Point Someone*, the protagonist of *Revolution 2020* is forced by his father to pursue engineering. Bhagat points out those students in India are not encouraged to opt for careers or studies based on their passion or choice. Rather, it is the will of the parent that is forced down upon their throats. The protagonist says, “I would be one of those unfortunate cases who had done well, but not well enough “(3).

They become distraught when they are not able to fulfill their parents' desires that were imposed upon them. As a result, students have to lie to their parents when they don't do well, for they wouldn't want to see their parents getting hurt. Parents on the other hand are also insensitive, who tend to scold them rather than reassuring them when things don't go as planned. Bhagat infers that this could be one of the reasons why young people contemplate suicide.

The plot revolves around the protagonist, his friends Raghav and the local beauty Aarti who is a District Magistrate's daughter. The three of them belong to middle class backgrounds. The protagonist's father is an ailing retired teacher, who is not inclined to spend all of his money

on his medication, as the well-being of his son; the protagonist occupies a higher priority. The protagonist wants to enter one of the prestigious IITs. He has to do the JEE, the entrance test, in order to get into one of them. But he is not successful. His father sends him to Kota, Rajasthan, which is renowned for institutes that impart training for one to clear the JEE. Yet, the protagonist fails in his subsequent sitting for the JEE (4). His father passes away in the meanwhile. He starts to live by himself. His relatives do not seem very interested in taking him under their wings.

They give him a little bit of money and gradually move out of his life. Bhagat highlights a major problem that exists among the young who are abandoned due the loss of their loved ones – no one in society cares too much for them! The young are running out of role models who can mould them to become leaders who not only follow their passion, but also make this world a better place.

The protagonist, who has lost both of his parents, is now an orphan, who is despised by his relatives. It is at this juncture of his life, that through a friend of his, he is introduced to a political leader Shuklaji. Shuklaji has been portrayed as one who fits the stereotype that one usually finds in Indian movies – corrupt, loaded with unaccounted cash or black money and quite heartless. Shuklaji is corruption personified. *Revolution 2020* rubs it in when it comes to corrupt politicians. According to Bhagat, politics is only for criminals and criminals are meant to be in politics. He goes on further to point out that elections have become associated with a host of criminal activities. Shuklaji finds a way to launder his black money – give some of it to the protagonist to start a college named Gunga Tec(5).

ChetanBhagat, in his novel *Revolution 2020* talks about how meaningless education has become. But, it also highlights that everything in life is not that depressing. *Revolution 2020* is a story of a young person's ambition and love in the background of corruption in Indian society and how youth react to these other very important facets – ambition and romance. Bhagat adroitly delineates the issues of contemporary Indian society which affect Indian youth through his characters in this novel:

The way different characters and situations are developed by the novelist against complex socio-cultural practices offers the readers an opportunity to see people and social institutions in an interactive mode. Whether it is the characters that are being in even a shade of change in the social practices or the social practices which facilitate or thwart the growth of human personality avenues for social criticism are opened. (6).

In all of Chetan Bhagat's novels the stories revolve around the young person. His novels have attained popularity among this section of society as he is able to weave in a very seamless fashion everything that is happening in today's India from the perspective of the young person. At the same time, he is able to infuse interest in the reader by highlighting on the various challenges that a young person faces – anger, competition, bitterness, romance, sacrifice and rash decision making. His novels present a clear picture regarding his concerns in the current scenario prevailing in 21st century India. Most of what he wants to convey is through the eyes of the protagonist of his various novels and through leading newspapers. The youth of India form a significant proportion of Indian society and cannot be ignored. The aspirations of the youth need to be understood and Chetan Bhagat has attempted to give voice to it through his writings. The dark and grim reality of Indian society is also being pointed out in his novels, which the young person can relate to.

Revolution 2020 is another such book. The reason why his book click with his readers is because Bhagat does not seem to give answers to the various challenging situations that a young person faces. Rather, he faithfully tries to highlight it to the world. The young person feels that he or she has a voice in Chetan Bhagat's novels, as young people's views are not being seriously considered. It is the elder's voice that matters. Various issues are brought are brought to the limelight in this book. *Revolution 2020* forces the reader to shine a light at the evil tentacles of corruption that is destroying the nation's conscience. When this is coupled with unbridled ambition, all boundaries are being crossed. Bhagat does not justify it, but raises this very pertinent question.

The young person is forced to confront this ugly dual reality, and come up with ways to counter it. Does the title of the book offer some clues into the time frame by when it could be eradicated – 2020? Chetan Bhagat, in his novel *Revolution 2020* very clearly elucidates the fact that the weak stem of 'love' ends up being the only consolation for human survival in the midst of the creepers of corruption that have been watered by unbridled ambition. Can the 'weak stem of love' strengthen to a point where in a potent, unadulterated, unselfish love could solve the problem? By highlighting the sickness, and stating that there is a glimmer of hope in love, Bhagat seems to remind his readers that true love will love their child unconditionally. He seems to go on further by adding that true love for friends and country will be willing to sacrifice. The 'weak stem of love' can be strengthened to uproot evils of unethical behavior, corruption and other criminal tendencies by the young person.

II. WORK CITED

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