Chapter 8:
Conclusion
A strong guiding principle of democracy is political equality. The Indian society has been inherently entrenched with inequality in terms of caste and gender. The diversities in religion, castes and regionality were often used to play politics strangulating the common man. India had ushered into dynastical rule after independence. The reasons for this can be attributed to the love for retention of power and the lack of rational spirit among people.

Another remarkable feature of Indian democracy has been its adult franchise for its citizens. There have been no prerequisites or qualifications required to contest elections. The dynastical regime had led to concentration of power and had failed to provide even basic facilities in both urban and rural India resulting in ongoing poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, parochial identities and abuse of power in the form of Emergency. This was due to the indifference of the policy makers and the confidence that India lacked due to the absence of strong opposition party which could replace the dynastical regime. All these factors have been contributing to the anguish of the general public. It has been sad that the elected representatives are not working satisfactorily for attaining the goal of Welfare State. Every law is having loop holes and due advantage is taken by the policy makers like the practice of untouchability is a crime but it has been still followed in a subtle manner. People are thus made pawns at various levels of the political system.

The present study has tried to explore how the political system makes a pawn of the common man through the analysis of the selected postcolonial Indian English novels and hence it is titled, “People, Pawns and Politics.” The study has focused on the helplessness and sufferings of the public and the novels chosen for the purpose of analysis are Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*, Nayantara Sahgal’s *Rich Like Us*, Rohinton Mistry’s *A Fine Balance*, Upamanyu Chatterjee’s *English, August* and Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss*.

Political themes in the selected novels had the time span ranging from late sixties to early eighties which has covered the major post – independence political and social events like National Emergency, wars with Pakistan, China and Bangladesh, assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Naxalite movement in the North – Eastern states, functioning of bureaucracy and illegal immigration. The attainment of independence in 1947 had led to fresh challenges and added responsibilities. During the first twenty-five years of independence, the nation was confronted with such burning problems and traumatic experiences as to put its inner strength, its talent and its spirit to a severe test. The first
painful experience after independence was that of partition and the problem of integration of more than five hundred princely states, which had become technically independent. The political map of the country was further re-drawn with the creation of linguistic states in 1956. The study has focused on the political events after the end of this phase and its effects on the masses. This time span was chosen for the study as it signifies the end of one political era where one generation of rulers who were freedom fighters was replaced by the next generation of rulers. Nehru’s death had ended an era in Indian politics. With this began the dynastical rule in Indian democracy. The symptoms of today’s chaos in the Indian politics could be attributed to the National Emergency declared by Mrs. Indira Gandhi where we find the abuse of power and criminalization of politics.

Within the chosen time span, the study has spatially covered the three continents Asia, America and Europe and mainly has dealt with Mumbai, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Madna, Kalimpong, Delhi and the rural interiors of India. This has given a wider perspective to the study. Also the study has shown that people in general are exploited universally and are victimized everywhere no matter which part of the globe they belong to.

The early Indian English novels had concentrated more on freedom struggle and social themes in the pre – independence period like Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura* and Mulk Raj Anand’s *Untouchable* but after independence slowly the political system has undergone a change. Indian psyche was used to slavery and colonialism rather than democracy. Adoption of the Parliamentary system of democracy had led to initial problems for Indians as now they had become governors from being governed. And maybe the early politicians were not cognizant regarding how to wield the newly acquired power. This phase in the Indian politics was interesting and the selected novels have depicted this phase of the working of democracy in a developing country like India. The euphoria of idealism had slowly declined and things were falling apart. The dynastical rule in democracy was creating hurdles in the welfare of the masses.

Indian English literature was perceptive enough to portray this phase of Indian politics. The novelists have depicted the continuing corruption, inefficiency, poverty and misery of the people caused due to the twisting of the system. They have depicted man’s desire to gain control over each other’s freedom and existence. People in governance have become indifferent to social welfare, brotherhood and common good for all. This has developed apathy in the minds of people towards politics and politicians which was seen in the political novels of the Indian English writers. The plight of the public was that they
were first exploited by the Britishers and now by their own people.

What has made this study different is that many researchers have explored literary theories but one has hardly used the parameters of Constitutional provisions to the works of literature and has checked its practical implications to Indian democracy. The special contribution of the study is that it has applied Constitutional provisions to selected works of literature and has analyzed the effects of the distortion of democratic principles and provisions.

The thesis has put forth the hypothesis that there has been exploitation of masses at various levels i.e. physical, economic, social and psychological. In *Rich Like Us*, we find the beggar is dragged to the van going for the sterilization camp. Also we find physical exploitation of Om and Ishvar in *A Fine Balance*, where they forcefully have undergone vasectomy operations. Dina has carried out economic exploitation of Om and Ishvar by paying them less than they deserve. Dina’s psychological and economic exploitation is done by her brother, Nusswan and the Landlord. Social exploitation in the form of inhuman atrocities levied upon the untouchables is found in *A Fine Balance*. Also Biju has been exploited economically and psychologically in the US in *The Inheritance of Loss*.

The First chapter ‘Introduction’ has dealt with the rationale of the study which has stated how the common man becomes a pawn in the hands of the political system with the help of the analysis of the selected novels. This chapter had put forth the methodology for the analysis of the selected novels which was using the relevant Constitutional provisions as parameters for the analysis of the selected novels. For this purpose, the Constitutional provisions and laws like the Directive Principles, fundamental rights and duties, Public Service Commissions, provisions for the North Eastern states and reservation policies were used. By analyzing the selected novels it was found that there has been a wide disparity between theory and practice of the Constitutional provisions and laws which have been a major source of problems for the citizens.

The chapter also concentrated on the working of the Indian democracy. As the study has dealt with the theme of how politics makes a pawn of innocent people, it was essential to measure the abuse of the system in the hands of politicians which has tormented the masses. Though the system has been ideal in its written form, when it comes to implementation, it was twisted for the benefit of the few rather than the common welfare of the masses. In this way, the system and laws also got exploited. This chapter had taken
into consideration the various Constitutional provisions to show deviations and abuses of these provisions and the wide disparity in theory and its practice.

The Second chapter ‘Postcolonialism and The Development of Political Novel in Indian Writing in English’ had done a brief survey of postcolonialism in India as the selected novels belonged to the same period. Postcolonialism was explored as the selected novels have exemplified theories of colonialism. We have found in the novels decolonization of language, manner and lifestyle itself. In Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss*, the effect of politics and the policies was seen on the psychology of people. The tribal culture has been looked down upon by the foreign infiltrators which has developed an inferiority complex in the minds of the tribals and they got easily exploited. The tribals were not given their due right to government jobs and admissions in educational institutions to keep them backward. Due to this, the immigrants have smartly kept the tribals ignorant and have claimed their own culture to be superior. It has been a sort of neocolonialism which has affected the psychology of the natives and they have rebelled through Naxalite movements.

The common man has been facing economic and religious problems because of politics and the ambitions of politicians. This was explored in Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*. We find that the character of Saleem’s grandfather had a lot of impact of colonialism on him and considered his Islamic culture to be inferior to the colonial culture. He did not allow fanaticism to be practised in his family and was not rigid about the religious practices. He wanted his wife to study Western education rather than getting education of religious scriptures from a ‘maulvi.’

We find Salman Rushdie has been rewriting history of India in *Midnight’s Children*. He gave an account of the freedom struggle, partition, reorganization of states on linguistic basis, wars with Pakistan and Emergency since he wanted the world to know Indian history from the perspective of an Indian and not what was merely put forth by historians.

Salman Rushdie has done experiments with English language. His use of language in *Midnight’s Children* is a kind of creation and blending. Strategies like, the yoking together of Hindi, Marathi, Urdu or Gujarati words with English ones such as ‘doctrin-attaché, dugdugee-drum, chik-blind, dia-lamp, defiant use of vernacular words
without glossary, ‘ekdum, angrez, nasbandi, dhoban, zenana, ooper neechay, sarpanch, crorepati, ayah, nibu – pani, khichri etc. Arbitrary joining of words to form comic polysyllables ‘overandover,’ ‘suchandsuch,’ ‘birthanddeath,’ ‘blackasnight,’ ‘almostseven,’ ‘nearlynineold,’ ‘whatdoyoumeanandhowcanyousaythat,’ godknowswhat,’ etc.

We also find language being used innovatively by Upamanyu Chatterjee in English, August. His language has flexibility of expression and minute observation that go together with his symbols, similes and images. Some of the expressions used in the novel are:

“… thoughts that scurried in his mind uncontrollably, like rats in a damp cavern.”

“… office – goers hanging out of the door like tongues out of canine mouths.”

“… the Supply Officer … smelt like a scented eraser out of geometry box …”

“… the woman was some kind of whore, as loose as a tooth about to fall…”

and “as pleased as pimp.”

Along with innovative techniques in using English language, there was a focus on gender issues in the selected novels. We find in Nayantara Sahgal’s Rich Like Us the female characters like Rose, Sonali, Mona and Nishi were persuaded to accept the patriarchy and atrocities of Emergency. They become in a way subaltern where there was double imposition of sufferings first, as a women, they were considered inferior and then they suffered the violence of Emergency. Thus the Second chapter had highlighted the impact of colonialism on the selected postcolonial novels.

Also the chapter had taken into consideration how the genre of political novel in Indian English literature had evolved. It had unfolded the political background of India and had traced the development of the Indian political novel in English and the various phases it had passed through in terms of the thematic concerns. It had thrown light on the dominant ideological influences of each phase, the political movements at different stages and the way they had affected the lives of the contemporary masses.
To observe the time chronology of the selected novels as per the progression of the political events, the individual analysis of the novels was done. The national Emergency was a dramatic shock to the Indian democracy. In fact, democracy had turned to autocracy. It was surprising that the daughter of the first Prime Minister of India and a freedom fighter took such a harsh step like Emergency just to protect her political power. Emergency had shattered the very foundations of democracy. This is the reason why three novels were selected for analysis based on Emergency. The three novels i.e., Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*, Nayantara Sahgal’s *Rich Like Us* and Rohinton Mistry’s *A Fine Balance* were selected on Emergency as they show different aspects of Emergency. Salman Rushdie had used Emergency as a backdrop; Nayantara Sahgal had a feminist and an insider’s approach whereas Rohinton Mistry had a diasporic approach with a focus on rural politics and hardships of metropolitan life in Mumbai.

The Third chapter, The Fantasizing of Democracy—Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children* had a bigger canvas as the writer had explored the political events from 1915 to 1977. It was found that there was a focus on the effects of Emergency on the middle classes of urban India. Saleem had witnessed and participated in the major events of the modern Indian history. He was in fact as Rushdie said, “handcuffed to history.” When Mrs. Indira Gandhi, had decreed that due to Emergency all the Midnight’s Children must be sterilized, Saleem was castrated. The motif of retention of power had affected the other characters in the novel like Padma, who had lost her magical powers.

For the analysis of this novel, the Constitutional provisions of Emergency (article 356) and right to freedom and equality (articles 14 to 22) were used. There was no breakdown of constitutional machinery as per article 356 still Emergency was imposed to safeguard power. We find that neither Saleem nor the other characters in the novel had any right to freedom or equality during Emergency. The Midnight’s Children were locked up all of a sudden one night and were physically tortured so that they lost their special powers and were no more a threat for the absolute authority of the Prime Minister. The fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution were suspended and there was an abuse of the system. Out of fear and insecurity, the Prime Minister had levied atrocities on the Midnight’s Children. Saleem kept moving to different nations against his wishes due to political will thereby signifying that the public had no right to article 19 which has stated that the citizens of India had the right to move freely throughout the territory of India and to reside and settle in any part of the country.
Indian Constitution has adopted secularism. This novel has helped to prove that the fragmentation of the Indian society, the confusion of social, religious, regional and parochial identities was used as a weapon to victimize the masses. The chapter arrived at the findings that Saleem had become the symbol of the universal little man who became, becomes and will always become prey of great events like wars, violence, riots and partition of the country caused by the political will. He is helpless to fight against the system and this had lead to suffering and tragedy.

This chapter had asserted that there is a limited choice for an average little man and he is a pawn everywhere. Saleem, the symbol of the human spirit, had retired to the privacy of a retired life. He was no longer an integrated personality and this suggested bleak vision of the future and defeat of the human spirit at the hands of social and political situations. He has been an archetype of the common man and finally gets defeated. This chapter proved that like Saleem, the common man’s life has been affected by various political events in one way or the other. The sufferings of the common man were ignored and his voice was always suppressed but still he has been dragging on his life facing hurdles and challenges daily with a new vigour and zeal.

The positive aspect of Saleem’s personality was that his spirit was not crushed. Like a phoenix, he has risen back to life to narrate his experiences to the reader. Similarly, the other Midnight’s Children had also survived the setback of losing their magical powers. Padma now was the companion to Saleem and has assisted him in his narration. Life had returned to normalcy after Emergency. Saleem has packed up his story into thirty chutney jars to hand over history - making to the next generations. He had wisely left one empty jar - the future chutney– because the subsequent generations of Midnight’s Children will determine how it all turns out. The chutney jars have represented the history of India affected by the politics whereas; the empty jar has been signifying the future politics of the nation.

The chapter has shown that due to Saleem’s castration, even basic human rights like that of procreation were denied during Emergency out of fear and insecurity of the Prime Minister. The entire generation of Midnight’s Children had begun life with lots of aspirations and optimism but they suffered with the nation due to wars, the emancipation of Bangladesh, Emergency etc. Inspite of the sufferings they were optimistic about future even when democracy had turned to almost monarchy. In monarchy, a single individual has all the power and is most of the times selected through hereditary factors. It was Mrs.
Indira Gandhi ruling single-handedly and a new era of dynastical rule had begun as she had declared her son, Sanjay Gandhi to be her political heir.

However, Saleem was hopeful about his son’s Emergency generation and knows that it will not tolerate atrocities because right from birth his child, Aadam was reacting to the happenings of Emergency. He hoped for a better future of his child. Salman Rushdie has been however optimistic about democracy and India’s political future. The title of the novel symbolically has represented the post-independence born Indians questioning their fate in free India. Each of us has been carrying in us the traits of Saleem who has been full of aspirations and dreams of living in an independent welfare state where its citizens wished to live a life of security and satisfaction. It has been a matter of time that the dream of Midnight’s Children will be realised.

The Fourth chapter, The Other Side of Emergency - Nayantara Sahgal’s *Rich Like Us* has shown the effects of Emergency on the upper middle classes and the rich classes. Also she had a feminist approach and so has focused on the sufferings of the female characters.

For the analysis of this novel, the provisions of Emergency and civil service conditions were found appropriate. Article 309 of the Indian Constitution has specified the ‘conditions of service’ for the civil servants. It has stated that demotion is a punishment for the malpractices by bureaucrats. Whereas, Sonali was demoted as she was unable to accommodate herself to the new requirements of Emergency. Rose had accepted her husband’s first marriage, Mona his second and her great grandmother had submitted to death in the form of ‘Sati.’ Ram’s paralytic condition has symbolized the policy paralysis of the government affairs and the nation itself during Emergency. There has been an uneven division of power between the sexes. It has shown how politics of Emergency had encroached on the right to life and security of women. The beggar was ruthlessly driven to the sterilization van against his wishes which has shown the violation of article 19. It states that under the right to equality, no one can exploit or harass others.

Removal of economic inequality, avoiding centralization of wealth, abolition of Zamindari system, removal of poverty and unemployment have been the objectives of socialism mentioned in the Directive Principles. No discrimination can be made on the basis of religion, race, caste, language or sex. One wonders whether all these provisions
had really been implemented when one looks at the plight of the crippled beggar.

We find through Sonali that the civil servants knew it was no Emergency but no one dared to protest and if one protested, one would get punished like Sonali under article 309. She has suffered at multiple levels as she gets harassed as a bureaucrat, as a woman and as a common citizen. A civil employee of the Government is guaranteed the protection of fundamental rights in the articles 14, 15, 16, 19, 20. In her case, fundamental rights were flaunted and denied. The judiciary and legislature had lost their powers due to the provisions of Emergency under article 353 (b) which meant the legislature had no right to make laws.

This chapter had established that Emergency was the result of the degradation of moral values among the politicians, civil servants and people at large after Independence due to which the society suffered. Each and every character had become a pawn at the hands of either politicians or bureaucrats. The chapter had ascertained that though women and the poor and helpless people like the Beggar were worst sufferers during Emergency, it had affected adversely even the rich classes and intellectuals like ruining of businesses, intellectuals imprisoned and caused irreparable damage to their very existence like Kishori Lal, Sonali, Rose and Ravi had faced substantial loss in their lives.

Emergency had affected everyone even senior politicians and freedom fighters like Jaya Prakash Narayan was imprisoned and treated badly in the prison. Inspite of all these odds, the novel has ended on a positive note. Sonali faced the injustices bravely and it has symbolized that the Emergency will end after all. Significantly, the novel concluded with Sonali studying the history of seventeenth century Indian art as a way of retaining her inner harmony during the period of Emergency. This could be interpreted as escapism from reality since during Emergency everyone was trying to escape from the truth that it was no Emergency at all but a fake demonstration of Emergency. Everybody has the freedom to find peace and even Emergency had not trampled this right. Sonali found it in ancient art, Nishi in flattering the Prime Minister and supporting her husband and Rose in helping the limbless beggar. System had not crushed the spirit of the people.

The chapter proved that Sonali has been an epitome of hope in the novel who symbolized that a good change was at hand. It was strange that the Prime Minister being a lady, did not sympathise with the plight of Sonali but was punished severely. Ravi who had
enthusiastically joined the band of political crooks realized that he was used as a puppet by
the politicians. With this awareness, he realized that supporting Emergency was unfair.
The result was he fell from power. Thus there was a hope for the bureaucracy too that it
would help in the survival of democracy eventually.

Though Rose was killed silently, individual resistance has surfaced. Sonali
has helped the beggar to safety and has provided artificial hands. The limbless beggar has
symbolized the democracy in India which had become handicap during Emergency. The
beggar getting arms suggested that Indian democracy has been vibrant and will not remain
handicap forever. Kishori Lal had refused to leave the young communist boy in jail; people
had begin to make an effort to revive personal dignity. The picture was not totally bleak.
The young communist boy in his play has referred to the Prime Minister as a fascist which
was true upto some extent as she had crushed every existing or possible opposition to her
absolute authority. Fascism believes in one leader system, only one political party will
have a hold on all citizens and this was happening during Emergency with Mrs. Indira
Gandhi ruling and Congress party had become all powerful. Some of the characters like
Sonali, Ravi and Kishori Lal were making an effort to change the situation and find feasible
solutions to the problems. This approach to the past and the present highlighted the fact
that the spirit of India cannot be compressed by trials like Emergency and India would
rediscover its richness and legacy.

In the Fifth chapter, Struggle for Balance during Emergency - Rohinton Mistry’s
*A Fine Balance*, there was a diasporic approach towards the effects of Emergency on the
lower classes, rural India and its interiors and the worst sufferings of the common man in
a metropolitan city like Mumbai. The novel has shown that Dina and Maneck from the
urban elite higher middle class and Ishvar and Om from the rural lower middle class have
suffered equally in the rural as well as urban India.

For the analysis of this novel, the framework of Constitutional provisions of
Emergency and special provisions of Scheduled Castes and Tribes (articles 330 to 340)
were found suitable. It states that they had been conferred special rights like not only
reservations but also separate Commissions to ensure that no injustices would be levied
upon them. Through Ishvar and Om, we got an insight into rural India and have come
across the atrocities committed on the untouchables through the story of the family of
Dukhi. His entire family has brutally suffered at the hands of the upper class people like
Thakur Dharamsi who inflicted inhuman atrocities. Due to the character of Thakur, we have come across the farce of elections where the votes for the entire village were cast by his men which has reflected one of the drawbacks of adult franchise. We find untouchability practiced in rural India inspite of the laws forbidding it. The chapter has proved that the deprived classes suffered eternally with or without political events like Emergency. For them, everyday was facing an Emergency in various dimensions. It is sad that inspite of the various welfare provisions, their sufferings have no end. Obviously, they have been the most adversely affected ones.

Dina, Maneck, Ishvar and Om were robbed of their accommodation, financial independence and identity itself during Emergency. Already caste – stricken, Ishvar and Om moved around Mumbai like mongrels in search of bread and butter and accommodation. They have lost the freedom of settling and right to work and earn during Emergency. They have represented the hardships of common man in a metropolitan city like Mumbai during the fateful times of Emergency where democracy had almost turned to autocracy. Autocracy is a political system in which one person has all the political powers and his decisions cannot be challenged. Every person in the country has to obey his orders. Same were the circumstances during Emergency. Mrs. Indira Gandhi had to be followed unquestioningly.

Ishvar, Om and Saleem from Midnight’s Children and the Cook from The Inheritance of Loss all belong to the lower middle classes. They had experienced various versions of exploitations due to politics irrespective of their religion, class and castes. Ishvar and Om have suffered due to Emergency, poverty and casteism, Saleem’s participation in various political events including Emergency has led to misery and the Cook has suffered due to insurgency and poverty. Though the methods and sources of their exploitations differ, their lives have got ruined.

This chapter has proved how Emergency had paralyzed the lives of people and has trampled the principles of democracy. The chapter arrived at the findings that even right to a decent living was snatched during Emergency. Ishvar and Om had become beggars and Dina had become a maid servant at her brother’s house. Om and Ishvar could not go back to their native village as they would again suffer the woes of casteism. They were unable to have a decent living in Mumbai. Life had become stagnant for them due to Emergency. The chapter has highlighted that due to political events like Emergency, people had lost their dignity to live as human beings becoming either beggars like Ishvar and Om,
maids like Dina or committed suicide like Maneck.

What is remarkable is that all the characters in the novel have been trying to resist Emergency in their own way. None of them has given up. They were fighting for their survival during the dreadful times of Emergency and its aftermath. Only exception was that of Maneck, who was sensitive to Avinash’s death and has committed suicide unable to see the shattered lives of his dear ones. Though Dina had become a maid servant in Nusswan’s house, she shared the same bond of affection of the good old days with the tailors and her troubled soul has found consolation. The tailors turned beggars have been struggling for their survival and are satisfied with their lot. Bal Baba had set up an ashram and had become a spiritual ‘guru’ and had several followers to his credit. The slums have settled again. Emergency has ended and democracy was back with a new government. Life is in motion inspite of several hindrances and Emergency had not completely crushed the faith of people in democracy.

The Sixth chapter, Illusion and Disillusion of Power of Bureaucrats in Postcolonial India – Upamanyu Chatterjee’s English, August has described the experiences, beliefs and attitudes of Agastya Sen, a trainee bureaucrat, who stands as a contrast to Sonali, also a bureaucrat in Rich Like Us. He was completely disillusioned due to the corrupt administration of bureaucracy and has lost his zeal to work. He could not bring about any positive change in the bureaucratic culture. He found his superiors dominating subordinates.

Bureaucracy is a part of the political system and fresh bureaucrats like Agastya had become pawns in the hands of the corrupt system. He wanted to use his position to better the life of people but has many constraints which disallowed him to do so. A good example of this was the way Agastya was discouraged by his colleagues and superiors from his visit to the drought - stricken tribal village, Chipanthi and take remedial measures. Public has been deprived of the various welfare schemes and provisions designed for their benefit.

When Agastya and Sonali from Rich Like Us were compared, we find that both were bureaucrats who suffered due to different circumstances. Sonali has suffered due to Emergency whereas Agastya has suffered because of administrative constraints on bureaucrats. Sonali suffered differently being a woman but Agastya too had to put up with the system though he is privileged to be a male in a male dominated culture. We find the
system has been affecting everyone irrespective of class, position and gender.

For the analysis of this novel, the researcher had used the guidelines of the Constitutional provisions of bureaucracy (articles 309 and 312). These provisions have declared the bureaucracy to be separated from the legislature so that the bureaucrats would serve all the governments impartially and were treated with justice as far as the terms and conditions of their services were concerned. We found that Agastya and his bureaucrat colleagues were pressurized by the politicians and had limited rights. Also the bureaucrats instead of serving the people had exploited them physically and financially. This tendency was found in the bureaucrat Gandhi, a forest officer, who had tried to rape a tribal woman and his hands were cut off by the tribals.

We also come across the attitude of the politicians towards the development of the tribals who wanted to keep the tribals underdeveloped thereby ensuring their vote banks. The chapter has arrived at the conclusion that vote banks controlled the welfare state. The politicians had the power to make policies and most of the times they lacked vision and rational thinking. Since there has been no prequalification for holding power, the ministers have been using the bureaucrats to implement even unfair policies. The educated bureaucrats have become helpless before the politicians. This is one of the demerits of adult franchise. This chapter has ascertained the fact that the common man and bureaucrats have been equally victimized and have been suffering silently due to the system which spares none. Bureaucrats too have been a part of the corrupt system. Various incidents in the novel have shown the corrupt nature and self-centeredness of bureaucrats like Srivastav who have been using public money to organize family parties and lunches.

The novel has displayed a contrast to the irresponsible attitude of the bureaucrats with that of the selfless service to humanity by Baba Ramanna. Agastya visited Baba Ramanna’s Home meant for lepers. He was stunned to see the devoted service offered to the outcasts like lepers. He was surprised to know that the Home didn’t accept any government aid but worked independently and efficiently. He realized the value of serving mankind. He returned from the Home peaceful, firm and with a conviction to carry out his duties sincerely. The visit imbribed positive values in Agastya and somewhat cleared his disillusionment for his job. There were tribal leaders like Rao who worked selflessly for the upliftment of the tribals. These elements inspired Agastya and he tried to lessen the troubles of his block as a BDO. We found him to be a reformed person towards the end of
the novel. From a sullen, brooding and nostalgic individual, he had become a duty-conscious and optimistic individual. Through Agastya and his journey from misery to happiness and peace, the writer has shown the brighter prospect for bureaucracy and after all everything is not bad with bureaucracy. There is still hope left due to bureaucrats like Agastya. The chapter has proved through Agastya that even if the circumstances and system has been unfavourable, willingness and efforts put in for the betterment of public lives can yield fruitful results. What has been lacking was the desire and selflessness in imparting one’s duties honestly for the benefit of the masses. The ‘who cares?’ attitude of bureaucracy has been harmful for the welfare of the masses.

The Seventh chapter, Conflict of Interests: Personal and Political – Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss* has highlighted the problem of insurgency, Naxalite movement in the North-Eastern states and illegal immigration. It has proved how in the post-colonial situation, the marginalized or the oppressed have become the aggressor through the plight of the natives of North Eastern states. Looting and rioting had led to a lot of confusion and total chaos.

The chapter has arrived at the findings that GNLF was the result of disillusionment of inefficient governance. The fruits of democracy and development had not reached the North Eastern states since it is remote, inaccessible and cut off from the main land. The colonizers had always imparted the North Eastern states an independent status and the demarcation of boundaries was ambiguous. To add to the troubles of the natives there, Black laws were imposed upon the people when they have declared Areas as Distributed Areas such as the Armed Forces (special powers) Regulations of 1958, Northeast Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1972 etc which empowered an Army Havildor or Corporal to shoot to kill or cause the death of any person in the name of maintaining law and order, even if there were no facts to prove that the person was breaking the law, only on mere suspicion, without being questioned in any court of law. This has snatched away the liberty, security and peace of the natives. The military and police took undue advantage of these privileges to trouble the innocent natives which resulted into the formation of organizations like the GNLF.

Though the GNLF has represented the oppressed Indian Nepalese, it has not hesitated to create expatriate-like situation for people who had come from different regions and had settled down at Kalimpong for many years. Father Booty had to forcefully return
to his native country inspite of living for decades at Kalimpong. Besides being assaulted both physically and mentally by the insurgents, people at Kalimpong were brutally attacked by the police during insurgency. When the judge lost his dog and went to the police to register complaint, he was not entertained and neither was shown respect for his privileged position of an ex – IAS officer. The chapter has proved that movements like GNLF were a result of a long negligence towards the sufferings of people. Though organizations like GNLF were voicing their demands, they too were not devoid of selfishness. They exploited people and have ruined the lives of natives there. Common man has no one to adhere to his demands and sufferings.

The judge was victimized by the system in which he was working both in the pre independence phase as well as the post independence phase. He was not welcomed by the Britishers being an Indian and he was unable to identify himself with the native Indians. This was the effect of colonialism on him. Sai had become a pawn in the hands of Gyan who used her to loot Cho Oyu. He had been unfaithful to her. Her grandfather maintained a safe distance from her so she got no love and affection from anyone. The Cook, Pannalal was used by the judge to serve him for a meager salary and Biju too has used his father to migrate abroad in search of greener pastures. Therefore we find that all the inhabitants of Cho Oyu and the residents of the North - Eastern states had lost their identity and had been adversely affected by the insurgency. Thus they have justified the title of the novel by being inheritors of loss. The chapter has highlighted that the residents of Cho Oyu were already affected by insurgency, police and military atrocities and Naxalite movement and lack of love and affection in their lives had made their very existence meaningless.

Overall, the novel has truthfully described the hardships of the characters at the hands of GNLF, police and the administrators in general. For the analysis of this novel, the Constitutional provisions of the North – Eastern states (sixth schedule, paragraph 20) were found applicable. The provisions imparted the tribals the status of autonomous districts and reserved forests, inheritance of property, protection of marriage and social customs. We find that the tribals were robbed of their ancestral lands and culture and were forcefully converted to Christianity thereby losing their native culture. The illegal infiltration has been dominating the North – Eastern states by having their own people in government jobs, contesting elections and their representatives formulating new laws in favour of their own people. The natives were deprived of their rights and culture which had driven them
to become Naxalites. The nation has become independent long back but the North Eastern states did not become independent.

Through the character of Biju, we had come across the painful experiences of illegal immigrants in an alien land. In the post-colonial era, people from colonized countries have been facing terrible hardships in a developed nation like US which is a land of liberty. The chapter has proved that discrimination was a universal principle of playing politics. No matter, where one goes, one suffers due to various subtle versions of politics.

The analysis of this novel has shown that due to insurgency and illegal immigration, the lives of the common man had become pathetic and miserable. As soon as Biju returns to Kalimpong, he fell into the hands of the revolutionary members of the GNLF who have robbed him of everything he had brought from America. Despite shame and humiliation, he felt immensely happy to unite with his father. The love and affection that Biju and the Cook shared moves Sai deeply.

However, lives have been flourishing in the lap of Kanchenjunga. The Cook and Biju with their union were going to face life in new dimensions. Sai has represented a new age and a new dawn amidst conflicting identities. Everything was not lost. Gyan too has realized that the GNLF movement lacked sincerity and decided to quit it and begin life in search of new avenues. The judge was satisfied with his own way of life. Thus all have marched towards the future with expectations of new and better things discarding their agonizing past.

The thematic preoccupation of all the writers under study was identical but versions were so unique and different which displayed their genius like the portrayal of Emergency was done differently by Salman Rushdie, Nayantara Sahgal and Rohinton Mistry. They have depicted the agony and plight of the common man, a pawn and victim in the game of politics.

By analyzing the effects of various political events presented in the selected novels of this study, the researcher has arrived at the findings that the masses are weak and are used as pawns by the rulers and the governance system. The study has strongly proved that politics makes or mars the lives of the common man. Though the Constitution is ideal, there are loop holes in its implementation and the policy makers have taken advantage of it like the misuse of the provisions of Emergency. Even in a democratic system, people’s
voice has been suppressed. Politics itself was the main force and had become a protagonist in the selected novels. We find politics was used in various dimensions in the novels. Emergency and its effects were seen on various classes, gender and castes in Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*, Nayantara Sahgal’s *Rich Like Us* and Rohinton Mistry’s *A Fine Balance*. Negligence and unwillingness of the system was the basis for playing politics in Upamanyu Chatterjee’s *English, August*. Discrimination and injustice was the source for politics in *The Inheritance of Loss*. No matter what was the form and source of exploitation through the twisting of the political system, the common man has been suffering universally.

While going through the political events and its effect on the lives of people, it was found that it revealed the negative as well as the positive aspects of our society as a nation. It has been one of the strengths that the Indian society has tremendous capacity to come out of the most traumatic crisis like partition, Emergency, foreign aggression etc. It has tolerated pains and shocks and has returned to normalcy soon again. This capacity to rise again after a setback has kept the Indian society breathing in spite of constant attacks for over two thousand years. This was because of the psychological toughness as well as the flexibility on the part of the society. Also the strong will of the people has led to the survival of democracy enduring several setbacks endangering its existence. Though India is a developing nation, its democracy has been flourishing inspite of being in its initial stages.

Within fifty years, India has faced partition like situation in Kashmir, Kargil war, demand of independent state, corrupt politicians, fastest growing industrialization etc and the leaders and the bureaucrats are indifferent to the problems of citizens. Some people have been at a loss to discover what they stand for, what they owe to others and the nation like the terrorist organizations or the Naxalites who have been misguided by some who take advantage of their plight.

Today it is remarkable that there has been a creation of general awareness of rights and powers of the common man. So the injustices levied on them have been revolted upon in some way or the other. This has got reflected in the selected novels too like the tribals beat up and cut the hands of the forest officer, Gandhi in *English, August* has been a glaring example of the awareness of power among the masses.
The selfless and dedicated political leaders who had fought for India’s independence and worked for the upliftment of the poor and glory of the country were either dead or had been replaced by few opportunists who cared more for their own vested interests. Even under the self – government, public exposure of the acts of corruption and various secret happenings going on in the corridors of power had been of utmost concern to the masses as all these were directly related to their lives. The common man has been exerting his power to overthrow the corrupt government. We find people have been slowly dictating the governance and have become harbingers of revolution by pulling down the dynastical rule in India. People have now handed power to Bhartiya Janata Party in a hope to bring a change for the better.

One finds politics has been governing the lives of people irrespective of caste, class, religion or gender. Everyone has been suffering due to politics and at the same time is a part and parcel of politics. Thus presently, the political system of India is in a state of redefining itself. There is a rise of Aam Aadmi party where the common man is actually participating in the political system. Sufferings of decades have led to this new move and the nation has been leading towards a vibrant democracy. There is a slow emergence of the democracy of the people, by the people and for the people.

This study has opened up many areas for research since there has been no fixed framework of the working of the political system. The political system has always been in a flux. No man made system can be perfect so political framework keeps changing to suit the changing needs of the people as they are at the centre of governance no matter which form of government a nation has adopted.

This study has concentrated on very few provisions of the Indian Constitution and its effects on the masses. Many more are still to be explored. Also there is not much organized work done in this area. Infact it is very fascinating to see how politics has been affecting one and all inspite of the differences of caste, class, gender, religion etc and this had created an interest in the researcher to explore the study area.
References


