

CHETAN BHAGAT: THE PROPHET OF “HEAVENLY SPARKS”

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ABSTRACT

Chetan Bhagat is one of the most influential authors in Indian English writing arena who is called the biggest selling English language novelist in India's history by recreating the zeal for reading novels among Indian youth. He has been considered a youth icon rather than just an author due to his interest in choosing themes and issues highly associated to youth and his zeal to simplifying the language really used by the youth in such global world. Coming from the lower middle class family and working as an international investment banker in the leading bank he himself has experienced the journey of an Indian youth. Like them he has gone through the desire of fulfillment of great dreams, the pain of failures, joy of achievements, grief of not reaching to the expectations of parents, struggle against contradictory social values and revolt against dichotomy of Indian society. Being a youth icon he not only hears this “eternal note of sadness” of Indian young generation trying to prove itself ‘survival of fittest’ but he also presents his own way of resolving the problems of human life, such as, the fragmentation of human personality, mechanization of human emotion and commercialization of human relation. In this paper I am interested to analyze Bhagat's taking up these challenges in his novels, specially *Five Points Someone*, *2 States* and *Revolution 2020* and his proposed optimistic solution in form “saving heavenly sparks” for overcoming “four thunderstorms that will threaten to completely put out the flame, namely, disappointment, frustration, unfairness and loneliness of purpose.”

KEYWORDS: Youth Icon, Globalization, Prophet, Heavenly Sparks, Post Colonialism, Otherness

INTRODUCTION

An overview of Indian history under British rule brings an idea that one can perceive a rhythm or a pattern in all those territories of human life that have been affected by the difficult passage from colonial subjection to political independence. First we felt the shock, the trauma of conquest, a stage of demoralization and mute acceptance of the alien rule. Then came the period of slow awakening, the sense of hurt and shame and resentment, and also the desire to imitate the rulers and adopt their language, their manners and even to some extent their religion. Then the slow stirrings of dissent and the rumbling salvos of revolt, eventually independence at the cost of partition of the country came in slow pace. However, no one can deny the fact that the British rule had also brought with it to India the English education and renaissance in literature. English literature became a means for Indians of giving form and utterance to the hopes and despairs, the enthusiasm and apathy, the thrill of joy and the stab of pain in the nation's history as it moves from slavery to revolution, from revolution to independence, and again from independence to the tasks of reconstruction involving further experiences of success and elation or futility and failure (Kaur, 2012: 103). According to M.K. Naik:

“Thus the Indian ethos gradually underwent a sea-change from the shock of defeat and frustration and the trauma of inferiority to a new found self-awareness and self confidence.” (Naik, 2009: 37)

After independence Indian English writers employed the literature as the means of reformation in Indian society and further tried to find out their own ‘space’ in the ‘centre’ going against the well-established phenomenon of ‘otherness’ and marginalization of East by West. This concept came to be known as post colonialism. Che Guevara projects the value of post colonialism for newly independent colonial countries proclaiming, "The final hour of colonialism has struck, and millions of inhabitants of Africa, Asia and Latin America rise to meet a new life and demand their unrestricted right to self-determination." (Guevara, 1964) Even Bell Hooks does not hesitate in saying, “Post colonialism is an intervention. A message from that space in the margin that is a site of creativity and power, that inclusive space where we recover ourselves, where we meet in solidarity to erase the category colonized/colonizer. Marginality is the space [site] of resistance. Enter that space. Let us meet there. Enter that space. We greet you as liberators.” (Hooks, 1990: 152) Mbembe finds it gives him "hope in the advent of a universal brotherly community" (Mbembe, 2008:2). Salman Rushdie celebrates post colonialism by remarking in his collection of Essays, *Imaginary Homelands* that the imperial sun has set. (Rushdie, 1991:129) The Ivoirian novelist Ahmadou Kourouma had employed the solar metaphor in his novel *The Suns of Independence* in order to describe decolonization. (Kourouma, 1981)

Hardly we finished celebrating independence and had the time to reterritorialize our imagination by narrating the identity crisis we had had to face as young and sovereign nations that we are confronted with another phenomenon which overwhelms us due to the “fundamental disjunctures between culture and politics” it provokes, i.e., globalization. (Doré, 2011:1-2) Globalization itself is viewed as a form of American imperialism by authors like Arundhati Roy, who sees therein the domination of multinational and private companies, (Doré, 2009: 79-90) and Samir Amin who looks at underdevelopment as a corollary of the accumulation capital on a global scale. (Amin, 1976) Contrary to Arundhati Roy who sustains that the British Empire has morphed into an Anglophone one, (Roy, 2004: 141) Amitav Ghosh discerns in the war in Iraq not the trace of a new American empire but, “a new phase in the evolution of the most powerful political force of the last two centuries, namely, the Anglophone Empire.” (Ghosh, 2005: 28) Thus globalization has been projected as the promotional plank of consumerist economy and found a permanent place in Indian English Fiction, sometimes as a literary entity and sometimes as an indecisive force in life of human beings. Indeed fiction, being the most powerful form of literary expression today, has acquired a prestigious position in Indian English literature. It is generally agreed that the novel is the most suitable literary form for the exploration of experiences and ideas in the context of our time and Indian English fiction has been completely successful in illustrating present day scenario in hands of Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh, Arundati Roy, Arvind Adiga, Kiran Desai, Chetan Bhagat, Amish Tripathi, Ravinder Singh and other compus novelists.

DISCUSSIONS

“Give me some sun shine, give me some rain, /Give me another chance, to grow once again.” This poetic expression is not only a true lamentation of a heart-broken student over orthodox methods of judging a student’s skill by Indian education system at present from a Bollywood film *3 Idiots* based on Bhagat’s best-selling novel *Five Points Someone* but also a clarion call of “quality assurance” by globalization in social, political, economic, cultural, legal and psychological fields of Indian society. As in this film an engineering student commits suicide due to being unable to perform at the expectation of his professor who is result oriented, orthodox, devoid of innovation and without any

emotional attachment and humanistic approach. In my opinion the globalization is like above mentioned professor who concentrates on efficiency, quality, achievement and physical development without any inner intellectual upliftment and moral responsibility. Globalization has worked on society as double edged sword in its impact. Relaxation in the political barriers across the globe to facilitate the trade and effective interaction in various spheres among nations may be called as globalization (Paliwal 2010, p. 20). With it the world, as a whole, has become a social space. It basically emphasizes on efficiency in social, political, cultural, economic and psychological ambiance of human beings but in course of this impact, it brings rat race competition and desire to get maximum at any cost, even, at the cost of strongly human values. The world has changed into a barren ideological entity whose picture has been created by W. B. Yeats, a modern English poet aptly in his poem *The Second Coming*:

“Turning and turning in widening gyre,
 The falcon cannot hear the falconer,
 Things fall apart. The centre cannot hold;
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
 The blood-dimmed tide is full, and everywhere,
 The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
 The best lack the conviction while the worst,
 Are full of passionate intensity” (Yeats: 140)

T.S.Eliot, the most influential poet, dramatist and critic of the modern English literature has begun his epoch making poem *The Waste Land* with a mythological allusion to convey his picture of modern man’s self-destruction. According to this Greek myth, Sybil at Cumae, a woman of prophetic vision was granted immortality by pleased Apollo on her plea but she forgot to ask for perpetual youthfulness; consequently she became fragile and decayed as much as enough to be changed into a thing of captivity in a cage by children. On asking, “What do you want Sybil at Cumae? What do you want? (Eliot, 1922: 202)” by them she answered, “I want to die. I aspire for death. (Eliot’ 1922: 202)” Like Sybil at Cumae modern man have been facilitated with “immortality” by magic of science, ‘the modern Apollo’ but in this process we have forgot our natural existence and spiritual interactions with Nature. “Getting and spending we lay waste our powers, / Little we see in Nature that is ours; / We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!”(Wordsworth, 1798: 239) We are caught into a narrow lane of ‘living death’, boredom, emptiness, hollowness and claustrophobia- an extreme fear of being in a small enclosed place.

In such scenario of 21st century in India there comes Chetan Bhagat who has taken globalization face to face in his novels to show demeaning and deteriorating impact of it on humanity in general and on Indian young generation in particular. An alumnus of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi and Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad and being himself the product of this throat cut competitive world he had gone through the heat of ‘bloodless murder of creativity” in this techno-based mechanized ultra-communicated globalised world. He realizes the need of rekindling “the sparks within us that makes us feel alive.” In his novels- *Five Points Someone*, *One Night @ the Call Center*, *3 Mistakes of My Life*, *2 States* and *Revolution 2020* he broods over globalization-drawn crisis among Indian young

generation in particular and humanity in general. Like Wordsworth he hears oftentimes “The still, sad music of humanity, / Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power/ To chasten and subdue” (Wordsworth, 1798:45) which “brought /Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow /Of human misery” (Arnold, 1995). He not only hears this “eternal note of sadness” (Arnold, 1995) of Indian young generation trying to prove herself ‘survival of fittest’ but he also presents his own way of resolving the problems of human life, such as, the fragmentation of human personality, mechanization of human emotion and commercialization of human relation. In this paper I am interested to analyze Bhagat’s taking up these challenges in his novels, specially *Five Points Someone*, *2 States* and *Revolution 2020* and his proposed optimistic solution in form “saving heavenly sparks” for overcoming “four thunderstorms that will threaten to completely put out the flame, namely, disappointment, frustration, unfairness and loneliness of purpose”(Bhagat, 2008: 2)

Once in a speech meditating on reasons of decreasing happiness from human life in spite of achieving materialistic properties he opines that lack of spark or excitement is the real cause behind human misery. According to him when people whose spark has faded too much are dull, dejected, aimless and bitter” (Bhagat, 2008: 2). So there is need of saving “Heavenly Sparks” to retain and maximize bliss of human life. In this reference Chetan Bhagat seems to have Words worthian approach. Like Wordsworth he compares the spark to be a lamp’s flame which must be nurtured and protected against storms of life. On one side Bhagat’s *Five Point Someone* is study of monotonous, result-oriented and mechanized Indian Higher education system which produces only such generation that is full with “doubts, disputes and distractions” struggling to reorient itself and gain harmony between mind and heart while on other side *Revolution 2020* is outcome of Bhagat’s anger and anguish against aimless Indian higher education system, corrupt political system, greedy administrative and beaurocratic officials and totally commercialized social structure which compels to be demoralized and devalued to be in race of the world. Even Bhagat’s *2 States* is an apotheosis of his combat against orthodox Indian social structure where inter-caste marriage is taboo even in 21st century. The most striking feature is that Chetan Bhagat does not only criticize these problems but comes with brighter hopes of optimism in form Ryan in *Five Point Someone*, Raghav in *Revolution 2020* and Krish in *2 States*.

Five Point Someone – What not to do at IIT! is debut novel (2004) of Chetan Bhagat. It is one of the highest selling English novels published in India and remained on the bestseller list until now since its release in 2004. The novel is set in the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, in the period 1991 to 1995. It is about the adventures of three mechanical engineering students (and friends), Hari Kumar (the narrator), Ryan Oberoi, and Alok Gupta, who fail to cope with the grading system of the IITs. Ryan is a bit smart and outspoken, whereas Alok and Hari are mildly cry babies. The three hostelmates – Alok, Hari and Ryan get off to a bad start in IIT – they screw up the first class quiz. And while they try to make amends, things only get worse. It takes them a while to realize: “If you try and screw with the IIT system, it comes back to double screw you.”(Bhagat, 2004) Before they know it, they are at the lowest echelons of IIT society. They have a five-point-something GPA out of ten, ranking near the bottom of their classes.

This novel illustrates how students waste their opportunities in college years if they don’t think straight. Through the story of three friends, the novel describes various facets of IIT life – the academics, the professors, campus life and the rat race to get better grades. The author is more concerned about what to do after getting admission into an IIT than the admission process itself. He points out that getting into IIT is not all that difficult as is made out to be. As he puts it, “If you can lock yourself in a room with books for two years and throw away the key, you can probably make it here.” (Bhagat, 2004)The book brings out the sheer brilliance of IIT students in a very subtle way. One professor mentions, “The

definition of a machine is simple. It is anything that reduces human effort. So, see the world around you and it is full of machines.” (Bhagat, 2004) A student, Ryan asks: “Sir, what about a gym machine, like a bench press or something? That doesn’t reduce human effort. In fact, it increases it.” (Bhagat, 2004) The professor does not know how to respond. People who have studied in IITs know how students can pose fairly challenging questions based on their common sense and without any prior knowledge and unsettle teachers in the class.

Again, when a professor asks students to design a car jack to lift the chassis in case of flat tires etc. Ryan draws a ‘modified screw-jack,’ in which one does not have to open manually and raise the jack. A flat tire does not mean the engine has failed. Hence once can attach a motor on the traditional jack and hook it up to the car battery. If one switches on the car ignition, the motor car derives power. Ryan is very happy with the design. But the professor finds it difficult to accept this original thinking. The conversation proceeds as follows:

“What is this?”

“Sir, this modified screw-jack, it can be attached to the car’s battery...”

“Is this an electrical engineering class?”

“No sir but the end need is the same...”

“Is this an internal combustion engines class?”

“Sir but...”

“If you don’t want to be in my class or follow my course, you may leave.” (Bhagat, 2004)

This example shows that many professors at the IITs are totally unequipped to handle the brilliant students who study there.

The limitations of IITs are brought out vividly in a get-together involving students. Ryan remarks, “You know guys, this whole IIT system is sick. Because, tell me, how many great engineers or scientists have come out of IIT? I mean that is supposed to be the best college in India, the best technology institute for a country of a billion. But has IIT ever invented anything? Or made any technical contribution to India? Over thirty years of IITs, yet, all it does is train some bring kids to work in multinationals. I mean look at MIT in the USA... What is wrong in the system...? This system of relative grading is overburdening the students. I mean it kills the best fun years of your life. But it kills something else. Where is the room for original thought? Where is the time for creativity? It is not fair.” (Bhagat, 2004) The mice race competition is intense in the IITs. The pressures which the IIT grading system puts on students are captured in one professor’s remarks at the end of his class: “Best of luck once again for your stay here. Remember, as your head of department Prof Cherian says, “The tough workload is by design, to keep you on your toes. And respect the grading system. You get bad grades, and I assure you – you get no job, no school and no future. If you do well, the world is your oyster. So, don’t slip, not even once, or there will be no oyster, just slush.” (Bhagat, 2004)

At the same time, there are some professors who are different and whom students adore. The heroes of the book never miss the fluid mechanics class in the fourth semester and the reason is Prof. Veera, who is completely different. He is twenty years younger than other Profs. No more than thirty, he comes dressed in jeans and T-shirts, which bears his US university logos. He holds five degrees from top universities – MIT, Cornell, Princeton etc. He carries his CD player with

him, and after class, he plugs it into his ears before he leaves the classroom. Prof. Veera makes it clear that he likes students who can think creatively and put the principles taught in the class into practice. Ryan builds a special relationship with this professor.

Ryan comes up with the Mice Theory to explain the problems in the IITs: "This IIT system is nothing but a mice race. It is not a rat race, mind you, as rats sound somewhat shrewd and clever. So it is not about that. It is about mindlessly running a race for four years, in every class, every assignment and every test. It is about mindlessly running a race for four years, in every class, every assignment and every test. It is a race where Profs judge you every ten steps, with a GPA stamped on you every semester." (Bhagat, 2004)

It is in the last part, that the book really comes alive in the traumatic final year which includes disciplinary action against the heroes of the book, Rayan, Hari and Alok for trying to steal an examination paper. There is an attempted suicide by Alok. But all the problems fortunately get sorted out. Finally, the time has come to graduate. In a dream sequence, one professor accepts the limitations of the grading system while making his convocation address:

"Once upon a time there was a student in IIT. He was very bright, and this is true, his GPA was 10.00 after four years. He didn't have a lot of friends, as to keep such a high GPA, you only have so much time for friends."

"This bright boy thought his classmates were less smart than him, were selfish and wanted to make the most money or go to the USA with minimum effort. And many of his classmates did go to work for multinationals and some went abroad. Some of them opened their own companies in the USA – mostly in computers and software."

"The bright boy stayed behind. Because he had principles he did not want to use his education for selfish personal gain. He wanted to help the country. He wanted to do research and he stayed back at IIT. Of course, getting a research project approved in IIT was not easy. The boy still kept trying but apart from being a professor, there was not much he could achieve here. Ten years passed, when his friends from college visited home. One of them had a GPA of seven points something, and he had his own software company. The turnover had reached two hundred million dollars. Another friend was heading toothpaste MNC, and came in a BMW. But even this did not bother the principled bright boy. The professor mentioned: "As you guessed, that bright boy was me. And at that time I thought it didn't matter if others had achieved more personally." He was still the one with the better GPA, the smarter one, the brighter one. Somehow, on that day, he decided my son must get into IIT. He wanted his son to carry on his family's strong intellectual tradition. But his son wanted to be a lawyer and hated maths. The professor hated him for hating maths. He pushed him hard just as he pushed students. He failed to get in the first time and the professor made life hell for him. His son failed a second time and the professor made his life an even bigger hell. Then the son failed to get in the third time. And this time, he killed himself.

The professor continues: "You all know that I have a daughter. But I also had a son, who died in a rail track accident five years ago. At that time, we thought it was an accident. But this is my son's letter I got only a few weeks ago. He wrote this to my daughter on the day he died. He killed himself because he did not get into IIT. He killed himself because of me."

Then the professor points at the central figures of the book "Let me tell you something about this boy Hari and his friends Alok and Ryan. They are the under-performers. That is what I used to call students with low GPAs. And they do have a low GPA - five points something is low, right?" The professor adds, "And that is when I realized that GPAs make a

good student, but not a good person. We judge people here by their GPA. If you are a nine, you are the best. If you are a five, you are useless. I used to despise the low GPAs so much that when Ryan submitted a research proposal on lubricants, I judged it without even reading it. But these boys have something really promising. I saw the proposal the second time. I can tell you, any investor who invests in this will earn a rainbow." (Bhagat, 2004)

The message of Chetan Bhagat for nurturing the “Heavenly Sparks” is captured in the professor’s address: “One, believe in yourself, and don't let a GPA performance, review or promotion in a job define you. There is more to life than these things - your family, your friends, your internal desires and goals. And the grades you get in dealing with each of these areas will define you as a person.” "Two, don't judge others too quickly. I thought my son was useless because he didn't get into IIT. I tell you what, I was a useless father. It is great to get into IIT, but it is not the end of the world if you don't. All of you should be proud to have the IIT tag, but never ever judge anyone who is not from this institute - that alone can define the greatness of this institute." (Bhagat, 2004)

Chetan Bhagat’s *2 States: The Story of My Marriage* is a social novel expressed through the issue of inter-state, inter-caste marriage of Krish and Ananya. But above all it is greater work of a matured novelist in its terms of language, narrative technique, and flash back cinematographical method of presentation and higher motif which is presented in the last of the novel when Ananya gives birth to twins:

The nurse cleaned up the two babies and gave them to me.

‘Be careful,’ she said as I took one in each arm.

‘You are from two different states, right? So, what will be their state?’ the nurse said and chuckled.

‘They’ll be from a state called India,’ I said. (Bhagat, 2009: 269)

This spirit of unification can bring harmony among people of different states and mar the regional disparity in India, according to Chetan Bhagat. Even in his Speech given at HT Leadership Summit in 2008 Chetan Bhagat talking about problems of India in present times he gives his solution by saying:

“Because to do anything great, you have to become one first. Two generations ago, our fore fathers came together to win us Independence. It isn’t like we didn’t have disputes then. Religion, caste, community have existed for centuries. But Gandhi brought them together for a greater cause- to get the country free.....Today we have another greater cause. To get India its rightful place in the world. To see India the way the younger generation wants to see it. To make India a prosperous, developed country, where not only the spirit of patriotism, but also the standard of living is high. Where anyone with the talent, drive and hard work alone has the ability to make it. Where people don’t ask where you come from, but where you are going.” (Bhagat, 2008)

Written in simple English, the 269-page book is an easy and hard-to-put-down read. As in all Bhagat’s books, there’s a liberal usage of swear words and youth lingo. It is the story about a couple coming from two different states in India, who face hardships in convincing their parents for approval of their marriage. The novel is a fiction, but is said to be inspired from the real story of the author and his wife Anusha who are from Delhi and Tamil Nadu, respectively. This is the second Chetan Bhagat book based largely on his life, with the other being his first book 'Five Point Someone'. He wrote this novel after quitting his job at an investment bank.

Partly autobiographical, the story is about Krish and Ananya who hail from two different states of India, are deeply in love and want to get married. The novel opens in a hospital through prologue, one of the stylistic quality of Bhagat's novel which continues later in his work *Revolution 2020*, where bed ridden Krish narrates the love story the lady doctor Geeta. The story is all about an IIM (Ahmadabad) couple's struggle to marry over the cultural differences. Krish is north Indian Punjabi boy in love with Tamilian Brahmin girl Ananya. The only catch is, Krish and Ananya don't want to elope or be estranged to their families and therefore, they choose to convince their parents for the marriage. Krish Malhotra and Ananya Swaminathan. Krish is a Punjabi born and brought up in Delhi, while Ananya is a Tamilian. Oh! I forget, she's a Tamil Brahmin (Tam Brahm as is commonly in college circles). The Brahmin part is emphasised throughout the book. In Ananya's words while introducing herself to Krish: "Tamil Brahmin, which is way different from Tamilians. I am born into the purest of pure upper caste communities ever created." (Bhagat, 2009)

Krish, an IIT-Delhi grad, meets Delhi University Economics grad Ananya at IIM-A. They fall in love with each other and decide to spend the rest of their lives together. Both the families are, however, against this marriage. The usual drama unfolds with Krish's mother showing prospective girls from rich families (read: dozen petrol pumps and marble flooring mansion and half a dozen cars in the parking lot) in typical Punjabi style. Ananya's parents, on the other hand, leave no stone unturned in emotionally blackmailing her and trying to convince her that a Ivy educated, Bay area-based groom is the best choice for her. They both get jobs, and have serious plans for their wedding. At first Krish tries to convince his girlfriend Ananya's parents and at last and convinces them by helping Ananya's father to do his first PowerPoint Presentation, her brother, Manju, by giving him tuition and later convinces her mom by asking her sing in a concert organised by Krish's office, i.e Citibank. She was convinced as she had her biggest dream of singing in a big concert comes to be true. She sang along with T.S Subramaniam and Hariharan. Then they tried to convince Krish's mom. But the problem was Krish's mother's relatives who don't quite like this, they say that Krish should not marry a Madrasi but ends up agreeing with them when Ananya tries to help one of Krish's cousin to get married and succeeds to do so. Now as they have convinced both their parents they now try to make their parents meet each other to know each. They go to GOA. But this dream of theirs ends as Ananya's parents finds something fishy between Krish's mom and him. Ananya's family end up deciding that Krish and Ananya will not marry each other. But at last Krish's father who was like an enemy for Krish helps Krish and Ananya to get married as he convinces Ananya's family well. They really do very hard to convince each other parents and finally make it. It is narrated in a first person point of view in a humorous tone, often taking digs at both Tamil and Punjabi cultures. The novel ends with Ananya giving birth to twin boys. They say that the babies belong to a state called 'India'; with a thought to end inequality.

Chetan Bhagat tries full justice to the work by not only depicting a love story and complication in inter-caste marriage in India but also conveying need of national integrity for full blooming of India in social, political, economic and cultural spheres.

Revolution 2020: Love, Corruption, Ambition is a novel by Chetan Bhagat written in 2011. Its story is concerned with a love triangle, corruption and a journey of self-discovery. In this respect it is a strong message to Indian young generation which knows only their rights and when it comes the turn of their responsibility it tries to avoid. The author has stated that the novel is based on the "rampant corruption" apparent in the Indian youth educational system, with the choice of Varanasi as a setting emerging through "a special connection to the city" following his visit. He further stated that "it is one of our oldest cities, and people there now have modern aspirations. I thought the contrast would be interesting. The city

also has a lot of characters."

Set in the holy city of Varanasi, *Revolution 2020* is the story of three childhood friends - Gopal, Raghav and Aarti. Gopal and Raghav are childhood friends, whereas Aarti is Gopal's closest friend and love interest. Gopal is from a poor family, Raghav, a middle-class family, and Aarti's family is from a bureaucratic and political background. The three friends hold their own ambitions in life, with Gopal seeking financial wealth, Raghav wanting global political change and Aarti aspiring to work as an air hostess. This story reveals the true picture of Indian Educational System with the hope that it will improve in future through the efforts of some sincere individuals. After failing both the IIT-JEE (Indian Institution of Technology Joint Entrance Exam) and AIEEE (All India Engineering Entrance Examination) exams, Gopal is forced to move to Kota, the so called "capital of coaching classes" to undertake them again. However, Raghav scores very well in his exams and joins the IIT-BHU as a way to fulfill his dream of bringing revolution to India as a journalist. In Kota Gopal is completely surprised when he learns that Aarti and Raghav have formed a romantic bond and consequently develops problematic habits, disrupting his life. Due to the emotional difficulties brought on by his friends' relationship, Gopal again fails to pass the AIEEE. Gopal's father cannot bear his son's repeated failure and eventually dies, leaving Gopal an orphan. Due to past debts total nearly 2 lakhs, Gopal makes a deal with a MLA, Shukla, to start an engineering college on his father's disputed land. Gopal becomes director of the new college (GangaTech University) and proceeds to learn about a corrupt educational system, the workings of which he eventually accepts. Meanwhile, Raghav finishes his engineering studies and becomes a trainee reporter for a popular newspaper, "Dainik". He begins publishing all of Shukla's wrongdoings like the Ganga Action Plan (GAP) scam worth 20 crore which gives a bad reputation to Gopal's college. Illegal re-zoning of land controversy causes some damage to GangaTech College. Shukla gets Raghav sacked but Raghav starts his own newsletter called Revolution 2020. He publishes an article about the Ganga Treatment Scam and proves that Shukla is a corrupt man. Shukla is forced to resign. Aarti develops a deeper friendship with Gopal and starts spending time with him as Raghav had no time for her. She acquires the job of a Guest Relationship Manager at the newly formed Ramada Hotel. Gopal invites Aarti there and reveals his love for her. Gopal finally succeeds in winning her over. He wants to go to Raghav's office to tell him that Aarti is no longer his and that he had become a more successful man in spite of being uneducated.

However, before he actually meets Raghav, he meets a young boy Keshav who according to Gopal resembles him in his childhood. It is then that he realizes that he and Keshav were the same but the only difference between them was that he himself had given in to the corrupt system but Keshav still possessed his innocence. He realizes that Raghav is the better man and vows to make amends. So, on Gopal's birthday when Aarti comes to tell Gopal that she also loves him always, not Raghav, Gopal brings two prostitutes to make Aarti believe that the girls are with Gopal. Then Aarti leaves the house leaving the birthday gift for Gopal she brought - a scrapbook - and Gopal allows Raghav to get married to her. Then Gopal opens the scrapbook and sees that Aarti confesses her love for him there. A heartbroken Gopal thinks that in spite of the fact that he and Aarti love each other, Raghav's love and life will make Aarti happier in life. In a deeper thought it is also been given that Gopal loved Aarti more but he had to let her go off for good. He was taking all the pain himself for Aarti and Raghav's better future, so that Raghav may bring in a revolution in this corrupted world. Although Gopal knows that "Life is a bitch when the only woman you can think of belongs to someone else", he has already realized that there is something greater than personal benefits, i.e. national and human welfare. This is clear in the conversation between Gopal and author himself who is trying to console him while Gopal is bed-ridden in the Epilogue:

'I have to leave,' I said. He nodded. He came out to drop me to the car.

'The revolution will come,' Gopal said. 'We will have a better nation one day.'

'I know,' I said.

'You also write about it. Once Ganga Tech becomes big, I will try to fix the system. I am sick of giving envelopes to people.'

'We have to change things,' I said.

'Everyone must sacrifice for it,' Gopal said. (Bhagat, 2011: 295)

As a novelist Chetan Bhagat has created individual and alive characters. They are more related to a common man especially youth and neatly reflect what we experience or do every day in our life. His characters are just an reflection of oneself. Sometimes you can relate many of his characters to yourself or your neighbor. His novels are written in simple language and without much fanfare. As Chetan says in his blog "I write to express, not impress". It refers that his intention is only to enlighten our hearts as well as our lives; to entertain his readers with making them feel importance of their sparks and to become productive force for nation. His novels are obvious product of his thought by which he invokes the Indian younger generation as he delivers in his speech:

"You must have read some quotes- Life is a tough race, it is a marathon or whatever. No, from what I have seen so far, life is one of those races in nursery school, where you have to run with a marble in a spoon in your mouth. If the marble falls, there is no point coming first. Same with life, where health and relationships are the marble. Your striving is only worth it if there is harmony in your life. Else, you may achieve the success, but this feeling of being excited and alive, will start to die." (Bhagat, 2008)

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