Chapter 6: Conclusion

1. The progress of Indian writing in English

Study of Indo-Anglian fiction is a refreshing experience for me. Writing of the three novelists possesses some common literary features and quite a few uncommon features. Prestigious Booker Prize conferred on them has enhanced the status of the novelists particular and of Indo-Anglian fiction in general. Though Indo-Anglian writing had been more than hundred years old, when the first Booker Prize came its way, it was not fully recognized at the international level.

First thing that I noticed about the three novels is that they have taken a new road in Indo-Anglian fiction. *The God of Small Things* is about the complicated human relations in the world. Pappachi, Mammachi, Chacko, Ammu, Velutha, Estha and Rahel live in the world created by them. Indian family life is disturbed recently by various forces. All except Velutha belong to one family. But each one of them is typically different from others. Chacko hates Ammu and ill-treats her children. Mammachi differentiates between the girl of the house and the boy of the house.

Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss* is about the severe impact of internationalization of Indian society. Many Indians believe that they can achieve much awaited enlightenment and salvation by migrating to America or Great Britain. Inhuman treatment that Indians have been getting in America and England has filled the thousands
of pages of newspapers and literary works. In spite of all this, Indian’s enthusiasm has not waned. Kiran Desai has thrown light on this phenomenon in her novel. Pannalal, the cook sends his son Biju to USA by using unfair means. He thinks that Biju would earn dollars there and return rich to India, which would reduce his burden of living. But all his hopes were crashed and dreams were falsified when Biju returns to his father in tattered clothes.

It also deals with estrangement of human relations in India. One of the serious impacts of British Raj on Indians is that some Indians set their eyes outside India, particularly European countries and America for better future. These people migrated to England and America through the compliance of legal formalities.

Some people however thrust their way to these countries through illegal migration. Anglophile Indians, NRIs and diasporic Indians hated Indians and were hated by British and Americans. Cordial relations hardly existed between the Indians in America and Americans in America. The tension that these pulls and pushes created was transformed into a material for literary creations.

The judge disliked Indians simply because of their identity as Indians. He distanced himself from his wife, daughter and granddaughter. The white-skinned people caricatured him on different occasions in spite of his scholarship. The judge was late to realize the implications of his behavior. Kiran Desai has focused on this aspect of Indians in her novel.

*The White Tiger* is a post colonial novel in real sense. Colonial mentality is characterized by the slavish mentality of the characters belonging to have-not class. Silent obedience, meek sufferings, humiliation and ill criticism are the inseparable experiences of these
people. We find examples of victims from lower caste and lower class in almost all Indian English works. Balram is the first person to revolt against injustice and exploitation. Novel stands out due to this change in author’s point of view.

Indian economy was opened to foreign traders, investors and businessmen since 1990. This naturally had its effects on the social and cultural life of Indians along with the financial matters. Literature is the representation of socio-cultural movements of the country. Indian society became liberal in approach toward each other. New social ethos finds its place in these novels.

New economy has demonstrated ruthless exploitation of natural resources of feeble human beings. Chacko wanted to earn maximum profit through his pickle factory. He therefore resorted to different unethical practices. He made the workers labor more and paid them less. He seduced women. The similar incidents of victimization could be found in *The Inheritance of Loss* and *The White Tiger*.

Previously Indian people were exploited on the basis of caste and gender mostly. Rich people exploited poor people in the past. Today exploitation has acquired one more dimension. Needy people irrespective of their caste have been exploited in the modern industrialized world. Nobody talked about Biju and his father’s caste. People looked at them as the objects of exploitation and exploited them as much as was possible.

We come across the dirty face of Christianity for the first time in Indio-Anglian literature. Roy’s *The God of Small Things* is about the happenings in Syrian Christian family of Pappachi and Mammachi. It is obvious from the narrative of the novel that humanitarian principles like mercy, pity, peace and love have their presence only in
scriptures. We don’t find Good Samaritan in Ayemenem family. Chacko despises not only Parvan Velutha but Christian Ammu also.

It was believed all over the third world countries that globalization and internationalization would redeem the world of petty infights based on caste, region and heredity. The Indian writers in English presented white-skinned characters mostly as beneficial invaders. Bakha’s untouchable caste never came in British man’s way. He touched Bakha as he touched others in the town. Rukmanihad special place in Dr. Kenny’s heart in Kamala markandaya’s Nectar in a Sieve. Writers wrote about the divide between lower caste persons and upper caste ones. Even Gandhian Moorthy was guilty of this weakness. When he entered Pariah quarters, he felt uncomfortable. Point is that Indian writers in English looked at European characters as the benevolent human beings. It was Roy who attacked phony religiosity of Christians in this novel.

Another effect of internationalization of human beings, which was ignored by the advocates of free economy, was that the Indian poors are exploited by the western industries also. Previously such under privileged people were exploited only by rich people and feudal lords in India. But globalization, instead of relieving them of their trouble, has added further difficulties to the existing ones. Cook stayed at the judge’s residence for many years. I am sure Biju, his son would also have been given accommodation at one place or the other in the same house. His migration to America proved wretched and demoralizing for him.

Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Arvind Adiga got the Booker Prizes in 1997, 2006 and 2008 respectively. It will be early to say that Kiran Desai and Arvind Adiga could not
publish significant works after the Booker, though Kiran Desai’s Booker is now six years. But one cannot help saying that Roy should have published noticeable fiction by now. It did not happen primarily because she diverted her energies to socio-political issues in India and abroad. She is now known more as an activist for social justice than a literary artist.

It is also possible that the Booker Prizes have put additional premium of expectations on these writers. Readers expect works of equal standards from the writer ever after. Lurking fear of failure may have kept them from publishing. Same cannot be said about Nobel Laureates because Nobel Prize for literature is given towards the fag end of their career as writers.

Study of Indo-Anglian fiction brings to our notice that the novels of the initial phase were written to serve the larger social interests like the eradication of inequality based on caste, economic conditions and gender. Some critics condemned it as propagandist literature. But it was wrong. Indian people were divided into various groups. Literature helped them come together.

Novels like *Untouchable, Coolie, Nectarin a Sieve* attracted the sympathetic attention of the readers to the poor lower caste people. There was a time when the novelists started writing on freedom movement and religions unity in India. They tried to bridge the gap between Hindus and Muslims in India. Some women novelists also voiced their concern over the condition of women.

The three Booker Prize winning novels changed the direction of Indian English fiction a bit. They cover large literary grounds. There are two remarkable things about these
novels. First is narrative technique, second is the use of English language. These novels
do not tell the stories in linear way; neither do they use famous flashback technique as a
fashion. *The Inheritance of Loss* brings with the judge’s retirement, *The White Tiger*
opens with Balram Halwai’s elevation to the position of entrepreneur at Banglore.*The
God of Small Things* opens with description of Ayemenem House. Other events are
revealed either through description or through dialogues. They come forward in a natural
course of action. That is why they appeal to the readers. Old novels were filled with
incidents that looked like patches. Writers of such novels seemed inserting their views in
the narrative. The three Booker Prize winning novels seem ‘character’s novels’, in a sense
story blossoms through their actions as a flower comes out of a bud.

Talking about the difference in the use of English in the novels belonging to the first
phase and the three Booker Prize winning novels, one thing strikes out clearly. English in
the three novels is colloquial. It flows naturally not as much through their pens as through
their mouths. Linguistic distinguishes between sentences and utterances. I am tempted to
say that the three novels have utterances.

The three novelists switch and mix codes in such a way that even when English and
Hindustani come together in one sentence, they seem to come from English. English in
India was a foreign language for a long time. Indian writers who wrote in English up to
seventies of the last century had learned it through books and through universities. They
got to England as educational tourists. Naturally their English was bookish. Case of
modern writers is different. Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga have spent
considerable time of their youth in England and America, the home of English. It will not
be exaggeration to say that England and America are their second homes. As a result,
their English comes from different socio-economic groups in those countries. English is not imposed on them; it is part of their linguistic behavior.

The same can be said about the readers. Modern education system and development in technology have brought readers of the different nations close to each other. Indians, who relished didactic tales and moral stories for a long time, changed their attitude to literature. They began to look for innovations in narrative techniques, characterizations and language. Writers tried to cater to the changing tastes of the readers.

2. The three Booker prize winning novelists are worth critical study

The author of *The God of Small things* received widespread accolades and it was credited with a lot of positive reviews on a global platform. Social evils like the caste system were dealt in wide aspect. Following quotation summarizes the point:

> “Little events, ordinary things, smashed and reconstituted. Imbued with new meaning. Suddenly they become the bleached bones of a story””(32)

She stresses the point that all the small themes are interconnected in this novel. It is a passionate descriptive and narrative work where love and emotions are the binding force. *The Inheritance of Loss* shows the dehumanizing effects of class system. In the fun and free flowing romance, Gyan and Sai tend to break this through the temporary bond of love which existed between them. Class divide was very much prevalent. Their views were not taken into account. The following quotations shows the contrasting worlds of Sai and Gyan:
“They were no longer relevant to each other’s lives except for the hope that they would be relevant...the sick sweet rotting mulch of the human heart.”(232)

The third novel *The White Tiger* by Arvind Adiga is a story of modern India. It reflects the journey of an individual from a dark background to a wealthy entrepreneur. His experiences are the main theme of the novel. It could be referred to as a novel which in broad terms is the eye opener for India. We could say this is the novel where all the issues from democracy, religion, culture to caste, class and globalization are covered. In short it covers a wide spectrum. Following quotation summarizes it all:

“See, the poor dream, all their lives of getting enough to eat and looking like the rich. And what do the rich dream of? Losing weight and looking like the poor.”(225)

3. The three novels have a close link with the changing world in view of globalization

Globalization and acculturation go hand in hand. Globalization means opening of trade opportunities to foreign hands by providing excellent infrastructure and concessions in exports, tariffs and import duties. The term is connected with the social, cultural, economic and political setup of a place. In short it can be defined as the merger of the national economies with international economies through capital flows, direct capital investment etc. The term also refers to the transnational dissemination of ideas, languages and popular culture. The United Nations says globalization is a widely-used term that can be defined in a number of different ways. The dawn of Globalization has drawn prominent authors to write on this topic. They reflect on three areas whether globalization
has been good, bad or intervals. As far as research is concerned, we need to understand it in terms of evolution, characteristics and its origin from an Indian point of view. The greatest loophole associated with globalization is that only a few variables have been considered and many are left out untouched.

We live in a world of interdependence where goods, services, information and money are all interrelated. This is generally referred to as globalization. The operating forces of a business beyond the social boundaries do not exist in social set ups. The term globalization is a replica of the modern times. It describes the social, economic and political system of a country. Some believe Indian culture and rituals are all under threat with the ever increasing pace of globalization. Western culture has stamped its authority at an alarming pace. It has disintegrated and lead to the decline of Indian culture. The impact of globalization on culture and literature is quite significant in the world of Information Technology.

Globalization has left its mark on literature too. Initially the literature had an Indian flavor to it but with the emergence of western culture and advent of globalization on a large scale there is a remarkable transformation in it. Colonialism and English rule slowly and gradually led to the erosion of the traditional broad based Indian values. One of the greatest positive aspects of globalization has been the rapid strides made by the publishing industry. To a larger extent globalization is embedded in the literary works. Literature is considered from a global perspective. Globalization has a huge impact in thinking across one’s own cultural barriers and political boundaries. The phenomenon hastened the process of merging various identities with the influx of marketing cultures in the recent era. Sujata Bhatt who was born in India moved to US at the age of 12 and
married a German. In her works three worlds of Indian, American and European flavor are found. *Brunizen* (1988), *Monkey Shadows* (1991) and *The Striking Rose* (1995) are three of her works which depict different cultural setups.

The three novels under the focus of this thesis have a direct bearing on the history of India. It is a matter of great privilege that all the issues which have been plaguing the Indian society for long, like the caste system, sexual exploitation, superstitions, and feudal system are covered in details. With the advent of globalization, there has been a considerable change in the patterns and thought process of the people from third world. Point is that the culture of a place also changes with globalization.

Globalization has high stakes in the context of Arundhati Roy. *The God of Small things* has a huge share of autographical context. Kerala as a state is the home to four major religions. The state has a history of Marxism with strong bonds of the caste system at the same time. With the advent of globalization women in Kerala can go abroad to work and earn a handsome pay packet. They have to pay a hectic sum to get married and the relations with their husbands are the most bizarre. The tense relationship between husband and wife is a matter of concern for social workers.

*The Inheritance of Loss* raises major questions relating to poverty, cultural dictatorship, ethnic tensions and gender discrimination. Globalization comes within the radius and circumference of these issues. The life of Biju from a village boy to the frontiers of the developed country of America are depicted in details. All his hopes are dashed when he confronts the real situation as an immigrant.
*The White Tiger* depicts the corruption and injustice in globalized India. The term darkness can describe the narrow lanes of the rural villages and blatant village life. Balram writes a series of letters to the Chinese Prime minister stating the drawbacks of investing in India. It is a modern outlook on globalization with a unique language and narrative script.

4. The three novelists have large acceptance in the literary world of today

As a writer Arundhati Roy shot to fame immediately after her first work was published. She is also one of the well known critics in India. She could also be termed as a fearless activist. Such has been the influence of the writer that her essays are published all over the world. She draws a larger base in India and has written in Hindi also. She works for the uplift of masses and fights for the common men. She is present for social justice from Kashmir to Narmada. She is known as fearless person in the political circle of India. As an author she has the honors of making the Anglo-Indian style of writing accepted in the literary world outside.

Kiran Desai as a writer had a history of being the daughter of Anita Desai which means she was exposed to the sphere of writing from her early days. Her works generally deal with the globalization, multiculturalism and terrorism. Her works are accepted on a wide scale in the western world as people tend to relate easily with them. The author has a knack of relating the past to the present which very few writers in the present generation possess. All the fundamental feelings like love and emotions are generally reflected through her work.
The third author Arvind Adiga is credited as being the second youngest writer to win the Booker Prize at the age of 33. He is a master of narrations which blows the waves of breeze of the readers in a big way. He is known all over the globe. His works basically focus on the highs and lows of the Indian economy keeping in view the feelings of the middle class. English literature has grown in the last decades and all these writers have a huge share in taking Indian literature to a global level.

5. Indian literature in English has now crossed Indian boundaries and needs to be studied with a new perspective

Indian writers like these three are taking precious global prizes. Indian literature in English like British literature, American literature and African literature is one of the leading literatures in the world now. Indian literature in English needs to maintain its standard with a new perspective in order to be worthy of such global credits.

Indian literature in English requires a lot of critical standards have grown leaps and bonds in the last decades. When the acceptance factor in any domain increases, it becomes mandatory to prescribe certain standards. Evolution of Anglo-Indian literature parallel to the classic literature has been one of the main features of Indian literature. Indian writers in English try to add Indian flavor to their English with Indian terms. This seems to be the positive point. With regards to the Indian critics they don’t go beyond a desired point. The Anglo-Indian literature belongs to the privileged urban class of Indians and is practiced by universities belonging to the elite class. So one may think Indian society is ignored and neglected.
Coming to the writers who have won the Booker Prize, they are basically Indian born writers and have had hands on experience with life which has helped them in a big way. These authors basically relied on textuality and firm rootedness in their works. For example *The God of Small Things* portrayed the entire landscape of Kerala. All the three authors have dealt with various themes which have been plaguing the Indian society for a long time. With the evolution of these authors Indian writing in English entered a new phase. The Indian authors are in great demand the world over. English writing has been taken to a new level and the upkeep of it is very necessary for the modern writers.

6. Final notes about the 3 novels and novelists

*The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy deals with the themes and phases of the caste system and untouchability and the feudal system in general, and how small things can have a total outcome in the final scheme of things. Love and emotions are the governing forces in this novel. In the second novel *The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai, the isolation, domination of old values and traditions are the central forces. Globalization has also been touched upon. The third novel *The White Tiger* deals with the class struggle and how the rich continue to be rich and the poor tend to be poor.

All the three novels have conveyed the meaning in the proper manner and there is no doubt that all of them are worthy of the Booker Prize. These three works share personal experiences and feelings of the authors. That brings them close to reality.

It is observed that globalization and colonialism are closely related and are interconnected. The British East India Company was founded in 1600, with the sole
objective to achieve commercial gain. It slowly became a British hub of imperialism in India. The globalization era started long before that India got its independence and traces of it can be found as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century where tea and other manufactured commodities were exported through the vast network of Indian railways between the routes of Asia and Britain.

Another factor is the tea production. *The God of Small Things* writes about the commercial aspects of tea and takes us to the city of Assam. The workers in these plantations were the subjects of all kind of exploitation, even sexual one. The fact is though China ruled the roost in those days, India continued to be the largest producer of tea.

*The Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai begins with the story of a young girl and her modest and lonely life. Sai’s love for her tutor Gyan is never understood by him as he is an insurgent of the Gorkha movement. A victim of globalization is Biju who tries to settle in the United States of America. The notable feature of this novel is that all the characters suffered in some form or the other. The novel portrays terrorists’ activities in the north eastern part of India. It is also observed that Indians desire to go abroad at any cost and face the immigration hassles by any means. Biju confronts the illegal issues. The author tries to explain the pitfalls and loopholes associated with it in a great deal.

The third novel in spotlight is *The White Tiger* by Arvind Adiga. The author belongs to the younger generation. The burning issue is the acceptance of global economy by India and its adverse effect on the poor people. In fact this is one of the best novels on globalization. The novel refers to the modulating tensions between the superpowers, India
and China. Balram writes a letter to the prime minister of China ascertaining him not to enter into any ties with India. Ashok who comes to his own motherland, is fed up with the widespread corruption. One can draw a comparison between Ashok and Biju. When Biju came back, he found it hard to accept the reality of life in his motherland.

Balram throws a lot of light on the outsourcing aspect. He refers to it as the phenomenon which is about to shake the world by storms. It is true to a large extent. We are witness to this fact in recent times in our real life. Balram feels that it is necessary to share information to achieve the path of economic success. With regards to this issue, he quotes examples of IBM and Dell.

The thesis was undertaken to understand the evolution of Indian literature in English over the years. The analysis of three major works by eminent authors has enlightened me on many aspects of India, Indian people and Indian literature. Finally let’s finish the thesis with:

“Yesterday’s regret and Tomorrow’s hope is Today’s Opportunity”.