SYNOPSIS/SUMMARY

The present research makes an attempt to trace the reflections of the prevailing sense of colonial perpetuity, social and cultural predicament and the influence of long-cherished servility in India as depicted in the four selected novels, *English August: An Indian Story* (1988), *The God of Small Things* (1997), *Q & A* (2005) and *The White Tiger* (2008). The present research thus, tries to verify the hypothesis that the Indian society has been in colonial perpetuity as shown in the four selected novels. The novels studied in the research throw up the variegated shades of colonial perpetuity and servility such as *Sahebgiri* in the Indian bureaucratic system, the *Raj hangover* in the post-1947 Indian society, *staunch cynicism* against have nots, *class hierarchy* in the post-colonial *Indian jungle*.

All these shades have been analyzed in the four chapters entitled ‘*English, August*: A Farce on Anatomy and Politics of Sahebgiri’, ‘*The God of Small Things*: A Saga of Raj Hangover’, ‘*Q & A*: Questioning the Colonizing Social System’ and ‘*The White Tiger*: An Onslaught on Colonizing Feudalism’, respectively. Besides depicting these shades the research articulates a few efforts of liberation and decolonization that the Postmodern Indian writers seek to attempt and thus defy the colonial bondage through these novels. Apart from studying the thematic patterns, the research also analyzes the stylistics nuances employed by the selected writers in the separate chapter.

Through these chapters the study aims to address a few research questions posed in the Introductory chapter to test the hypothesis. It attempts to find out whether the people in the Indian society, as depicted in the selected novels, are essentially in constant colonial perpetuity even after having attained political independence. The research also aims at discovering whether there are any efforts of decolonizing the people of the country while resorting to thematic and stylistic defiance in aesthetics.

The present study, however, is not just confined to exploring the factors and phenomena of Western cultural hegemony and Indian servile attitudes. It also seeks to trace the age-old culture of indigenous social and economic colonialism which has been very immanent within the social moorings of the Indian society. Through this study the attempts have been made to trace out phenomena of indigenous feudalism as
well as Western hegemony which keep the people in colonial perpetuity. It explores the facts, circumstances, practices, etc. in Indian social and political history that have shaped the immanence of colonial sense in the minds of the Indian masses. It also traces the streaks of rebellion in writing style in the selected novels against the colonial stylistics.


In the first chapter on Introduction the study especially focuses on the fact how the practice of colonialism, i.e. one stratum taking control on other, leads to formation of an assimilated or coerced culture. The colonizers leave influence of language and culture on the colonized. The difference between the European colonialism and the Mughal and Sultanate colonialism has been brought out in this chapter. The chapter also highlights the fact that the former invaders in India had accepted the Indian culture and settled here, but the British had different purpose as colonizers. More subtle was the purpose of establishing cultural hegemony of the West for perpetuation of indirect colonialism. The chapters brings to the fore how in the selected works the economic and cultural hegemony has been shown to be continuing to reign the third world even after political evacuation of the colonizers.

This introductory chapter also studies how the Post-colonialism emanated from colonialism and continues to exist in the form of neocolonialism which implies the continuing influence of the West in the native countries. The research traces the fact that the European colonizers freed the native countries only politically; while economic and cultural dependence of the colonized countries on the West still continues. Journey of the world literature from Modernism through Commonwealth to Postmodernism has been critically reviewed in this chapter. Structural approach in literature, New Criticism or Formalism, Cultural Studies, Archetypal Criticism etc. also have been studied. Then discussion shifts to an analysis of Postcolonial literature and followed by Postmodern Indian literature. It also discusses how there evolved the
change in trends from colonial Indian literature in English to Postcolonial Indian writings. Since selected novels fall in the category of Postcolonial literature, the detailed biography of each novelist and the story of each novel have also been included in the Introduction.

A close study of the literature pertaining to the concept of colonialism, post-colonialism and neocolonialism has been done for this research. Literature focusing on the anatomy of Indian social and cultural framework, Indian feudal reality, subaltern and Dalit studies in Indian context has also been reviewed. Writings marked with colonial stylistics and rebellion against such stylistics, new decolonizing Indian fiction writings etc. have been taken as the review of literature. Vladimir Lenin and Kautsky, Aime Sessaire, Joseph Conrad, Chinua Achebe, Antonio Gramsci, Frantz Fanon, Jean Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault, V. S. Naipaul, Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Gayatri Chkravorty Spivak, Ania Loomba, Bill Ashcroft, Helen Tiffin, Gareth Griffiths, Meenakshi Mukherjee, Harish Trivedi etc. are the prominent names whose works on colonialism, neocolonialism, Postcolonialism, Indian social system---have been reviewed critically, keeping in view the topic of the research.

Moreover, the Indian social and political history, the facts, circumstances, practices, etc. that helped colonial sense be perpetuated in Indian ways of life in general have been explored in this research. The meaning of colonialism, post-colonialism and neocolonialism etc. have also been taken into study. The present study also investigates into historicity of the practice of colonialism and its shaping impact. It studies the politics of British colonial system, economic and cultural erosion, gradual propagation of capitalism and resultant economic dependency on the West. The chapter also highlights the purpose, coverage, focus, significance, methodology, scope and limitation of the research.

In the second chapter entitled “English, August: A Farce on Anatomy and Politics of Sahebgiri” a critical approach has been employed to trace out continuing British styled bureaucratic hierarchy, its colonizing impact on people and typical Sahebgiri. Typical characteristics, anatomy, politics of Sahebgiri and its influence on the people causing the sense of servility, hypocrisy, cynicism, servitude etc. in them, depicted in the novel English, August, have also been taken into critical purview. The objectivity in narrative style of Upamanyu Chatterjee, the author, in describing the
shades of the sway of bureaucracy has been analyzed in order to define the novel as a
farce on the anatomy and politics of Sahebgiri.

The intended contrast of the misfit protagonist to the colonial type
bureaucratic system has been brought forth critically in this chapter. With regard to
the protagonist, the concept of non-heroic hero has been analyzed. The post-modern
Indian education system consists of the shadows of colonial influence and producing
the servile officers, deep-rooted cynicism in the educated youth, ambition for the
coveted but lifeless IAS, colonial cultural impact in shaping of the mindset, snobbery
and servility to senior officers and bullying attitude for the others, discomfited
demeanour of the subordinates etc., as reflected in English, August, have been taken
into critical account in the light of the anatomy and politics of Sahebgiri. Besides, the
analogy between traditional Indian social class hierarchical system and present day
bureaucratic system, as approached in the novel, has been critically analyzed.

In the third chapter “The God of Small Things: A Saga of Raj Hangover” the
concept and phenomena of Raj hangover in the form of snobbery, obsession to
western ways of living, servility and servitude for anything Western in the novel The
God of Small Things have been critically analyzed. The study reveals how the novel
is a saga of ambitions, aims, fantasies, woes, agony, predicaments etc. in ordinary
lives. The chapter also reveals that the presence of such phenomena causes the sense
of servility and snobbery in the minds of the characters in the novel. The truth about
post-colonial people struck in the situation of in-betweenness, owing to continuing
sense of British Raj hangover and Western cultural and economic hegemony, have
also been brought into focus in this chapter. Prevailing Anglophilia amongst Indians,
as represented by certain characters in the novel, has further been highlighted.

The chapter also brings forth how the people from the colonized countries,
particularly from India, have lost the sense of dignity to their own indigenous culture
and thus suffer from crisis of identity; such Anglophiles are not accepted as equal in
the West while they do not accept natives in India as depicted in the novel The God of
Small Things. The findings in the chapter in relation to the novel also involve how
English language is preferred to vernaculars; anything related to the indigenous is
looked down upon and thus held in lower esteem.
The study reveals how the happenings in the narrative of *The God of Small Things* bring forth the fact of deep rooted snobbery for the Western Ways of life. The novel is an artistic commentary on the misery, angst, agony, predicament, alienation in the lives of ordinary people. Arundhati Roy gets her literary heights in delineating the shades of small things and their importance for the people having small desires and ambitions. Snobbery for the superior West and sardonic attitude to the natives are some shades that the novelist expounds in the narrative in satirical tone. The idea of Western cultural hegemony finds sway in the descriptions of certain caricatures in the novel such as Pappachi, Baby Kochamma, Chacko and others. Extraordinary treatment to Sophie Mol and her mother Margret Kochamma reveals the sorry state of affairs of Indian mentality of high snobbery towards the West. Rahel and Estha are cut down to lower size whenever they are compared to *angelic* Sophie Mol. Pappachi’s passion for his status in society; his British leanings and snobbish attitude are the examples of Raj hangover in India. All such nuances, shades, streaks etc. have been critically analyzed in the chapter.

**Chapter four “Q & A: Questioning the Colonizing Social System”** sets to explore deep rooted cynicism and sardonic attitude of the society in general towards have-nots. In this chapter it has been studied how such an attitude develops owing to complicated Indian social, caste and communal anatomy and politics in the novel *Q & A*. Slavish acceptance of colonizing rituals, the nuances of people being colonized with such politics of social dogmas, as suggested in the concerned novel, have been critically analyzed in the chapter. Communal disharmony causing the suffering to the minorities, social hypocrisy, strong social class hierarchy based on economic status and caste, stigma of child abuse, child trafficking, child prostitution, curse of epidemic only for poor class, snobbery towards the white Western skin and other forms of colonizing system, as projected by Vikas Swarup in *Q & A*, have been taken into extensive study.

This chapter also compares how Swarup’s *Q & A* also becomes the manifestation Marxist point of view regarding the condition of Indian social system, highlighting the suffering of orphan children and the foul practice of child labour. Hollow dignity and insensitivity on the part of the traditional Indian royal families and other such aspects have been taken for exploration in this chapter. Vikas Swarup
in this novel extensively delineates the miserable conditions of the have-nots in the twenty first century India. The protagonist Ram Mohammad Thomas has to be victim of class discrimination and social cynicism owing to Indian society’s typical dogmatic approach in life. What Swarup enunciates in the novel is the slavery of the middle class to the age-old rituals and traditions, deep rooted cynicism and sardonic attitude in general against the poor, high snobbery for anything Western and powerful. This chapter, hence, takes into account the variegated shades of discriminations, feudalistic mindset and the perpetual marginalization and exploitation of the poor as enunciated in the novel.

**Chapter five** “The White Tiger: An Onslaught on Colonizing Feudalism” critically examines the shades of prevailing feudalism such as immanence of neo-colonialism in post-modern twenty first century India. The chapter also explores how the reality of Indian jungle where the savage practice of *might is right* thrives; hierarchy of certain animals in this jungle with the propensity of killing and be killed etc. are the symbolic aspects which have been taken into study to find out shades of slavery in India. The chapter also highlights social division of man in the form of bellied and non-bellied i.e. haves and have-nots, deep rooted slavery among millions of people epitomized in the concept of Rooster Coop as perceived and portrayed in Adiga’s *The White Tiger*. Besides these, this chapter also brings to the fore the roots of feudalism and caste system in India and utter failure of democracy, hollowness of General Elections, feudal *dadagiri* in Elections etc., the aspects delineated by Adiga in this ambitious work. Exploitation of the working class at the hands of feudal landlords, master-servant relationship, cycle of misery and exploitation remaining intact for centuries, yet the ways of liberation from strong shackles for those few who dare, idea of emancipation for dalits---are the points and other shades of colonial perpetuity which have been looked into closely in this chapter.

Having thus explored the thematic manifestation of prevalence of colonial perpetuity the thesis also takes into consideration the stylistic nuances and subtleties in the selected works. Such nuances and subtleties are reflected in the rebellious style and form of these writers as analyzed in the **sixth chapter**. In chapter six “Orchestrating Stylistic Mutiny: Decolonizing the Indian Aesthetics”---the efforts of liberation on the part of the concerned novelists through their unique style and form of
writing have been taken into critical light in detail. Their rebellious style of narrative, unprecedented syntax and grammar, deliberate code-mixing of Indian vernaculars into English and other forms of defiance against stipulated colonial style of writing—have been taken for critical evaluation and analysis. It has also been investigated how these Indian writers form the band of typical Postcolonial writers of the third world countries; retaliate against the imposed colonial forms of writing which were responsible for colonial expansions of imperial powers.

Chapter seven on Conclusion involves comparison of the shades of colonial perpetuity in selected novels. In this chapter the main points and concepts have been discussed. Comparative analyses of variegated forms of colonial perpetuity in the four selected novels have been drawn. Each novel has been critically viewed in comparison to other novels. Phenomena of Sahebgiri and hierarchy in Indian bureaucracy, prevalent Raj hangover such as Anglophilia and snobbery for the English language, class clash and suffering of the underdogs besides slavery to the traditional rituals, novel form of feudalism in twenty first century Indian jungle and practice of might is right, mutiny in the style and form of writing of the concerned novelists etc. have been discussed in context of each corresponding novel.

Thus the whole research establishes the fact that colonial perpetuity is an inevitable phenomenon in Indian social, political, cultural and bureaucratic fabric. It unmistakably establishes how colonialism continues to rules the roost in the country despite it having attained the political independence. The research thus establishes the fact that all the four selected novels turn out to be the quintessential specimen of the phenomenon of colonial perpetuity in the society. Besides there are variegated efforts of the concerned novelists to show the path of liberation for few and to decolonize the Indian aesthetics through defiance in style of writing against stipulated colonial aesthetics and norms.

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