Themes in Chetan Bhagat Novels

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Introduction:
Literature is a product of society and writers are responsible for reflecting the temperament of their community. A writer is influenced by the conditions of his age in which he is born and brought up. So literature can be understood in its social context only. It can be represented in two ways either in the imaginary form or in the ideal form. The imaginary representation indicates what the reality ought to be while the real representation shows what it is. The former is closely connected with the idealization; with rendering things as beautiful even when they are not. The writer can practice greater freedom in creating characters, events and setting.

The other image which is used in literature is ‘Real image’. The realism is the portrayal of life with fidelity. The real image shows the reality of society with all its shortcomings without any didactic purpose. Realistic works acquaint us with a real picture of society either it is good or bad. Realistic writers do not bother about the didactic purpose rather presents naked reality of the contemporary society blatantly.

Our India is most probably known as ‘Shinning India’ throughout the world but there is also a dark side which is neglected by some writers or politician. Today there is a great awakening and a host of writers, male as well as female, are contributing significantly to life and literature by interrogating and exploring their society and even their own life. Latest to arrive on this horizon of realism is Chetan Bhagat. He attempts to unfold the both sides of our society either it is shining or dark. In his novels, there are different themes related to India. The range of themes is quite wide and varied, and covers temporal and timeless issues. These works were carried by socio- political as well as literary factors. The real writers try to depict the moral and spiritual degradation that harass man in our time problems like loneliness, strangeness from ordinary culture and spiritual heritage, despair and anxiety.

Theme is sometimes used interchangeably with “motif” but the term is more usefully applied to a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit or asserted, which an imaginative work is designed to involve and make persuasive to the reader. A much-discussed topic, related to the question of an author’s assertion and truth-claims in narrative fiction, concerns the part played by the beliefs of the reader. It is universal in nature. It touches on the human experience, regardless of race or language. If a writer sees or believes about the things that most people do in their life, it will be recognise or reflect in the work of an author.

Themes in Chetan Bhagat Novels:
Chetan Bhagat began his journey as a writer in 2004 with Five Point Someone after graduating from IIT Delhi in 1995, and IIM Ahmedabad in 1997. He represents the new generation of writers of Indian writings in English about a mass of people living in highly urbanized settings, enjoying indefinite modern facilities and facing the pressure of hyper fast, competition-oriented life at one and the same time.

The post- modern writers like Kiran Desai, Chetan Bhagat and Arvind Adiga have presented the youth of contemporary era as trapped in the cobweb of meaningless life. The protagonists of their novels are suffering at the hands of modern chaotic life of disillusionment, alienation, loneliness, separation, anarchy, ambiguity and paradox etc. All the protagonists have been totally broken off from the

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spirituality and intellectuality in their day to day life. All the modern characters of Chetan Bhagat’s novels like Ryan in Five Point Someone, Shyam in One Night @ The Call Center, Govind in Three Mistakes of My Life, Krish in 2 States, and Gopal and Raghav in Revolution 2020 are in dilemma, what to do and what not to do, what is right and what is wrong. They all want to live a good life and doing well in their life.

All the novels of Chetan Bhagat’s describe the advantages and disadvantages of the life of rich and highly intellectual. In his novels, the characters which he portrays in a leading role living in major cities of the country are very well aware about corruption in every manner. Chetan Bhagat observes in an interview, “One can make money…… everybody makes money, but the moment one enters into corrupt mind-set; it has dangerous consequences especially in education. If there is corruption in education, one ends up with a whole generation that is not trained properly”.

The themes of all the six novels are based on society. From the novel Five Point Someone: What not to do at IIT, the writer started the movement of the policies of the education in which the semester system proves to be faulty system and for that the three characters of the novel steal papers from the Professor Chirian cabin and caught red handed. Such incidents occur in our day to day life system, so the theme of the first novel is totally associated with the present system of the university exam system. The story is also about college-life culture and can happen anywhere not necessarily in IIT. The story is moving around the protagonists of this trio’s- Ryan, Alok and Hari, screwing the grades at the big time because of their attachment with each other to have a fun and detachment with study. However they swear to reform the patriarchal system of education. The three characters dislike the teaching method, which is as old as the college itself. The students are asked to mug the subjects in order to score good grades. The students are so much overloaded with assignments, class tests, surprise quizzes and major exams that they forget what the real meaning of the life is. Their hostel rooms appear to be like prison cells. Ryan, the real mouthpiece of Chetan Bhagat is the student of IIT Delhi. He criticizes the education system and calls up the spirits of youths. He comments, “This system of relative grading is overburdening for the students. I mean it kills the best fun years of your life? Where is the room for original thought and for creativity? It is not fair.”

This novel also shows that the mind of people is also divided into two different directions. One in which they want to have a place in the global world, and on the other side they do not want to surrender to the system.

Chetan Bhagat by presenting a novel One Night @ the Call Centre raises questions about the advantages and disadvantages of call centres and those who are related to it. Here in this novel the writer depicts one of the bright sides of globalization is that Indian youth are getting good job opportunity in western countries. He also shows the dark side of our society that as a result of privatization in policy, a very few industries provide a job security and exploitation of their employees as well. The book describes a bunch of completely different characters with differing aims and ambitions, and how they pull themselves together and resolves their issues finally Shyam, Priyanka, Vroom, Esha. Radhika and Military Uncle are colleagues in a call center who have a chance to encounter with God. All they have to shed their identity each night and become faceless entitles whose very names are false and assumed. There is one thing of pride that the companies like Microsoft can not think about their business without taking into selflessness the Indian software engineers. On the other hand, an unfaithful husband, a scheming boss Mr. Baxi, apathetic grand children and a forced engagement are just some of their collective problems, and when the gang decides to take some time off work, a freak accident leads to an uncertain situation, and that is life altering. Through the example of Military Uncle, Chetan Bhagat touches the clash between the old and modern with the changing atmosphere. In this novel, there is also a call from God. God tells that although they receive hundreds of calls every day, the inner call is important which they can not hear, “The little voice inside that wants to talk to you. But you can only hear it when you are at piece and then too it hard to hear it”.

Chetan Bhagat’s third novel The Three Mistakes of My Life ironically unfolds some of better truths of human life which is more influenced by passion rather than emotion and ambition. It is a saga of
friendship. The tale of dreaming dreams, the story of chasing the dream. The story revolves round three friends Ishaan, the cricket lover; Govind, the protagonist extraordinary in Maths; and Omi, the son of priest. The novel begins with a prologue in which the characters are introduced. After prologue, Govind begins to narrate his stories which have more facts and fewer fancies imposed on him by his parents and Mama. One of the themes is Love between Govind and Vidya. Govind began to find pleasure in the company of Vidya as he is involved with her, “She kissed me like she never had before. It was not like she did anything different, but there seemed to be more feeling behind it. Her hands came to my shoulders and under my shirt”.

Vidya is also involved in the love of Govind even enough she knows that Govind is his brother’s friend. She even wants to know his role in his life. “yeah, what is your role as my teacher? Teach me how to reach my dreams or how to be drone. The main theme goes around the three mistakes done by Govind. Govind’s lakh investment for a shop in a newly built mall which is minded by the Gujrat earthquake is mistake number one. Govind violating the rules and falling in love with his best friend’s sister is mistake number two and a split second delay from Govind’s perspective in mankind a move which could save Ali from the hit is mistake number three.

2 States: The Story of My Marriage is the fourth novel written by the author Chetan Bhagat, following a story of inters-state marriage in India. This novel definitely gives us cultural shocks. He has touched some of the sensitive issues of cultural differences, father-son relationship, and corporate exploitation. He is of the views that love knows no boundaries, whether it be of caste, creed, religion, states or countries. To some extent, this story seems to be of Chetan Bhagat, but he never claimed it.

Chetan Bhagat said about his new book Revolution 2020, I had started writing my novel two years back. This is a story of Love. Corruption. Ambition. This novel explores the mental and psychological conflicts of three characters- Gopal, Aarti and Raghav who fail to come to the terms of reality. This novel is in fact, a tragic exploration of personal sufferings which arises out of the feverish sensibility of this intellectual that has lost his ways in contemporary India. Varansi where the three young people reside for education is also depicted as a very dominating character that tramps all the major characters by its evil forces. This novel uniqueness lies in the various was in which it is different from other localities, spiritual art is creative through proper selection and ordering of his material, the novel stresses the distinctive spirit of his chosen city and shows that life in its colour.

Conclusion:
Chetan Bhagat’s has a global theme that is the sense of failure to those young people who reach prestigious educational institutions with the high hopes and dreams to equal and surpass the achievements of students in the US and Europe. The mind of people is also divided into two different directions. One in which they want to have a place in the global world, and on the other side they do not want to surrender to the system. In the context of globalization, India has been giving a high priority to stability than to the efficiency. By all this, all his novels embrace human experiences and convey a sense of life and character like a coloured glass. There is no denying fact that Chetan Bhagat in these novels mirror contemporary Indian social-cultural, political, religious and economic structures and sub-structures. But these not only the dominating area there are many other aspects in these novels that presents, philosophical realities of life. Most of these are as man’s struggle to find meaningfulness, satisfaction and peace in life.

The uniqueness of the fiction writer is that every novel is an island in itself. Every novel has its peculiarities that are generic and special. In depth and structure of their novels, are peculiar and some of them can be placed in the highest ranks of the novels of the world? Poverty and suffering had been the two strong factors which dominated the life of people during the twentieth century in India. These two factors which are almost parallel to each-other become the main theme of his novels.
Bhagat’s ironical description in which he unveils the real picture of the world is also praiseworthy. Like his satire on contemporary politics which is now totally polluted by corruption, boastfulness and discrimination and egoism of domination. He also shows how innocent people are oppressed or destroyed by icons of dominating parties in administration.

An analytical study of Chetan Bhagat’s novels suggests that he is a novelist of inner landscape. His main concerns is the exploration of deep recesses of human psyche, going beyond the skin into the constant struggles raging the souls of human being, at the conscious and sub-conscious level and describing the atmosphere of mind. All his characters are constantly struggling either against individuals, against social environment or even against their own inner selves.

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