

Chapter-I

Introduction

The emergence of literature is born from painful and pleasant memories and from the experiences of histories. Writing is the evidence of a writer's tremendous power and evolution, which plays an effective means to express the colossal human problems in a wide context. A creative writer can grow his wings of creative expression to offer a truthful, accurate and objective representation of the world. Srinivasa Iyengar in the work *Indian Writing in English* mentions that

Literature has been the means of giving form and utterance to hopes and despairs, the enthusiasm and apathy, the thrill of joy and the stab of pain, in a nation's history as it moves from freedom to slavery, from slavery to revolution, from revolution to independence, and again from independence to the tasks of reconstruction involving further experiences of success and elation. (694)

The creation of the literary works in different genres, with diverse narrative techniques and approaches is the natural outcome of the issues and the incidents which are actually seen by the writers in the society. Every creative work is thus a scientific study of human society. Subhrajit Chatterjee in the article "The Historical Development of Sociology of Literature" quotes the views of W. F. Ogburn who highlights that "Sociology is a body of learning about society. It is a description of ways to make society better. It is a social ethics and a social philosophy. However, it is generally defined as a science of society" (39) and Allan Swingewood in his book *The Sociology of Literature* denotes that "Sociology is essentially the scientific, objective study of man in society, the study of social institutions and of social process; it seeks to answer the question how

society is possible, how it works, why it persists” (11). Thus human society and literary creations are indispensable to each other. There is a shared relationship between them.

Creating an ideal society is the first preference of the writers with social concern and they want people to get rid of all their predicaments and acquire advancement and betterment in their life. The sociological approach of the writer is the distinguished one in literature which is used by many social thinkers to depict the relationship of literature and society. It is the imitation of the human action which presents their thinking, saying, and doing in the society. Wilbur Scott in the book *Five Approaches of Literary Criticism* conveys his views that sociological approach “. . . starts with a conviction that art’s relations to the society are vitally important, and that the investigations of these relationships may organize and deepen one’s aesthetic response to a work of art. Art is not created in a vacuum; it is the work not simply of a person, but of an author fixed in time and space, answering to a community . . .” (123). Scott also has stated the views of Henry Levin who regards that “. . . the relationship between literature and society are reciprocal. Literature is not only the effect of social causes; it is also the cause of social effects (126) and Scott concludes that “It is clear that . . . literature maintains bonds with society . . . the sociological approach . . . will continue to be a vigorous force . . .” (126).

Literary creations under sociological approach highlight the existing colossal problems like socio-economic conditions, the political problems, the poor and the sluggish functioning of social and political organizations and the social ills affecting thoughts, attitudes, behaviours and the violations of established conventions and so on in the human life. The social concern authors write about the societal happenings to bring the awareness and to find the remedial measures. The writers who have highlighted the social problems in their works adopt the visual art technique also. It is known as ‘Social Realism’ which reflects life as it is, without any romantic subjectivity. Such works impart the social life as

an idealized one for the posterity. As per the definition given in *Dictionary of Literary*

Terms:

Realism in literature is a manner and method of picturing life as it really is [that is] untouched by Idealism or Romanticism. As a manner of writing, Realism relies on the use of specific details to interpret life faithfully and objectively. In contrast, Romanticism has more concern with its bizarre and psychological approach to character, presenting an individual rather than the type. Often, fate plays a major role in the action. (163)

In ‘Social Realism’, writers faithfully present peoples’ attitudes and behaviour in their relationship with others in given situations. They also describe the ways of life of the people of all social classes in the society. However, the incidents depicted in their works are neither made beautiful with the writers’ imagination nor they are described with exaggeration. The writers explain all the trials and tribulations of the neglected and the discriminated people in the society with the naked reality. Md. Amir Hossain in his article “Sherman Alexie’s Literary Works as Native American Social Realistic Projections” has given an explanation to the word ‘Social’:

‘Social,’ as a word, is like an omnibus, covering all aspects of human activity, displaying an awareness of others. Simply speaking “Social Realism” is an extraordinary reach of understanding of social life. Still better, it is an intellectual power of probing into the nature and function of society, its various institutions and traditions, and their functioning. It is an intellectual penetration of social process. (384)

‘Social Realism’ has taken various concrete shapes and forms because of the attitudes and the consequent behaviour of the people towards one another. It is not a new concept used in literary works. It has begun as a movement against Classicism and

Romanticism and do not expect idealism in the ways of life. Social Realism is neither limited to any one country nor to a particular century. This is not to a particular group of writers also. As a movement, it has been closely associated with the literary movement in France during 19th century. It was started in France with the works of the novelists like Flaubert and Balzac. It became very popular in England with the works of George Eliot. The works of William Dean Howells had established its individual identity in America. As far as India is concerned, there are innumerable Indian writers who have displayed their social consciousness by following this narrative technique, and display their social awareness of such societal ills which affect the people who are powerless and find very difficult to make both ends meet during their livelihood.

The visual art ‘Social realism’ is an extraordinary search for understanding of social life. The writers in their works provide their keen interest on observations and unfiltered representation of the society. They confront the truth underlying in the ordinary existences of their contemporary society and neglect nothing that is ugly or painful in which the injustices and the fallible existence of the society is brought out. Thus, the writers use the visual art technique to unravel the layers of the social fabric relating to social readjustments and maladjustments.

The literary artists who give expression to the social issues in their works are the people with strong social consciousness and they are called ‘Social Realists’. They have “focused on the ugly realities of contemporary life and sympathized with working class people, particularly the poor. They have recorded what they have seen [as existed] in dispassionate manner” (*Academic Decathlon Curriculum* 294). Hence, their works have become the voice of the existing incurable ills of the society. Such social ills are the discrimination among human beings on the basis of gender, social standing, religion, ethnicity, and cultural tradition; the betrayal of trust and love in human relationship and

the indulgence of power mongers in corrupt practices to enjoy more illegal pecuniary benefits and so on.

Commonwealth Literature has multi-terminologies such as Post-Colonial Literature, Third World Literature, Minority Literature, Marginalized and New Literature in English Literature. It includes the literary products of the countries Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Caribbean, India, Malaysia, Singapore and North America and so on. By following the sociological approach, the literary works of the writers from these countries bring out the quandary of the suppressed people and grapple with social and cultural issues in a wide context. It is done with a belief that artistic and literary works can deal primarily with the problems and also explore the predicaments of their own society. They make the readers come into contact with their painful experiences of many other people across Commonwealth nations. Thus they widen the horizon around the world.

African writers take it as a gospel that the source of what they write must be from their immediate societies and must demonstrate their distaste and disapproval for the socio-political shortcomings of the land. Writers like T.M. Aluko, Chinua Achebe, Nadine Gordimer, Wole Soyinka, and all other writers are socially committed to present the reality of Africa. Such commitment is inevitable as they are worried over the freedom and equality of their people.

The Post-Independent generation writer T. M. Aluko (1918-2010), in his novel, *One Man, One Matchet* (1964) expresses the disappointments of their native society. He chooses to deal with the theme of corruption, nepotism and the incompetence of the African politicians. Nadine Gordimer (1923-2014), one of the most prolific writers, powerfully explores social, moral and racial issues in South Africa under the apartheid rule. Her novel *Burger's Daughters* (1979) portrays the struggles of anti-apartheid activists to liberate their society from racial discriminations. Chinua Achebe (1930-2013), in his

works, throws light on the changes in the African society and politics. His most famous work *Things Fall Apart* (1958) is a withering depiction of the clash between traditional tribal values and the effects of colonial rule.

Wole Soyinka (1934-) is an honest observer and writer of his land and its people. His work *The Swamp Dwellers* (1958), condemns the way that the religious leaders of their community use the fear of their town people for their personal gains. Soyinka in the novel *Season of Anatomy* (1973) explores the destructive effects of war, specifically the totalitarianism and the corruption of reformed governments. His recent drama *Alapata Apata* (2011) is a strong political satire on the contemporary situation, which also focuses on the evil power corruption and its official misuse for personal enrichment. The writings of the African writers show that they do not idealize and glorify their society, but refer to the evil practices of their society in order to build a new land.

Australian writings highlight the inherent social problems such as discrimination against aborigines and dysfunctional aboriginal families, unemployment, poverty, alcoholism, sexual abuse and domestic violence. The selection of themes by the Australian writers includes diverse subject matters such as convict settlement, nationalism and confederation, effects of European contacts with aboriginal people and the fathom between the city and the bush life. Until the Depression in 1929, most novels are optimistic about the country, but in the late 1930s the literary mood has changed and the dark and gloomy views were explored. The devastating effects of the Great Depression led to a range of literature, focusing on the difficult lives of the affected working class and the unemployed people. These works played an important role in influencing public opinion and pursuing political ideologies.

The Australian fiction has shown concern on the life of ordinary people. Catherine Helen Spence's (1825-1910) novel, *Clara Morrison* (1854), offers a realistic description

of domestic life in South Australia. Miles Franklin (1879-1954), in the book *My Brilliant Career* (1901), writes about the adolescent frustrations in the bush society. Joseph Furphy's (1843-1912) master piece *Such is Life* (1903) is a fictional account of the lives of rural Australians.

Henry Lawson (1867-1922), writes his first collection of stories (1894), with compassion about the lives and struggles of Australian pioneers. Ruth Park's (1917-2016), famous trilogy – *Missus* (1985), *The Harp in the South* (1987) and *Poor Man's Orange* (1949) are set in the inner slum areas of Sydney to bring out the wretched and weary life of the slum people. Dorothy Hewett (1923-2002) in her first novel *Bobbin Up* (1959) writes about the struggling life of women in Alexandria Spinning Mill which gives a new impact in literature of the working class.

Faith Bandler (1918-), an Australian civil right activist, in his work *Waevie* (1977), depicts the sexual exploitation of the Aboriginal servants by the white people. Alexis Wright's (1950-) best known novel *Carpentaria* (2006), recounts the story of the aboriginal people from the coastal town of Desperance and their conflicts with the local government. The realistic pictures by Australian writers are a record of personal hopes of loss, of tragedy and of deep disappointments and also show that their works are not only a weapon in the social and political warfare but also a doctrine of truth and life.

Caribbean writers are involved in the analyses of the flaws of the society. They depict the life of the underprivileged people who are filled with shame and humiliation. Their portrayal brings the overall oppressive negativity of the society, which highlights class conflicts, economic oppression and the alienating effects of hostile social conditions. One of the Caribbean writers Jacques Stephen Alexis's (1922-1961) works, published between 1955 and 1961, are the true portrayal as well as the valid documents of the pain

and the plight of the Haitian working class. His novels *Comrade General Sun* (*Compere General Soleil*) in 1955 and *In the Twinkling of an Eye* (*L'espace D'un Cillement*) in 1959, encompass the cruelty of businessmen who tyrannize their workers, employees and domestic staff and the rich women who ill-treat their child servants etc. His concern for the underprivileged masses as depicted in his novels, explains that his interest is not merely to describe man, but to contribute to his transformation.

Joseph Zobel (1915-2006) is the author of several novels in which social issues are at the front. His novel, *Black Shack Alley* (*Law Rue Cases-Negres*) in 1950, reports the social destruction of the cane-cutting families and their poverty that threatens to engulf the rural workers. The works of the Caribbean writers are distinguished by their examination of oppression, victimization and segregation of their people and sought for their liberty from the chaotic life. Thus, these writings of Caribbean are not a falsification of reality, but they are significant markers to awaken the suppressed group.

Canadian Literature experiments with the range of physical environment and social condition, which include the human failings and social imperfection. Morley Edward Callaghan (1903-1990), the Canadian writer intends on addressing the social problems that he finds around him and about people who have been caught in traumas in their society. His novel *My Beloved* (1934), is an emphatic condemnation of the society. Sinclair Ross (1908-1996), in his *As for Me and My House* (1941), gives a marvelous depiction of the economic depression of the 1930s, and has a rigorous scrutiny on the state of her society.

Mordecai Richler (1931-2001), one of the English-speaking Canadian writers, is best known for his master piece *The Apprentices of Duddy Kravitz* (1959). It highlights their unstable social condition of moral ambiguity, human failing and social flaws. The social concern Canadian writers, through their writings show their concern by addressing the social issues to encounter number of obstacles, which exist in their life. In their

writings, they offer an accurate and objective portrayal of the struggles in the life of their men to ameliorate them from their cruel life. Bole Butake, in the article “The Writer as Visionary”, emphasizes the significant role of every writer in the society. He asserts that

The writer has a moral duty to steer members of his society along a course that ensures the triumph of truth and justice for all . . . and also to steer society away from corruption, greed, injustice along a course that will vindicate truth and justice. The writer as visionary and combatant must know everything or as much as possible about his people. This is the only avenue by which he can clearly decipher their aspirations and so help in charting a course for the realization and fulfillment of these in their lives.
(23-25)

Over the years, literature has reflected the prevailing social issues in order to get rid of the painful and piteous life of the throng. In Commonwealth literature, countless writers, through their works, expose the ills of their society and satirize the unpopular manifestation in order to educate the mass emotionally and intellectually. The writers consciously enforce the energy and express a powerful cry to put an end to the worldwide social issues.

Indian literature is one of the robust fields among the Commonwealth literature. In Indian English literature, the literary works written before and after Independence have dealt with social issues and evils that are predominant in Indian society. India is a country, which has never ending problems in politics, religion, caste, tradition, culture and so on in which people are trapped without liberty. Indian English writers disclose the unpleasant life of the society through their word paintings; their works act as a tool to give an awakening call to the country. It represents everyday life with accurate representation without idealization.

There is a galaxy of Indian writers in English, show their national consciousness through their works. Under the sociological approach and the technique of social realism they portray the truthful and honest picture of the society and try their level best to create awareness among the suppressed Indians. Their voice indicates their concern in favour of the elimination of social evils and expresses their desire for social reforms for the betterment of all Indians irrespective of their religious, social and professional status.

Indian English writers depict all the ambiguities and chaos like frustration, restlessness, sense of guilt, alienation and all the traumatic experiences by exposing the issues – rift between poor and rich, economic crisis, corruption, conflicts and hostilities among various communities and so on to stress the new aspirations and ideas to set social harmony. The towering figures of Indian English fiction like Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Kamala Markandeya had a strong commitment to expose the dismal portrayal of life to bring the desired transformation in society. Their works stress on the harsh realities of their nation – poverty, starvation, famine, caste system and peoples' economic condition and so on, through which they express the most intimate consciousness of life and society.

As a social Realist, Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004) has depicted the problems, which the oppressed, the poor, the downtrodden Dalits, and the lower caste people face in the society without any kind of relief in sight. He describes an inhuman society where human beings are treated like unwanted by another set of human beings just because they are born poor in a socially inferior class. The negative attitude of the superior social class towards them stands as stumbling block in their educational, professional and economic

advancement. Mulk Raj Anand's novels of Social Realism are *Untouchable* (1935), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937) and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942). Talat Ahmed in his article "Mulk Raj Anand: Novelist and Fighter" has expressed about the writer's literary output saying that "his works have been infused with a political commitment that has conveyed the lives of India's poor in a realistic and sympathetic manner" (n.pag.)

R.K. Narayan (1906-2001) has portrayed the day-to-day life of his society. His works have societal issues like casteism, inequality, injustice, gender discrimination and superstitious beliefs as their themes. He has focused his attention on the importance of traditional values in the ways of the life of the people. His faithful reflection of the contemporary society has been made without any of his display of criticism and satire. Some of his most notable works about the societal life of his time are *Swami and Friends* (1935), *The Bachelor of Arts* (1936), *The English Teacher* (1945), *Mr. Sampath* (1949), *The Financial Expert* (1952), *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955), *The Guide* (1958), and *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967).

J. Krushnakant Dave in his article titled "R.K. Narayan's Fiction: A Reflection of Reality in Real Rhythm" has highlighted the social concern of R.K. Narayan:

Being a man of moral consciousness, R.K. Narayan has vividly described social customs and reality with unbiased objectivity and complete detached observation . . . He is for the social integration and order. . . He has dissected the social motives successfully with the help of realistic characterization. (67)

Raja Rao's (1908-2006) *Kanthapura* (1938), deals with the problem of untouchability, along with other issues like freedom struggle, toddy drinking and labour wages. Inspired by Gandhian ideals, he works for the betterment of the untouchables at the social and economic level. His novel *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), forcefully realizes

the confrontation of Eastern and Western cultures. It is an evacuation of truth that the tradition of India has an essential vitality in its encounter with the West and it validates the value of Indian culture.

Kamala Markandaya (1924-2004) has mirrored all the social evils to which she has been a direct witness through her novels. She has found a society of Indian villagers who are greatly afflicted with poverty, hunger, beggary, prostitution, dowry and inequality.

Regarding her social themes, S. Krishnaswamy in his work “Kamala Markandaya: Autonomy, Nurturance and the Sisterhood of Man” observes:

Kamala Markandaya is not a theorist to dwell upon caste and class problems and class problems alone. Her concerns are predominantly socio-economic and so her novels offer us [readers] a savage tale of brutality, ignorance, mental and physical bludgeoning that every ordinary Indian man and woman is subject to” (4).

Kamala Markandeya’s most important novels of social realism are *Nectar in a Sieve* (1955), *Some Inner Fury* (1956), *A Silence of Desire* (1960), *A Handful of Rice* (1966), *The Nowhere Man* (1972) and *Two Virgins* (1973). Through these literary works, people come to know of the events that have happened in the remote and near past through the chronologically presented facts in history and the re-creation of social issues and events through the characters of their writing. Besides these very popular writers, the contemporary writers like Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, etc., are deified as path-breakers for their portrayal of contemporary Indian life in a truthful manner. Nayantara Sahgal (1927-) is regarded as an exponent of the political novel but she has also touched social issues through her novel *Rich like Us* (1985). It focuses on the civil disorder, corruption and oppression of the society. Arundhati Roy’s (1961-) first novel *The God of Small Things* (1997), deals with gender discrimination.

Kiran Desai (1971-), daughter of Anita Desai, is known for her work *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006), which is about the rigid class systems that exist in India. M.Asmani Shyam, in the book *Critical Response to Indian English Fiction*, writes on the works of Indian writers that their works are “. . . faithfully mirrored right from the early phase of reformist exuberance to the growth of revolutionary consciousness among the common masses of India” (1) and these facts help to shape and mould the deformed societies.

Even though great efforts were taken by several writers, the eradication of the social issues of India remains a mystery and till date it has not been uprooted. Hence the contemporary social realists – the renowned Commonwealth writer, Sir Vidiadhar Suraj Prasad Naipaul and the Indian writer Aravind Adiga, take up the responsibility to rewrite the images of the miserable social issues of the country, India, which is the ancestor’s motherland for V.S. Naipaul and the mother land for Adiga. Social awareness is the crux of the writings of these writers.

V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga are the profound interpreters of the lives of Indians and are the analyzers of the deepest conflicts and verbalizers of their agonies. They explore the social evils of India which include the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor in rural and urban areas, the brutal reality of the economic system, political culture of India, caste and culture conflicts, superstitious beliefs migration from villages to cities for livelihood, zamindary practice, illiteracy and unemployment, especially in rural India. They condemn the master-servant relationship, the nexus between the politicians, criminals and police, the mockery of educational system, the hollowness of government schemes, pseudo-secularism, poor medical services in government hospitals, and the harmful impacts of Westernization etc. The writers’ entire gamut of the critical response on India polarizes its reality.

V.S. Naipaul is a Hindu Brahmin, born in Trinidad in 1932. He has a distinct combination of circumstances that he is an Indian by ancestry, Trinidadian by activity and British by residence. He grew up in an extended Hindu family of Indian origin bound by customs and conventions, rites and rituals and he is always trying to guard the Indianness against the possible contamination of an alien culture.

Naipaul's sensibilities and his achievements have resulted from his unique combinations of circumstances, which have made him a homeless wanderer, a man without a country and a man who has the voice of exile. He refers himself as 'rootless' despite having settled in British countryside. Because of his affinity to three countries England, Trinidad and India, he is considered as 'a homeless wanderer'. Mohit Kumar Ray, in the article "Naipaul-The Man and His World" writes that Naipaul is "... a man without a country and a man whose voice has become the voice of exile" (235). He has been always in dilemma whether he should call the birth of his country Trinidad, or the adopted land England or the forsaken land India his home. But he has never given up his native kinship as an Indian and this spirit is explicitly revealed in all his writings about India. Bruce King in the book *V. S. Naipaul* confirms Naipaul's relationship for his Indian roots when he says, "... while Naipaul is a rationalist, secularist, and strong believer in Western individualism and skepticism, he is emotionally attracted towards Indian fatalism, passivity, and philosophical notions of the world as illusion ... " (7-8). Though he has lived in the midst of different cultural traditions outside India, he has always tried to keep his Indianness intact. He has a nomadic attitude towards his inhabitation. He does not feel tied to any place or race.

V. S. Naipaul belongs to the most talented writers of these days and was called 'a master of modern English prose' in the New York Review of Books. His mastery of observation and his high language competence, which he uses to render his ideas to the

reader, show his brilliance and versatility. V. S. Naipaul's eyes are very attentive for the smallest detail that can give an evident landscape or unremarkable physique of many features. His clarity of vision is notable as he has observed his life which is marked by political upheavals, colonization, migration and revolution. Naipaul's work upraises with a sense of crisis, disaster, despair and tragedy. His works give him a popular international readership, chiefly because of his ironic perspective on contemporary life.

Naipaul has received tremendous plaudits for his writings all over the world. More than twenty-five works of fiction and non-fiction have won him several literary prizes which include the John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize (1958), the Somerset Maugham Award (1960), the Hawthornden Prize (1964), the W.H. Smith Literary Award (1968), the Booker prize (1971), the Jerusalem Prize (1983), and the David Cohen Prize for a Lifetime's Achievement (1993) and in 2001 he won the Nobel Prize for literature.

V. S. Naipaul begins his career in the 1950s, which is the time of anti-colonial movement across Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Caribbean. To find out the subject matter for his works, Naipaul travels throughout Africa, Argentina, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Uruguay, Zaire and so on, and writes down what he has noticed from his travel. Radhamani in the article "The Fictional Forte of V.S. Naipaul: A Brief Note" quotes the words Satish Harit, who expresses about the impact of Naipaul's travels, that "The vision that gets projected in his writings is a traveller's vision and itinerant's perception of that which charms him from afar, beckons him and mystifies him" (161). These experiences are the recurrent sources of all his works which address the volatile, violent and often-despairing aspects of life in the developing world.

V. S. Naipaul has attempted biographies and autobiographies through the use of fictional characters and incidents. His biographies include *The Mystic Masseur* (1957), *Mr. Stone and the Knights Companion* (1963) and *A House for Mr. Biswas*

(1961); his autobiographical novels are *The Mimic Men* (1967), *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987) and *A Way in the World* (1994).

The Mystic Masseur is an ironic and satirical account of the life in Caribbean. The novel projects the disillusion, disappointment and displacement of the Caribbean half-made societies. The novel *Mr. Stone and the Knights Companion* is set in England, deals with the English middle class problems written by a man whose criticism of the West Indies seems to be an indication of Naipaul's purpose to change himself from a West Indian into an English novelist. *A House for Mr. Biswas*, set in Trinidad, centers on the protagonist's attempt to declare his personal identity and it deals with the theme of isolation, frustration and disaffirmation in a colonized society.

The Mimic Men (1967) describes a man's struggles in a corrupt and dehumanized post-colonial society. *The Enigma of Arrival* is a collection of personal experience of Naipaul in England where he portrays different sets of people to show the nature and inter-relationship of various encroachers and aboriginals. The novel provides deep findings of the continuing effect of colonialism on peoples' everyday lives. Naipaul's multicultural heritage and hybrid identity is highlighted in the novel *A Way in the World* through which his masterful skill in transmitting his diasporic experience into different literary genres is shown.

The Suffrage of Elvira (1958) concentrates on the election that is contested on the basis of preconception and of the superstition of the electorate in Trinidad. It criticizes the democratic process and the consequences of the political change. The novel *In a Free State* (1971) is a sequence of five works which include two short stories, two novellas and a short novel which are connected by the same and the single theme of rootlessness and quest for identity. The stories in this book are based on the lives of characters that are projected as slaves to their socio-economic conditions. *Guerrillas* (1975), establishes the

bitter truth that the freedom of an individual is suppressed through the threat of punishment and violence in the modern world of politics.

V. S. Naipaul selects Africa as a plot to construct his novel *A Bend in the River* (1979). It is about the inner conflicts of an individual, and cultural, political and racial problems of the society. Naipaul's last two novels are *Half a Life* (2001) and *Magic Seeds* (2004). They are written separately but the focused themes slavery, colonization, decolonization and industrialization are common in these two novels. V. S. Naipaul has two collections of short stories – *Miguel Street* (1959) and *A Flag on the Island* (1967). The *Miguel Street* is a collection of seventeen stories which represent the Caribbean society through seventeen characters. Strong desire of individual's identity, rights and attainment of their goals are the main focus in the short story *A Flag on the Island*

V. S. Naipaul's *The Middle Passage* (1962) is the reflections of main societies – British, French, Dutch in the West Indies and South America. *The Loss of El Dorado* (1969), *Over Crowded Barracoon* (1972), and *The Return of Eva Peron* (1986), are the books that came out of Naipaul's visit to Trinidad and the other colonial societies in Caribbean. V. S. Naipaul's visit to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Malaysia and Iran are portrayed in his books *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* (1981) and *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions* (1998). Similarly *A Turn in the South* (1989) is a notable account of his visit to Latin American nations and his journey in the South of the USA. In *The Masque of Africa* (2010), Naipaul encompasses his travels through the African countries Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Gabon, and South Africa with the purpose to judge the effects of religious and spiritual belief on these societies. Naipaul's travel diary of Zaire – a brief and organized collection of notes, is published as *Congo Diary* (1980) which gives a most convincing and disturbing view of Zaire, which is trapped between the modern world and its traditions. The non-fiction *Finding the Centre* (1984) deals about the two narratives 'The

Crocodiles of Yamoussoukro’ and ‘Prologue to an Autobiography,’ is a combination of Naipaul’s exploration about the three subject matters – his youth, Trinidad and his father.

The three substantial non-fictions or the Indian trilogy – *An Area of Darkness* (1964), *India: A Wounded Civilization* (1977), and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* (1991), are the results of his visit to his ancestral home, India. They are the replications of contemporary India. In *An Area of Darkness*, Naipaul gives a detail description of his first visit to India and reveals his deep antipathy for the immensity and chaos of the country. The second book of the trilogy, *India: A Wounded Civilization*, extends little hope of recovery to the Indian civilization. In *India: A Million Mutinies Now*, Naipaul correctly intuits the rise of long-suppressed identities that radically alter the Indian society towards betterment in the last decade of the twentieth century.

The Indian trilogy of V. S. Naipaul is homage as well as protest, memory as well as denial, disillusionment as well as dirge. R. Devi Magdalin, in the article “Notions of India: A Critical Study of V. S. Naipaul’s *India: A Wounded Civilization* and *An Area of Darkness*” quotes the word of D. N. Ganjewar who highlights that his writings about India “. . . are difficult and challenging not because they are obscure or avant-garde but because they reflect a keen realistic vision of the novelist” (91) and establish that the straight forwardness is the prominent feature in his writings.

V. S. Naipaul thinks that writing is the only available weapon against all injustices and also a powerful means to stop undesirable happenings. His incisive treatment of contemporary realities plays a vital role in regaining the strength of the society. His novels, short stories, travel books and discursive writings carry the undeniable burden of darkness and loss. His feeling of bitterness and pessimism cannot be separated from his feeling of sadness, cheated hopes and physical and emotional degradation.

Like V. S. Naipaul, Aravind Adiga, the prolific writer also is highly disturbed by the unresolved sufferings of India and tries to explore the grim and gloomy sights of the nation through his writings. Aravind Adiga, born in Chennai in 1974, moved with his family to Australia after the death of his mother. After fifteen years of alien life at Australia, he returned to India as a journalist. On his return, he notices that numerous changes had taken place in the development of the cities but not in the lives of the poor Indians. He feels upset on seeing a transformed India having lost its human values. Since 2003, he has begun his career as a correspondent for Time Magazine.

Aravind Adiga's profession as a journalist had provided an opportunity for him to establish his identity as a writer of Social Realism. Till this date, he has authored only three works and they are *The White Tiger* (2008), *Between the Assassinations* (2009), and *Last Man in Tower* (2011). He has also written four short stories and they are *The Sultan's Battery*, *Smack*, and *Last Christmas* in 2008 and *The Elephant* in 2009. As a journalist cum writer, he has been recognized for his works and he has received many awards. In the year 2008, he has received Man Booker Prize for Fiction. In 2009, he has received four envious prizes for his writings such as British Book Awards Author of the Year, Commonwealth Writer's Prize, and John Llewellyn-Rhys Memorial Prize. In his interview with Lee Thomas, he has expressed his feelings about himself as an Indian and about other Indians who lead their lives as if they were social outcasts:

I am complete misfit in India. I don't do anything right. I don't live the good life that a middle-class person returned from America should do. I don't own a car, though I could; I don't keep servants, though I should. Through sheer incompetence and ineptitude, I've discovered what life is like for the majority of Indians. I take public transportations, which I shouldn't; I eat by the roadside, which is dangerous; I talk to prostitutes and

pimps. My stories follow from my experiences – they are the stories of a fallen and alienated middle-class boy. (15 Apr. 2009).

Aravind Adiga gives a sardonic and dark picture of India in his writings, which is an accumulation of his acerbic and bitter experiences. His intolerance against the social evils – poverty, corruption, the growing difference between the rich and the poor, brutality of the caste system etc., are elaborated and projected brilliantly in his three major works *The White Tiger* (2008), *Between the Assassinations* (2008), and *Last Man in Tower* (2011). He gains immediate success as a notable writer and wins one of the most prestigious literary awards the Booker Prize for his very first novel, *The White Tiger*.

Aravind Adiga's short stories *The Sultan's Battery* (2008), *Smack* (2008), *Last Christmas in Bandra* (2008) and *The Elephant* (2009) visualize the same thematic concept of class injustices, poverty, and degradation of social-cultural values et cetera. Adiga includes the two short stories – *The Sultan's Battery* and *Smack* in his second work *Between the Assassinations*. *The Sultan's Battery* is an intriguing story about a quack sexologist Ratnakara Shetty who sells fake pills for venereal diseases but he justifies his profession that he has three daughters who in need to get marry that requires huge amount of dowry. Aravind Adiga throws light on the social stigma – dowry system which plays a devastating role to heighten the burden of a poor. *Smack* is the story of a smack addict Ramachandra who has no shame in sending his children Soumya and Raju to beg for getting smack. The writer describes the uncompromising truth that the parent's negligence is one of the key components to increase the number of child labourers in the society.

Technical and scientific advancements are often used to camouflage the dark side of India. Aravind Adiga unmasks this truth in *Last Christmas* by depicting the perils of the poor who are scared of the global economy. This story depicts the multiple levels of the deprivation faced by a scavenger woman Saraswathi at the hands of an unnamed judge.

In *The Elephant*, Adiga chooses Chennayya as a protagonist to represent the marginalized existence of the working class people in India. The author proves with the life of Chennayya that poor people are under paid, under privileged and the most neglected groups in the elite society.

Aravind Adiga in his novels has shown a picture of different sides of India – the villages and the cities. He peels off the glossy surface of the economic miracle to expose the rot beneath. The author throws light on the facts that political and other disturbances in the society only affect the poor people. His works are a ‘sorrowful parade of humanity’ and an investigation of the naked reality of the predicaments of India, through which he reveals the plights and pains of his nation.

Among the oeuvres of the writers, V. S. Naipaul’s Indian trilogy – *An Area of Darkness*, *India: A Wounded Civilization* and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* and Aravind Adiga’s works – *The White Tiger*, *Between the Assassinations* and *Last Man in Tower* are selected to focus on the ugly realities of modern day India. The authors give an understanding that they are united in their attack on the status quo and social power structure of Indian societies.

V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga have sincerely attempted to expose the loopholes in the democratic system in India. Their social realism is persistent by their visualization, which is carried out for the purpose of art as well as for the manifestation of social reality. They handle realism with its characteristics and their writings are like a mirror which is held against the uncomfortable realities of India. They explore the Indian society with all its woes and imperfections and remind India’s unending distress to the readers. They try to establish their vision of humanism as an antidote against the prevailing issues.

India has attracted Naipaul more than any other countries of the world. He visits India thrice and writes his account in Indian travelogues. One of the remarkable features of

his travel to India is that he never visits for sights and sounds, but he travels on a purpose, which enables him to penetrate through the upper crust of the societies and their people. His arrival to India is motivated by his desire to explore his roots and redefine his connection with India – an imaginary homeland of Naipaul.

Naipaul's first travelogue *An Area of Darkness* should not be merely considered as his objective narration of India, a country of his parents, but it was India, which he had observed with emotional attachment. Till he visited India for the first time, he thought of India as the other side, which should always look greener. Hence, its narration begins with his great expectations about his parents' homeland and his dreams of India being rich in traditional and cultural habits. During his visit to India, he was startled to find his sweet dreams about the country completely shattered and the greener became a never ending darker side because of the conditions of Indian societies and the people living in them. As a result, India continued to be an area of darkness as it used to be before his first visit.

V. S. Naipaul is horrified to see the plight of India's poverty, notices the country is full of dirt, dust, starved and sick people and poor beggars. He observes the unhygienic life style like poor living conditions in slums, open defecation in the air and diseased human conditions etc. His curiosity is completely broken by these dark sights. He finds the Indian scenario is unbearable and feels it is quite hard to see any positive aspect from this land. He could not relate this country or its people as his own. His preset ideas of the land become flattened to a mere hallucination. Indian realities by no way appear before him as healthy and shining.

An Area of Darkness is a powerful account of how Naipaul's representation about India jostles with reality after coming to India. Corruption, nepotism, general apathy to perform duties, which the writer sees strewn at every part of the country are sufficient enough to ruin his fantasy. His experiences give him a creative shock. He tries to attach

himself too much to India but is unable to. All the time India appears before him as a distant reality. He finds it difficult to separate himself from the observed. Ultimately he is totally lost in delusion. India remains a mystery to him and is 'an area of darkness' as it has been since the days of his boyhood in Trinidad.

V. S. Naipaul concludes that India is barren land; India is a failed nation. Anil Kumar Yadav includes the words of Michael Antony in his work *Naipaul, India and Indianness* claims that India is "... his ancestral land but he was not going to deal with it from a point of view of false loyalty and the expected sentiment . . . He had visited India on a sightseeing and fact- finding mission and he was clearly disappointed and disillusioned. His assessment of the visit was summed up in the title he gave to the book: *Area of Darkness*" (20).

The book *An Area of Darkness* wins Naipaul more enemies than friends for his negative portrayal of India, and some people look upon him as a cold, diffident writer. But the reason behind such a devastating picture of India is not from the hostility of Naipaul against India but from the frustration. Rama Nayar in his article "'Island' as a Metaphor of Creativity: A Study of V.S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas* and *The Mimic Men*" shares the observation of Naipaul who says "The truth about India wasn't what I thought about India, it's what they are living through. That is a great discovery" (180). Thus, V. S. Naipaul's *An Area of Darkness* ends with the tragic dissipation of nostalgic dream and an awareness of a wide gulf between Naipaul and his ancestral homeland. He says in *An Area of Darkness* that "It was a journey that ought not to have been made; It had broken my life into two" (265). This journey is for him; a powerful emotional experience, which not only changes his views but also strongly, influences further writing.

Naipaul's second travelogue is *India: A Wounded Civilization*. It narrates his unpleasant experiences he has had during his second visit to India. He finds India having

lost its charm of traditional culture and piety. He feels that the religion Hinduism has let down the people. It has failed the people in every front and it did not help them to advance culturally. It has enslaved them and cut off their contact and relationship with others. It has made the entire India as fragments and not a unified one after independence. Indians have lost their intellectual potential and they look bereft of any confidence and courage to face challenges. They look like being reconciled to their fate. India which was very famous for its ancient civilization has become more archaic. Tradition that was followed in arts has lost its ancientness. All Indians do not have any new ideas to develop India in its social sphere. Every field such as science, culture, society et cetera has lost its past glory and become a thing of the past because religious narrow mindedness. India is without its past glory. He describes how authoritarianism and communalism pose a serious threat to Indian democratic polity. The writer analyses the flaw ‘intellectual depletion’ as the root cause of all the chaos, which engulfs India into darkness. Naipaul awakens the affected Indians to act or question against the prevailing undemocratic means.

Dr. Shanmugam, in the article “A Study of Expatriate Vision in V.S. Naipaul’s *India: A Wounded Civilization*” observes that V.S. Naipaul

. . . exhibits his affiliation with both the world-the West and the East and therefore tries to focus on India from his point of view. He builds a powerful series of episodes with the background of Indian landscape, Indian sights and sounds, Indian manners and gestures as only a keen observant and a sensitive artist can depict them. Naipaul’s portrayal of hard and harsh facts of life against the background of Indian landscape is a skillful dissection of the real and its presence beneath the inhuman bestialities of life. (49)

Thus Naipaul not only offers surface views of the nature of problems in India, but also tries to wake up Indians from their long slumber and sluggish life.

V. S. Naipaul's third travelogue *India: A Million Mutinies Now*, written after his third visit to India is the realistic portrayal of social conditions. One can see everywhere in the societies wrenching poverty, horrifying injustice, growing criminalization, religious and caste fanaticism, linguistic dominance, and terrorism. All these events are like a million mutinies, affecting the peaceful lives of the innocent, honest and poor sections of the society. In addition Naipaul deals about the extremes of ideologies from the conflicts between Hindus and Muslims to the tensions between different castes to the terrorism of radical Sikhs that has made rift in the country –The infighting among the different sections is a consequence of clash of ideas on the issues of religion, caste, region and language.

Bupinder Singh, in the article “Naipaul's *India: A Million Mutinies Now: A Political Perspective*” elaborates that “Naipaul argues that the differences on the basis of class caste, gender, religion, lead to million mutinies [that is] fragmentation of Indian society. Political leadership is responsible for the . . . various issues . . . there is hardly any attempt made to preserve and propagate the Indian culture, language and religious beliefs . . .” (1).

The masses' struggle extends to the unrest among the youth due to unemployment who does not hesitate to join movements such as Naxalism and Militancy. However democracy in India faces a major challenge when it stops working, demands are not heard, rights are not respected, associations are crushed and freedom of expression is silenced. The ghost of million mutinies appears in the horizon. Therefore to overcome this, Indian democracy has to be successful in its own right and should be instrumental for conflict prevention and resolution.

V. S. Naipaul introduces some characters like Namdeo, a poet whose childhood experience with caste prejudice forces him to create the 'Dalit Panthers' – a group dedicated to liberate India's so called untouchables; Dipanjan, a member of the Bengali gentry whose awareness of poverty and misery around him leads him to join the communist party and live among the poorest village peasants. These movements can be considered as a part of process of growth and restoration. Naipaul shows his satisfaction that people have started thinking about their country as well as showing concern about the nation's development. V. S. Naipaul, in the Indian trilogy explores the Indian society with all its woes and imperfections and reminds India's un-ending distress to the throng. He establishes his vision of humanism as an antidote against the prevailing issues.

Aravind Adiga concurs with V.S. Naipaul to bring out India's actual dreary picture through his writings. In the three works – *The White Tiger*, *Between the Assassinations* and *Last Man in Tower*, Adiga successfully portrays the different images of India. He depicts the ever widening gap between the powerful and the powerless, corruption, poverty, political turmoil, terrorism, caste and class discrimination etc. He shows his social concern by criticizing all the individual vices such as deceit, hypocrisy, avarice and false pride in one's social status based on caste, religion and wealth and makes his people retrieve the sulfurous condition of India.

The novel *The White Tiger* is presented in the form of epistolary novel, a series of letters written over a period of seven nights, in which the protagonist, Balram, narrates his rags to riches story, to the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao, who plans to visit Bangalore on a fact finding mission about the entrepreneurial spirit of the country. Through the letters, Balram narrates how he becomes a successful entrepreneur starting his journey from a small village, Laxmangarh to the city, Bangalore.

Balram Halwai's village Laxmangarh, in Bihar is adversely affected by poverty. He is an intelligent student, christened by the inspector of schools as 'a rare white tiger'. Unfortunately he is taken out of the school and put to work in a tea shop to repay their family debts, incurred for his sister's marriage. Trapped in the vicious cycle of exploitation, he declares that he would not stay as a slave and would make his life beautiful. He soon learns the indispensable skills to succeed in new India – the ability to break the law to do anything to lift his life from the darkness to light.

Balram dreams of becoming a driver and his destiny lands him at the mansion of the landlord of Laxmangarh 'the Stork' alias Ramdev in nearby city of Dhanbad. There he becomes a driver to the landlord's son Ashok and his wife Pinky. Balram gets a chance to go to Delhi with his master. To move out of the village Laxmangarh is a chance to escape from the village of dark and feels glad to enter Delhi, the city of light. But he is totally disappointed and terrified to see the inhuman behaviours of the rich people and decides to unchain him from his slavery existence. He understands the influence of money and wants to become rich.

To fulfill his desire of a rich living, he slits the throat of his master Ashok and steals his capital. With his looted money, he escapes to Bangalore and starts his own taxi service and he becomes a great entrepreneur. Thus the novel *The White Tiger* is a dark tale of suffering, solitude and despair of a man for whom madness and murder become principles of liberation.

The novel *The White Tiger* voices the social injustice of modern India. It is the torch light in the darkness where the writer projects the millions who live in undesirable conditions. Neeru Tandon, in the article "The Theme of Poverty in the 21st Century Indian English Novel with Special References to Kiran Desai, Kamala Markandaya and Aravind

Adiga” quotes the words of Michael Portillo who comments about the novel *The White Tiger* stating that

It changed my view of certain things like what is the real India and what is the nature of poverty . . . What set this one apart was its originality. For many of us this was entirely new territory, the dark side of India . . . It’s a book that gains from dealing with very important social issues, the divisions between rich and poor and the impossibility of the poor escaping from their lot in India. (58)

The novel *The White Tiger* represents socio-economic realities of modern India with a view of helping reconstruct India with a more comprehensive development programs. It is an urgent plea to the haves to bridge the dangerous class-divide. R. K. Dawan quotes the views of Amlanjyothi Patra in the book *Aravind Adiga’s The White Tiger: A Symposium of Critical Response* who says that the novel *The White Tiger* aims “. . . at direct attack at the system of democracy in India. The corrupt politicians and the unholy nexus among politicians, executives and the business community are ruthlessly exposed, [It is] making a poor show of the much advertised “Shining India”” (132). The novel is an open letter to the dead conscience of the nation but at the same time it is a powerful warning that crime and terror will escalate until social inequalities are removed.

In *Between the Assassinations*, Adiga explores the character sketches across caste, class, religion, occupation and preoccupation during seven years from 1984 to 1991; the period between the assassinations of the two Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv Gandhi. The stories and characters created by Adiga have a definite purpose and message. He chooses the fictitious place, Kittur as a tool to expose the bitter reality of the power struggle between the poor and the rich, various castes and creeds and communal affiliations. The galaxy of characters represents each section of the Indian society.

The book starts with the story of Ziauddin, a twelve year old Muslim boy of a farm labouring family working in a tea stall, in an age in which he should reap the joy of innocent childhood, but he struggles for survival like an adult. He develops a sense of isolation from the society. Unknowingly he comes under the sway of a foreign terrorist Pathan. At last he realizes for whom he is working and so escapes from him. The wrong teaching by some religious extremists brings about the change in the child. Adiga through Ziauddin , tries to probe into the causes behind terrorism.

Adiga raises a voice against the beauraucratic corruption through the character Abbasi, a god fearing Muslim. He is against corruption and shuts down his factory as the fine needle work done by the women workers leads them to blindness. It is the social conscience in Abassi that makes him get rid of this sin but most of his friends who own similar factories do not have enough social conscience like Abbassi to close down their factories. When he decides to reopen the factory, he overcomes several hurdles to reopen the factory. He faces many visits by corrupt officials from various government agencies who ostensibly come for inspection but in reality come to take bribes. He offers bribe to all officials, union and political leaders. Though everyone curses corruption no one has found a way to slay this demon. Corruption is a major evil affecting India today. It is rampant and ever growing malaise that affects the Indian society.

Kittur has memorials of riots, violence, corruption and psychological repression. It is evident in the story of a Dalit bookseller, known as Ramkrishna, or otherwise addressed as 'Xerox,' a son of a low caste father who did all his life for a living by taking the crap out of the houses of rich landlord's, which is the traditional occupation of people of his caste. Xerox makes his living by selling pirated copies by greasing the hands of the police frequently. When he is caught selling Rushdie's banned book *The Satanic Verses*, the police take pleasure in breaking his legs though he pleads ignorance of the ban on the

book. The conditions in jail and corruption of the police force reflect the sorry state of the judiciary of India. Adiga explores the ways in which the marginalized face the oppression by the rich and highlights that the ancient social inequalities that still persist.

Aravind Adiga through the dilemma of Shankara Kinni raises a question whether caste or class is worst in society. Shankara is a child born to a Brahmin father and a low caste, Hoyka, mother. Shankara is always treated as someone special among his Hoyka relatives as he is half-Brahmin and hence much higher than them in caste and scale. But amidst Brahmins, he faces a problematic identity. He is not given recognition by the upper caste and is never considered as Brahmin. The social disconnect makes the boy violent. Since he feels insecure about his identity, he tries to take revenge against the caste-biased society by exploding a bomb in his school. Adiga puts forth that the caste in which one is born leaves a permanent scar on the person. These ideas on class and caste are deeply embedded in the psyche of individuals and are resistant to change.

Mr. D'Mello, a strict, orthodox, highly idealistic teacher feels deep resentment in his dearest student and sole comfort, Girish, who desires to see pornographic pictures. Mr. D'Mello blames the Angle Talkies for bribing the 'bloody politicians' which to him is the cause that promotes young boys to visit the 'house of sin.' Mr. D'Mello is bitterly disillusioned by the corruption in post-Independence India and the immorality of the people especially, the younger generation. Corruption plays an evil role in destroying India's heritage and culture. Adiga unlocks the Indian mind set about corruption, which is prevalent in full swing in the country.

Adiga beautifully brings out how truth is suppressed in today's world through the character of Gururaj Kamath, a journalist who is on a mission to discover the truth involved in an accident. In this bureaucratic world, truth is the first casualty as is discovered by the upright journalist, Gururaj. The writer further reveals the fact that media

is a means of doing business and nothing more than that; and how man with the power of money and influence is able to manipulate both police and judicial system.

In the case of Ramachandran's family, Adiga highlights how the wretched labour class of the town loses all sense of self-respect and how children are compelled by their parent to go for begging. The children Soumya and Raju starve for food and earn money by begging to buy smack for their demonic father who is an addict. It is a heart-breaking story of civilized India. Adiga picturises the life in slums is seen through the eyes of the little children whose innocence is exploited. The writer shows that morality is at its lowest ebb and children are being exploited for their selfish and mean motives.

Adiga focuses on how venereal disease is a taboo in the society. People do not go to hospitals for fear of censure in society and resort to treatment from quacks and suffer in the process as in the case of Ratnakar Shetty, father of three daughters. He toils day and night to save money for the daughter's dowry. In order to earn more, he adopts the profession of fake sexologist to fulfill the needs of the family. To his horror he finds that the groom he has fixed as the match of his eldest daughter suffers from a sexually transmitted disease, which he picks from a prostitute. Ratnakar Shetty directs him to go to a doctor but the young man refuses to go for fear of social discrimination. Ratnakar Shetty helping the young man is against the larger backdrop of moral, social and political degradation in the country.

The story of Jayamma is a document of the deep-rooted divisions based on caste and poverty. Adiga through the character of Jayamma reveals the pathetic picture of Indian poverty since she is a woman of fifties born in the upper class of the society but in rags. Both Jayamma and Shaila are servants in the same house but Jayamma, as a Brahmin loathes Shaila for being a lower caste. She tries to have an identity of pride while Shaila is given the identity of humiliation. Adiga conveys that a person is recognized on the basis of

one's birth rather than one's deeds. According to the writer the problems of caste and poverty have been brewing for a long time and so he makes an attempt to address the growing gap between the rich and the poor and it causes unrest in the society.

Aravind Adiga brings in the class differences through the character of George, the mosquito man. George, who spreads pesticides tries to establish relationship with a rich lady, Mrs. Gomes but fails in the end. He thinks that he could do so much more with his life as he is in contact with a rich woman. He has extraordinary hopes to be treated with nobility and dignity. But his delusion is soon shattered due to his mistaken perception that Mrs. Gomes is different from other rich people. She continues to treat him as a mosquito man. Although discrimination on the basis of class and caste is banished by the constitution, it still exists in reality as part and parcel of every day Indian life.

Ranbir Kaur and Gunjan Agarwal in the article "Duality of Human existence in Aravind Adiga's *Between the Assassinations*" writes that "Adiga exposes the life of a town dominated by fearful contrast between wealth and squalor. *Between the Assassinations* is a social criticism [which is] focusing . . . and highlights . . . the religio-socio-political conflicts . . ." (1) of the contemporary life in India. Aravind Adiga criticizes the society through his stories, which focus the attention towards the various ills that plague the country, India. Gross violation of the peoples' liberty and equality, poor-rich divide, corruption, religious conflicts, child labour and utter sufferings of the people are his concern.

The novel *Last Man in Tower* is a copy of the world of Mumbai city as it reflects real events. Adiga follows the concept of realism and presents the life with fidelity. The story begins with Visharam society where all the residents live like a family. There are many characters but it centers around Yogesh Moorthy alias Masterji and his struggles against the changing world. There comes a trial for the peaceful life when the property

developers Dharma Sha is determined to bring the Vishram Society down and replace it with luxurious apartments. He proves as a good businessman by his generous offer to all the residents. Masterji stands as an odd man out by refusing the money offered. As the demolition deadline looms, desires mount; neighbours become enemies and the acquaintances turn into conspirators who lose their humanity to score their pay day. At last his neighbours kill Masterji ruthlessly. Vishram society forgets everything – their humanity, their religion, their fear of god, their life long relationship in order to remove Masterji from their way.

Aravind Adiga clearly paints that the corruption is scattered everywhere. The pathetic man thinks that the world and its people are good, but he faces his end in the brutal hands of the new India that is more materialistic and which thinks in terms of personal development. The ending of this novel is tragic, involving blood, death and extremities of human emotions.

The Vishram society is considered as a miniature of India and it is assumed that the country allows citizens from all the religions to live peacefully. But the miscreant Dharma Sha shatters the unity of the society for his individual gain. Persons like Sha are self-centered and have no remorse for the wrongs committed by them. It is not only the cheap housing society that is being demolished but the values of India that are disintegrating. In this novel, Adiga draws an authentic contemporary picture of Mumbai – the lawlessness, corruption, moral disintegration, greed, wealth and abject misery and the reality of the world where people of integrity and goodwill are almost gobbled up.

Dipanjoy Mukherjee, in the article “Aravind Adiga’s *Last Man in Tower: A Postcolonial Reading of New India*” writes that “The novel can be studied as representing neo-colonialism in which Dharma Shah represents the neo-colonizer who is going to set up a colony in Vishram. The novel explores middle class ethics, the vacuum created by

mis-governance that allows greed and envy to flourish, the bureaucracy that creates the illusion of order and justice . . .”(58). Thus Aravind Adiga’s writings attract the readers who are disturbed by these disconsolate scenes of India. These works are the eye-openers of the Indian society.

The two eminent writers V.S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga commit themselves to explore and represent the Indian societies, which are bound with several intricacies and inconsistencies. As social realists, they write in order to protest irksome realities of social issues that characterize India. The visual descriptions of these authors about India always hit the nail on the head and their central theme is vibrant, pulsating and intellectual.

The attempts of the writers are the systematic investigations to establish the true face of India. The writers seem to suggest that they have to tackle all the burning issues of India through which they try to move India towards the path of progress. Their writings are shown as a crusade for the welfare of the humanity. They lay the foundation for a better social order in which all the strife, misunderstanding, hatred, cruelty, enmity, suffering and injustice will yield a place to the greatest happiness.

To indicate the contemporary picture of India, V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga use their lucid style of writing, figurative and symbolic language through which they come up with their extraordinary mastery in their writings. Naipaul is a writer of brilliant techniques that he uses to transform his travel experiences into texts. His portrayal of hard and harsh facts of life against the background of Indian landscape is a skillful dissection of the real life. Aravind Adiga takes up the epistolary form as an innovative technique in his *The White Tiger* novel. In all his novels, he has used vast animal imagery to portray the inner souls of his characters by giving them animal titles, which can show their animalistic instincts.

The study has been pursued on the thesis statement *Combating Social Issues: A Study on Select Works of V.S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga*. It has dealt about the ugly side of societal problems to show how such problems have created irretrievable predicament to the under privileged Indians. It has been critically and logically analyzed on three different chapter headings. Three works from Naipaul such as *An Area of Darkness*, *India: A Wounded Civilization*, and *India: A Million Mutinies* and three works from Aravind Adiga such as *The White Tiger*, *Between the Assassinations* and *Last Man in Tower* have been selected for the study. The research adopts the methodology recommended by seventh edition of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* for the documentation, quotation and bibliography.

V. S. Naipaul evinces the painful social issues of India in the twentieth-century and Aravind Adiga does the same in the twenty-first century. This obviously shows that India's ailments and sorrows extend in every century without much changes and that nothing is uprooted. It indicates that instant efforts should be taken with deep sense of urgency to exterminate the maladies of India, or else, a writer from the twenty-second century will still have to examine the same issues.

The major objectives of this study are: (1) to explore the similarities of the contemporary issues of life in India as portrayed in the select works of V.S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga (2) to reveal the true melancholic picture of India under social realism through the select works of V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga (3) to indicate how the writers ransack the everlasting sorrows of India which engulf the nation into darkness (4) to represent the writers' anger over the prevalent scenario of the ever-widening gap between the haves and the have-nots in which the financially powerful are the real masters that suppress the downtrodden (5) to bring out the hue and cry of the authors against corruption and its negative impacts in every field and (6) to analyze the observations of V.

S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga on various problems created by caste, religion and culture and to prove that these contravenes are the root causes of the depletion of India.

The study is structured into five chapters. Chapter I “Introduction” records the brief survey of the growth of Commonwealth Literature and it substantiates Indian literature as one of the branches of Commonwealth Literature. It discusses that the Indian writers in English, and mentions the use literature as a powerful protocol to establish the reality of the society. The chapter presents brief information about the penning of V.S. Naipaul, a renowned Commonwealth writer and Aravind Adiga, the prolific Indian writer. The select works of the writers provide an expanded depiction of India and its guilelessness unveil the distress of the nation.

V.S. Naipaul exposes the ills and satirizes the unpopular manifestations in India through the works *An Area of Darkness*, *India: A Wounded Civilization* and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* which offer a realistic picture of the Indian society, culture, politics and economy. His accounts are not merely almanacs of his physical visits; he rather tries with great expectations to find ways to relive his childhood memories of India. Aravind Adiga, gives a sardonic and dark picture of India in his works *The White Tiger*, *Between the Assassinations* and *Last Man in Tower*. The corpus of the select works is highlighted under the writers’ avowal of their similar views on India and its never ending struggles. Social awareness is an understanding of social life, which is the crux of the writings of V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga. Thus in the hands of the two authors, social realism remains a technique by which truth is represented in an artistic way. The writers in their select works focus the ugly realities – the existence of poverty, exploitation of working class, corruption in various fields, tradition and cultural decay, disputes in caste and religion etc. in India and sympathize with the affected poor. The larger canvas of these works discusses the dark and melancholy pictures of the nation.

Chapter II entitled “Poverty: ‘An Inexhaustible Source of Tears’” deals with poverty and its various facets. V.S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga paint the picture of poverty and its dreadful consequences clearly. They infuse all poverty related issues like exploitation, child labour and migration and so on. Their writings give more importance to liberate the sufferers from the clutches of evil forces. They come down heavily on Indian mentality of servitude, which perishes the life of the downtrodden in India. They draw attention to the misery and the weary life of the poor in village as well as in the city.

V.S. Naipaul’s Indian trilogy and Aravind Adiga’s *The White Tiger* and *Between the Assassinations* brilliantly analyse Indian poverty and its aftermaths. For instance, Naipaul’s characters Vasanth and Jivan in *An Area of Darkness* are the clear evident for the quivering poverty of the migrated workers. Debu and Papu, in *India: A Million Mutinies* elaborates the economic crisis of India in which Debu is highly depressed when the poor people are fed by American maize which is the fodder of the pigs in America. Adiga’s protagonist Balram in *The White Tiger* undergoes unbearable pain and sufferings due to poverty. It changes him into a murderer and he loots money from his master Ashok. In *Between the Assassinations* Aravind Adiga through the story of Ziauddin and Soumya proves that undoubtedly child labourers are created by poverty. These writers uncanny evocation of the poverty stricken is undoubtedly a social commentary on modern dichotomies – the rich and the poor found in contemporary society.

Chapter III “Corruption: A Catalyst for Crimes” mainly focuses on corruption, an anti-social practice which prevails in the Indian society from time immemorial, in one form or the other, which corrodes India’s edifice day by day. One of the primary motives of V.S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga is to bring forth the unbridled corruption that exists in India. The authors strongly condemn this contagious malady, which will wipe out the country slowly, since corruption is deep rooted in multiple segments of the society like

politics, security forces, law and order, education and government hospitals. It acts as a catalyst to increase the number of crimes and is a threat and danger to India. The authors convey that the rich encounter corruption, but one has to realize that the poor brethren are the worst affected by such deeds. The rampant malpractices collectively enhance the miseries of poor.

V. S. Naipaul expresses his strong disapproval on corruption that it is a deliberate action of destruction or disruption in which India is trapped without redressal. His characters Patel, a local landlord and the Sarpanch, the village officer in *India: A Wounded Civilization* bear witness for the corruption in government offices; the misdeeds and the malpractices of Judges are brought out by A.S.R. Chari, the Indian criminal lawyer. In *India: A Million Mutinies*, Naipaul records the lust for power in politicians and their corrupt attitudes in politics through the character Prakash, a corrupt politician.

The abominable repercussion of corruption is revealed through Aravind Adiga's characters Balram in *The White Tiger*, Abbassi in *Between the Assassinations* and Darmen Sha in *Last Man in Tower*. They utilize corruption as a lubricant to hide their misconducts. Balram easily sneaks away from the murder case of his master Ashok, Darmen Sha offers a huge amount to vacate a residential society and indirectly encourages swallowing the life of an innocent man Masterji. The character Abbassi confronts various government officers and politicians, those who are in the sole motive of getting bribe to allow Abbassi to reopen his embroidery factory. V.S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga thus show that corruption is one of the serious social issues in India, which deteriorates the justice and law.

Chapter IV "Conflicts: Elements of Fragmentation" presents the observations of V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga on the social tensions in caste, religion and culture which are common and prevalent in the entire nation. The caste-based discrimination

is the most complex one that India faces today. The novelists skillfully portray various complexes created by caste consciousness. To dissect these conflicts and its dreadful consequences, the writers take every effort, skill, expertise and knowledge to find ways for peace and tranquility.

V.S. Naipaul vehemently condemns the caste system as it is a destructive tool to fragment the society. In his exploration, he presents a pathetic picture of people trapped in caste system, which psychologically affects the individuals and curbs their growth. In *An Area of Darkness*, Abhayraj and his brother Charudatt, the higher caste students are separated from Kanakachand, a lower caste boy. In *India: A Million Mutinies*, Naipaul mentions about the horrible death of Dalits who are burnt alive in their hut by the upper caste. Aravind Adiga in *Between the Assassinations* portrays the dismal life of the outcast Sankara, who is shunned and humiliated by the society because of his rank as a lower caste; and the other character Ramakrishna, a Dalit, is mortified and confronts disgrace because of his father's dirty profession of manual scavenging. As outcasts, they struggle to maintain their dignity in the society. The authors insist that these outcasts should be treated as human beings and urge the readers to work towards their emancipation and integration in society. If not, it will cause fissures in society, which has the potential to destroy the social fabric of the country.

V.S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga show their concern towards India's serious and dreadful issue – the religious conflict – a thirst for blood. Both the authors mainly observe the unpleasant relationship between Hindus and Muslims in the country, especially in Bombay, Delhi and Maharashtra. In *India: A Million Mutinies*, Naipaul meets Anwar and Nikhil, who represent the Muslim and the Hindu communities

respectively to get firsthand information about the clashes. Naipaul directly visits the Hindu-Muslim riot affected areas to ransack the root causes for these issues and reveals that the animosity and the intolerance among them are the fiasco for their disharmonious relationship.

Aravind Adiga, in *The White Tiger*, exposes Hindu – Muslim disharmony in Delhi through the life of a Muslim boy, Mohammed, who is forced to change his name as Ram to get a job from a Hindu family. The writer includes many such incidents to bring forward the unpleasant nexus between the two communities. The authors' unadorned portrait of the religious conflicts put forward that these contravene represent the gradual depletion of India.

V.S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga vividly portray the influence of Westernization, which dominates and spoils the tradition and culture of India in every aspect of life. People of the world admire India's rich heritage, customs and culture. But the uniqueness of Indian Heritage is eroded by the influence of Westernization. Naipaul dislikes the Indian mimicry of English. In *An Area of Darkness*, he says Indian people want to resemble English people with their ties, collars and jackets and also change their names as Andy, Freddy, and Bunny. In *India: A Million Mutinies*, Naipaul speaks about Indian's craze of English and English schools.

In Aravind Adiga's novel *The White Tiger*, Pinky, wife of Balram's master, hates the Indian traditional and social restraints and feels that Indian way of living is a deterrent for her freedom. She leaves Ashok and moves to America to have a modern and westernized life. In *Between the Assassinations*, school students watch the pornographic pictures which make D'Mello the orthodox teacher feels that Westernization plays an evil role in destroying India's heritage and culture. Both the

writers, V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga thus stress that people should not let down their own tradition and culture and that Indians have to be proud to be Indians.

Chapter V “Conclusion” deals with India’s tottering life and creates awareness on the appalling condition of the mother nation. It is clear that select writings of V.S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga provide the real paradigm of India and explore its unending distress. Their writings can make any Indian feel devastated through their incisive, unsympathetic and unpretentious portrayal of India. They give a clarion call to the nation to be vigilant against the threats within the country. The study investigates the fact that despite the Britishers’ departure several years ago, India has not overcome maladies like poverty, corruption and caste-based conflicts, which refer to the dark side of India. The study suggests solutions to eradicate these miserable social issues and highlights that it is the duty of an individual to ponder on these issues and contribute for India’s redemption.

The eminent writers V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga assert that India marches towards the abyss and the nation continues to be dogged by deep-seated societal problems. It is covered with laziness, lack of morality and spirituality. Every Indian is responsible for the decay as well as the development of India. It is appropriate to remember the words of V.S. Naipaul who in his *India: A Wounded Civilization* writes that “The youth, the peasants, the working class, all must declare that we will not allow fascism to raise its head in our country. We will not have a dictatorship in our country. We will carry our people’s government . . . This is Bharat. We have our ancient tradition . . . our leaders sought a reawakening” (130). The edifice of India should be nurtured. Every Indian must take an oath and should give assurance for the safety and security of the nation.

Krishna Singh quotes Aravind Adiga's personal opinion in the article "Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger: A Tale of Two Indias*" that

At a time when India is going through great changes and, with China, is likely to inherit the world from the West, it is important that writers like me try to highlight the brutal injustices of society. . . criticism by writers like Flaubert, Balzac and Dickens in the 19th century helped England and France to become better societies. That's why I am trying to do—it's not an attack on the country, it's about the greater process of self-examination. (16)

According to Aravind Adiga, people should have self-examination on the deplorable issues and its consequences of India which should be weeded out. There must be an impeccable and immaculate India for future generation. To achieve this goal every individual must have an intention to have an India without wounds, darkness and mutinies. The major trigger of all these problems is lack of fear of God and immoral behaviours of public and public-servants. People should not bind with the moral compromise at any place and should build the moral stability at any time.

Atulindra Nath Chaturvedi in his book *A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, Scientist and Humanist* highlights the words of Dr. Kalam who reiterates the words of the ancient Tamil poet Thiruvalluar who conveys that "the important elements that constitute a nation are: being disease free; high productivity; harmonious living and strong defence"(63); and he also bears the energetic words of the saintly poet Kabir who said that " what do you want to do tomorrow do it today, and what you want to do today do it now" (63) which elicits the need to take urgent measures to save the nation, India.

Thus the select works of V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga are the marvelous compilation of their powerful thought and show their sincerity and purity of their purpose to save the nation and analyze the eternal struggles and flaws of contemporary India. The sole aim of the research is to reflect the current status of Indian society consistently and proffers hope for the attainment of a promising future to the people.