

CHAPTER-3

CITYSCAPE AND WORKPLACE: GLITTERING VISION OF COSMOPOLITANISM IN VIKRAM CHANDRA

3.1 VIKRAM CHANDRA: AN INTRODUCTION

Vikram Chandra is an Indian-American Writer. He was born in New Delhi in 1916. His father Navin Chandra worked as a business executive and leads a retired life. His mother Kamna Chandra has written several Hindi films and plays. His sister Tanuja Chandra is a film maker and screen writer. She has directed several films. His other sister Anupama Chopra is married to Vidhu Vinod Chopra, a film director. She herself is a film critic and a consulting editor for India's NDTV. Vikram Chandra is married to Melanie Abrams, who is a fiction writer. They both teach creative writing at the University of California, Berkeley.

Vikram Chandra received his high school education from Mayo College in Ajmer, Rajasthan. He attended Xavier's college in Mumbai and then as an undergraduate student, he shifted to the United States. He graduated from Pomona College, Claremont, California, with a B.A. Magna cum laude in English (concentration in Creative Writing). He attended the film school at Columbia University leaving halfway through, to begin work on his first novel. He received his M.A. from writing seminars at John Hopkins University in 1987. He has taught at George Washington University and lectured at the University of California, Berkeley. His first novel *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* (1995) was inspired by the

autobiography of James Skinner who was a legendary nineteenth century Anglo-Indian soldier. The novel is named after a poem from the *Kuruntokai*, an anthology of classical Tamil love poems. The story begins with an element of surprise – a monkey who can type and who has to tell tales in order to survive. The audience includes Lord Yama, Lord Hanuman, Lord Ganesha, a small group of youngsters and the family which is home for the animal. There are many stories tied around and interfused with violence and passion.

While writing the novel, Chandra taught literature and writing and was also working as a computer programmer & consultant. It was published by Penguin Books in India, by Faber & Faber in the U.K. and by Little Brown in the United States. The book received critical acclaim. It won both the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best First Book and also the David Higham Prize for Fiction. Since much of the novel deals with nineteenth century it has not been made part of the study. In 2000, Chandra along with Suketu Mehta served as a co-writer for a Bollywood movie 'Mission Kashmir.' It was directed by his brother-in-law, the Bollywood director Vidhu Vinod Chopra.

His other book *Love and Longing in Bombay* is a collection of short stories published in 1997. It has different characters portrayed in five stories which are loosely interconnected. Each story is set in a different social milieu revealing a broad spectrum of modern Indian life. The storyteller Subramaniam tells his stories to the regulars of the Fisherman's Rest. They are then transmitted to more people by one of Subramaniam's listeners, the narrator Ranjit Sharma.

The novel was published by Penguin India in 1997. It won the Commonwealth Writers' Prize for Best Book (Eurasia region). It was shortlisted for the Guardian Fiction Prize and was included in the Notable Books of 1997 by Outlook magazine (New Delhi). The story 'Dharma' was awarded the Discovery Prize by the Paris Review & was included in Year's Best Fantasy and Horror story (St. Martin's Press, 1998).

Sacred Games was published by Penguin India in 2006. It is a nine hundred page epic story which focuses on a Sikh police inspector- Sartaj Singh and his investigation into the suicide of mafia kingpin Ganesh Gaitonde. Ganesh dies but he tells his story to Sartaj Singh in alternating chapters, confessing his deep emotions and his mobster lifestyle. The character of the city is developed as Chandra concentrates on other characters in the story.

It was published by Harper Collins in U.S in 2007. It won the Hutch Crossword Award for 2007. It was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award for Fiction.

His non-fiction work about the culture of computer programming and classical Indian aesthetics was published in 2013 by Penguin India as *Mirrored Mind: My Life in Letters and Code*. It was published by Faber and Faber as *Geek Sublime: Writing Fiction, Coding Software*. The book is published in US as *Geek Sublime: The Code of Beauty*.

In June 1997, Vikram Chandra featured in the New Yorker photograph of India's leading novelists. His work has been translated into nineteen languages.

Chandra believes that there is no such thing as single story. It has seeds for other stories. In an interview with Ranjan Ghosh, Chandra claims the writer loses to be the owner of the story the minute it gets written, “In his or her encounter with your story, the reader constructs a new story. Each reader’s narrative is a unique one, related to the one you constructed but not quite the same”(n.pag.).

Some critics have opposed Chandra’s notion of authenticity by sharing the view that he is selling, the feel of being Indian as a commodity to sell his books but Chandra insists on judging the work on their relative achievements and not by the notion of Indianness and their assimilation by the West.

The stories narrated defy the conventions of their respective genres. They sustain our hope but none of them provide expected and comforting solutions. The protagonist tries to construct a coherent picture of the events but the vastness and multiplicity is so huge and perplexing; and to add to it, there are unresolved and unsolved issues where the reader is left to his own interpretation.

Chandra uses Bombay(Mumbai) street slang in his writing, which at times sound harsh. Thus, Chandra stresses on multiplicity and diversity to narrate the timeless topics of love, death and redemption.

3.2 LOCALE

The two novels under this study deal with metropolitan Mumbai, the City of dreams. Mumbai has truly charmed many people inside and outside India. Be it the tourism, be it Bollywood or the scenic beauty or the trade practices, it is the most favoured capitalistic hub of India. Mumbai is the capital city of Maharashtra located in Central India.

It is the collection of seven islands on the west coast of India. The archipelago of seven islands includes – Colaba, Mazagaon, Old Women’s Island, Wadala, Mahim, Parel and Matunga Sion. Initially, there were these seven islands separated by swamps. In 1845 the city’s swamps were filled and the separate islands turned into one large island.

The Kolis, a Marathi fishing community were the earliest known settlers of the islands. Then, Mauryan Empire gained control of islands and transformed it into a centre of Hindu and Buddhist culture & religion. Later, it passed on to various dynasties and was ruled by the Gujarat Sultanate. It became a Portuguese possession in 1534. They established a trading centre in the city. That is why, they called the place Bom Bahia, meaning the good boy, which in English was pronounced as Bombay & hence the name settled. The products which were traded included silk, muslin, rice, cotton and tobacco. By 1626, there was a great warehouse, a port and a ship building yard in the city. By the time, East India Company took charge of Bombay, it completely transformed the city. In 1687, the company made Bombay as their headquarters. By the end of 1700, it was the Gateway of India. The first Indian railway began its operations between Mumbai &

Thane in 1853. In 1854, the first cotton mill was opened. The Bank of Bombay, the oldest bank in city was established in 1840. The University of Bombay was established in 1857. Bombay stock Exchange was opened in 1875.

During the freedom struggle, it became the centre of the Rowlett Satyagraha of 1919 and the Royal Indian Navy Mutiny of 1946. After independence, the territory of Bombay was structured into Mumbai state. In 1960, it was incorporated into the dominion of the newly created Maharashtra state.

Mumbai is a composition, multi-cultural city and is the centre of India's entertainment industry; it is the fourth largest populous city in the world. One can witness posh areas like Cuffparade and Juhu and also the poverty stricken slums of Dharavi, one of largest slums in the world. It is home to the corporate powerhouses, RBI, BSE, NSE. It is the store house to rich & glorious classical heritage in Elephanta caves, Siddhivinayak temple, Museum etc. It is to be noticed that the name of the city was changed to Mumbai by the ruling party in 1996. So, both the names have been used for explorations in the chapter.

3.3 THE ISSUES

There are five stories in the collection- *Love and Longing in Bombay*. Each is titled by a Sanskrit word which refers to some principle or theme to which the story relates. Each story is framed by the works of an elderly man Subramaniam, a retired civil servant. He sits down at the bar and recounts his stories to all those present in the bar. He manages to captivate the imagination of Ranjit Sharma, who is the main narrator and a skeptic, belonging to contemporary Bombay. The common narrator throughout the work binds the stories with Hindu concept. It is a fine example of storytelling and fable weaving and then one sees a range of Bombay life and flavours and tastes of the city. The readers witness dreamers, workers, gangsters and the vast assortment of issues and struggles they face; some of the issues reveal the vast array of forces which are prevalent in the modern world.

The first chapter of the book 'Dharma' deals with proper conduct. It is the story of Jago Antia a soldier, who comes home to his parents' house to find that it is haunted.

Army Lifestyle: The army is maintained by the country which is a well trained and well equipped military service which play useful role in the defense of the country. They lead a life of discipline and are self reliant to instill in others, a desire for national service. They are given a tough training as Jago Antia had been following a hard regimen with his cadets. He was taken to be a man of exemplary courage who had lost his leg in the battle field. He was hurt in a mine attack and his right knee was twisted. He knew he had to command his cadets and there was

no time to waste. He chopped off his leg bearing all the pain. He had won many combats and many medals. He was respected by his fellow soldiers as they said, “That is why his politeness, his fastidiousness, delicate way he handled his fork and knife, his slow smile, and these Jago quirks were imitated by even the cadets at the Academy”(6).

Superstitious Beliefs: Some beliefs have been practiced in Indian culture from past times. It is largely attributed to the lack of education. Astrology plays an important role in the lives of people in India. India, being the hub of diverse cultures and traditions, is also home to myriad superstitions. Sacrifices, horoscopes, religious discourses are practiced and followed in Indian society. The belief in supernatural elements forms the crux of the story. Jago Antia comes back to his house in Bombay after experiencing an acute pain in his amputated leg. He discovers ghost stories surrounding the house. The neighbours are sure about the house being haunted. They steer clear of it out of fear. His companion and servant is afraid to follow him into the house. Finally, a person who understands about spirits and supernaturalism is called for handling the matter. He informs Antia that ghost could be some relative and Antia does what is necessary so that the ghost can rest in peace.

The second chapter is titled ‘Shakti’ which depicts the ability of the feminine creative force to establish her identity. It deals with the story of Bijlanis and Boatwallas. It gives a glimpse of complexities of love. Sheila is a very beautiful woman who comes to love a short, dumpy and an unattractive man. She has an unquenchable thirst to defeat Dolly Boatwalla who suffers from superiority

complex. The narrative discourse leads to their fights, parties, lifestyle, business, children and finally Sheila overpowering the Boatwallas into an understanding or settlement. It also serves to highlight the ego clashes in the elite gentry which form the root cause of friction.

Kitty Parties and Club Culture: A Kitty party is usually a gathering of housewives, where the party is held in one lady's house or in a hotel. It includes food, fun and gossiping. The trend has shifted now to clubs which had been earlier restricted to the elite class. Now, the individuals who belong to the middle class are seeking the membership of the club. They provide ultra modern facilities like swimming pools, dance parties, various sports to play, food and drinks. The membership of the clubs is open to the whole families. The trend reflects the intermixing of both the groups where the distinctions of caste and colour are wiped out.

In the narrative, Sheila started throwing cocktail parties and lunches where she invited her special guests from elite gentry including, Dolly Boatwalla which was a grand success but Dolly Boatwalla stayed aloof. Then, Bijlanis wanted the membership of Malabar Gymkhana as their son wished to play there but they were denied permission which resulted into Bijlanis opening up of a new club, which was called the Shanghai club. It was much sought after club but then, Boatwallas were not given membership. The club culture has been increasingly accepted in the modern cities as they provide recourse to busy individuals to enjoy their life, the way they want.

Womanly Cat Fights: The fights between Bijlanis and Boatwallas form the centre of attraction in the story. Sheila, who is a part of the higher echelons of society wages her battle to stay at the very top at all times. She is determined not to be bowed down by the games played by the other woman surrounding her. Bijlanis diversified their resources and invested into transportation and plastics besides mixies. Bijlanis think of taking over the business of Boatwallas. The children of both the families are in love while Dolly is against the relationship but Sheila through her conniving and cunning efforts, manages to become the most important woman of high society. The marriage of the children is fixed and both the families are finally together.

Domestic Help: Domestic help these days are hard to find. They come from the far off villages where living conditions are difficult. In the cities also, they face a tough life which is strenuous and devoid of charms. Like in the text, the maid Ganga, worked in a dozen houses without any break. She reached back home by 7:30p.m. Then she was busy with her household affairs. She used to live in a small Kholi and had her daughter to take care of. When she was buying a new Kholi, she took a loan from her mistress, which she had to pay back in installments. She was a widow but very courageously, handled all situations; even she married her daughter in a well to do family.

Bijlanis helped her to great lengths to ensure their maid is satisfied. In the modern scenario, double income households and large families require full time domestic help. The elite class supports the servants to maintain their standards.

Dolly Boatwalla had her servants dressed in a proper uniform. She had the habit of showing off, which was influenced by her adoption of western ideals.

Love Pangs: Love pangs are essentially felt by the youth of today. Notwithstanding the urges and frequent requests by the parents, these youngsters do not pay any heed. Sheila's son Sanjeev and Dolly's daughter Roxanne fall in love during the course of the narrative. The families are not interested in the relationship especially, the Boatwallas. Dolly takes her daughter to London, while Sanjeev loses interests in life and falls into depression. If the demands of the couple are not met, they take recourse in love marriages or run away with the partners. In many societies, love marriages in some of the communities are banned. Even, the families punish the couple who bring disgrace to the family reputation by running away. There are new cultural traits visible in society which forges a set of new relationships and also, the traditional system and taboos are still very much a part of Indian culture. Nevertheless, there is a spurt of love marriages in the present times.

The next chapter is 'Kama' which deals with sensual pleasures. A policeman has discovered a crime and is not satisfied with the investigation, so he takes upon himself to resolve the case. It puts him into danger as his actions are frowned upon by the superiors and also lead him towards unknown territories, where some startling discoveries are made.

Strained Relations: Matrimonial disputes have become a common phenomenon in the present century. The unfulfilled needs and desires in an unhealthy relationship becomes the cause of dispute which can ruin one's life.

Sartaj Singh, the protagonist uncovers the tangled tale of love and betrayal, which exists between husband and wife. He discloses the secret of Chetan Bhai Patel's private life. In the process, Singh also encounters his own demons of desire when his ex-wife re-enters his life. One feels the ache of Sartaj Singh over the breakup of his marriage as he is not able to sign the divorce papers.

Sartaj Singh recalls his past. Sartaj was a hero in his college days; while Megha, his estranged wife was rich and beautiful. They got married but Megha could not understand the nature of his job while Sartaj lacked patience in making her understand; so the differences crept in. While solving the case, Sartaj realises his mistakes which has ended his relationship with Megha. He understands that they are not made for each other and finally signs the divorce papers.

Elite Lifestyle: Elite is the section of society who is the most influential. They bear the resources of wealth, power and prestige. They are generally educated and enjoy a superior status.

Chetan Bhai Ghanshyam Patel belonged to the elite section of the society. He owned a Rolex watch valued rupees 218000/-. His flat, the sixth floor apartment looked lavish as if it was a haveli with elephant parked outside and durbans on sofas. The drawing room was large with brass lamps, furniture and hangings on the wall. There was a life size statue of an Apsara(an idol)pouring water made of marble. He owned a red Contessa car. He went for outings on weekends and had his own set of pleasures and luxuries.

Sensual Encounters: Abuse and assault have become quite common in the society. It is an involuntary act in which a person is threatened or forced to engage against his will. This amounts to the torture of victim. There is a spurt of these kinds of incidents in modern society.

The story presents, an inhibited life of Chetan Bhai Ghanshyam Patel who was murdered. His neighbours and friends shower their praises on him but he had a hidden life which is supposedly the cause of murder. He had a 'shoukeen' (enjoying and carefree) kind of lifestyle as is put forward by Mrs. Khanna. He along with his wife went to Daman, a hotel during weekends. He used to practice all sort of indecent activities with his wife. Sartaj Singh comes to an understanding that some things happen between husband and wife and they can't be explained. This is what happened in the Patel household.

The next story is titled 'Artha' which is a reflection of purpose or prosperity. It deals with the gay relationship between Iqbal and Rajesh. Sandhya is a computer programmer, who experiences painful relationship with her ex-husband and has supposed lover. Both Sandhya and Iqbal are highly individualized, turning up into close friends while facing professional ups and downs.

Gay Relationship: Homosexual love is explored in the story. It is a sort of romantic or sexual attraction between members of the same sex or gender. In the story, Iqbal and Rajesh are depicted to be in a gay relationship. Iqbal recalls that he had met Rajesh on a New Year Eve. Afterwards, they met again and fell for each other. They had fights, patch-ups and meetings in the whole year but then suddenly Rajesh is gone. Iqbal misses his company and is tormented. He tries hard to get a

trace of his partner which he eventually does, but is not elaborated in the narrative. Iqbal understands that lost time never comes back. He could not confess his relationship to anybody as the Indian society does not accept it. He remains alone with certain hollowness in his heart.

Many countries have accepted the notion of gay rights while in India also, many quarters demanded for gay rights but honourable Supreme Court of India has upheld Section 377 which criminalizes homosexual love. Gay relationships are quite uncommon in India but under the impact of western values and liberal culture, Indians are also coming out in the open. They are not shy about disclosing their identity and their preferences.

Infidelity: Infidelity or breach of faith violates the basic assumption of life trust. It can be a heartbreaking experience when the betrayal is detected when a spouse is emotionally or sexually involved with someone outside marriage. When the expectations are not met, it leads to a feeling of rage and betrayal, lowering of personal confidence and damage to self image. There are certain norms which are to be followed in a marital relationship but if these rules are not adhered to, the violation can be full of torment.

The story portrays entangled relationships. There is Iqbal, who confronts a horrible truth about his lover Rajesh, his connections with the underworld. He is shocked and lost while Sandhya, Iqbal's co-worker and friend discovers and effectively eliminates the infidelities of her artsy beau Anubhav.

Gang Operations: Rajesh had lied about his working in a post office and also about the gym. He had been involved with Ratnani, a rich businessman who had underworld connections. Police and Rajesh's brother also confirm Rajesh's involvement with the Bhailog (gangsters). Iqbal tries hard to trace the whereabouts of his partner but all his efforts come to nothing. He gets a warning from a gangster that he should not follow up Rajesh, otherwise he would also be wiped out and nobody would come to know.

Gang workers operate their network through slum areas. The poor people like Rajesh are made the scapegoats as they are the easy targets. They are made to do the operations for meager amount. If they are caught, they have to undergo the torture in police custody. The elite or business people have their own security guards and connections for their protection as is visible in the case of Ratnani.

Computer Generation: In the present world, it is almost impossible to imagine that someone can live without computers. The most that any industry has gained from the discovery of computers is the business industry. They have improved the efficiency and productivity of the quality of the work done. It can help businesses by making the staff efficient and also saving the valuable time. The interest is getting bigger and faster every day. In the discourse, Sandhya and Iqbal are software programmers. It is the source of their income and livelihood. The programme which they develop catches a snag. They work on the system, the hardware problem and also create a faster and improved version of the programme. Naturally, the money pours in and eventually, they get a new office.

Empowered Women: Sandhya is an example of modern, independent woman, who understands what she feels for, does what she really believes in, and lives true to her own terms and values. She has her own office at her flat, and looks out for herself. She is independent at all levels. She can make her own money, follow her own path and be her own best friend. She is divorced from her husband and has a son to take care of. She is very friendly with Iqbal, who is also her colleague. She is a little spendthrift as she has tastes for art and painting. She buys a painting worth rupees twenty two thousand. She has a very stylish drawing room. She is in relationship with Anubhav who is a painter but when she comes to know about his infidelity, she throws him out of the house. She is disturbed by the presence of her ex-husband but manages out well. She challenges herself with a better software programme and is successful in her efforts as she creates a better and faster programme.

Corruption at Workplace: Sandhya and Iqbal have created a software programme which has developed problems. Iqbal went to check the system in the office where it was operational. When he investigated he found that somehow the plugs were intentionally pulled out. He found the two officers – Raunakji and Manishji working late at night. There were ledgers and safe in the accounts room. The safe was with its coverings of Gods and Goddesses and there was an empty space in the middle as if something was missing. When he went to check the cables, he touched upon a jumbo, which was taken away from the safe. Iqbal could make out, that files were corrupted because of the mishandling of the two officers

while they continued with their slips and forgery in the accounts room but they were caught and fired from their jobs.

The last story bears the title 'Shanti' which means peace. Through the story we reach Subramaniam, a character who makes his presence felt throughout the narrative. The story deals with the quest of young woman for her Air Force husband lost in World War II combat mission. It narrates the love story of the protagonist who sees the woman at the railway station. She is a frequent passenger and her repeated visits to the station serve only to intrigue him and increase his obsession with her.

Cultural Riots and War: Cultural riots and World War II have been portrayed as the backdrop of the narrative. These political leaders excite the passions of people and they are the ones who get the maximum benefits out of war. The Hindu mob snatched away the life of Hari, the twin brother of Shiv Subramaniam. The World War II made Shanti lose her husband who was a pilot in the Air Force.

The political leaders like Nehru envisaged a new order in India – a secular and socialist India, where all religions have freedom and equal say but the contemporary political leaders have destroyed the spirit and feel of secularism and socialistic principles by creating differences in the people of varied cultural identities. The cultural riots and mobs further promote segregation in society which is a stumbling block in the hopes and aspirations of an egalitarian society.

Widow Remarriage: Shanti was a widow as there was no news of her husband whose aircraft was put on fire in the World War II. She had been struggling to find

her lost husband but was ineffective. While on her visits to the army headquarters, she happened to meet Shiv. Shiv gets attracted towards her and wishes to marry her but his parents and relatives do not support him. Finally, they elope and get married. They get settled in Bombay.

Indian society has incorporated and sustained the positive impact of the new culture. Widows are no longer suffering alone; they have been given a platform where they can restructure their lives. Many pension schemes and monetary benefits are provided to them. They can plan their future and remarry which is not considered a taboo in metro cities. The problems associated with widow remarriages are markedly visible, as the elders in the story are not ready to support them.

Thus, in the stories we meet the two narrators, one who is near the end of his life, the other one in the prime of his own. Chandra reels before the readers the two visions of megapolis; one is ageless and the other which is ever changing. Subramaniam evolves a vision of an older and haunted Bombay and Ranjit Sharma represents Bombay of the new information age, materialistic, pragmatic and incredulous.

The next novel *Sacred Games* is a crime thriller where Bombay's police officer Sartaj Singh seeks an opportunity to nab a criminal warlord-Ganesh Gaitonde. Chandra starts with the character of Sartaj Singh taken from previous work- *Love and Longing in Bombay*. We observe two man plot stands in the novel. Sartaj Singh's quest to discover himself is interfered with Gaitonde's memories of his established career. The book moves through various channels. It is a deep

introspection of the changes visible in megapolis which caters and supports many activities simultaneously. Some of the issues which form an important part of the study are discussed below:

Nuclear Terrorism: The narrative is planted in the backdrop of nuclear threat. Gaitonde comes to know about Guruji's plan of nuclear bomb and builds a cubicle for him to protect from nuclear possibility while Sartaj Singh and Anjali Mathur follow up the leads of the terrorists groups executing a plan to blow up Bombay. Their findings lead them to a virtual nuclear holocaust keen on destroying the humanity.

Nuclear terrorism in India will remain a potent threat as long as there are terrorists seeking to gain access to nuclear material and technologies for malicious purposes. The activities during the past years are a witness to significant rise in the profile of a security threat involving terrorism and nuclear weapons. The September 11, 2001 attacks on the twin towers of the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon is a clear testimony to the fact. Terrorists have made it clear their intention to get nuclear weapons. Many Islamic nations through various means are posing a threat as they have procured deadly weapons and nuclear armament which they can use to unleash the terror.

The book describes the presence of militant outfit Hizbuddeen. It is the army of the final day. They talk of the destruction of India starting from Bombay. It also deals with Kalki Sena which is getting ready for war. They wanted to set up a perfect nation according to Hindu principles, the Ram Rajya.

Infidelity and Domestic Violence: In metros, there are many more reasons, which lead to marital-discord and forms of domestic violence. These include more income of a working woman than her partner, her absence from the house till late night, being more forward socially than the males; working women are quite often subjected to assaults at home or in office.

In cities, marriages don't offer a lifetime warranty anymore. With more and more women joining the workforce, the traditional barriers are collapsing to give way to a new westernized culture. Women are aiming high, working longer hours and travelling outside for work. With both the partners working between office deadlines and house hold chores, couples have barely any time to invest in a marriage. As a result, there are more instances of extra-marital affairs in the corporate sector. Both males and females succumb to these pressures. If they are not satisfied in their marital relationship, they find options outside marriage.

The character Kamala Pandey, a representative of elite section faces domestic violence at the hands of her husband but she is bold enough to give it back in the same coin. She also attacks Mr. Pandey and gives him a fine beating. The husband is skeptic, that his wife is having an affair. Kamala Pandey is an airhostess and Mr. Pandey believes that she has been hosting the pilots at stopovers. Mr. Pandey's doubts indeed, turn out to be true as Kamala Pandey is involved with a pilot Umesh who later blackmails her.

Aparna and Amrit Rao, living in small Kholis, in slum areas are always fighting it out. Amrit Rao has extr -marital relations with a lady from whom he had children.

The elite and the slum dwellers, both are facing the same kind of issues, be at home or workplace.

Political Corruption: It is the use of power by government officials for illegitimate private gain. In Politics, corruption undermines democracy and good governance by flouting or subverting formal processes. Corruption in public administration results in the inefficient provisions of services. Government regulators and police share in bribe money which they receive from people in order to get their work done. Earlier, bribes were paid for getting wrong things done, but now bribe is paid for getting right things done at right time. Political machinery is bottom necked involved in corruption. The major source of corruption in police is the vast power vested in a police officer in day to day working. They enjoy wide powers while discharging the core functions of police, which includes the maintenance of peace and order and prevention and detection of criminal activities.

In the narrative, Bipin Bhonsle, the Rakshak candidate for the constituency of Morwade comes to meet Gaitonde, the ganglord. He wants to win an election in his favour. When Gaitonde specifically asks him about their endeavour to root out corruption, he replies, “When the whole world is dirty, bhai, you have to get dirty to do any cleaning. We can’t fight their money without tricks. Once we are in power, it will all be different. We will change everything”(244). He is ready to squander all his money to secure a win, while Gaitonde provides him the essential, man power. This is the state of affairs of politicians in India where power matters.

Later on, during the course of the novel, the Rakshaks form new government in the state. They are trying to become a party of statesmen as is

portrayed when a character states, “As state ministers and cabinet secretaries, they had toned down their ranting nationalism, but they would not give up their battle against cultural deprivation and western assumption. They promised to reform the nation”(17). People like them, have their own philosophy to project. They are much concerned about the degradation of Indian culture and values by western influence, and not about the upliftment of poor sections of society and development of nation as a whole.

Some instances of corruption amongst police force have been clearly indicated in the novel. Police collect money to be distributed among the members and to maintain for the budget of police station. They take bribes to issue a no objection certificate in case of accidental deaths. Parulkar, the Deputy Commissioner has got repairs done at his house for free. A ganglord convicted of murder, was out on parole and the police records say that he is absconding while, he is going on with his malicious activities in Bombay. They have monthly arrangements with dance bars and clubs. It is quite evident that Parulkar has been getting money from Suleiman Isa, the ganglord to carry on his nefarious activities. The system has become altogether corrupt.

The Partition Saga: The partition of India was the process of dividing the Indian subcontinent. India gained independence from the British rule in 1947. The northern, predominantly Muslim sections of India became the nation of Pakistan while the southern & majority Hindu sections became India.

The land of the Punjab was fertile and wealthy. There were Hindus & Muslims in equanimity in Punjab. Neither of the side, wanted to relinquish the

valuable land. The border was drawn right down the middle of the province between Lahore & Amritsar. So, people had to move from one side to another but that turned out to be a painful exercise. Trains full of refugees were set upon fire by militants from both sides and many people were killed.

The struggle and torture of partition was faced by the family of Prabhjot Kaur (Nikki), Sartaj Singh's mother. They were deceived by Prabhjot's father's friend Khudabaksh Shafi, who was a Muslim. He wanted to own the house and land of his friend, so he planned an ambush. The rest of family reached the Indian side while the elder sister of Prabhjot Kaur, Navneet was taken away by the Muslims. The family had to face a lot of hardships in re-establishing themselves.

Inter-Caste Marriages: Inter-caste marriage is mostly caused by love. In India, different religions have their own rules relating to marriage. When two people from different social groups marry, it is the case of an inter-caste marriage. If the parents do not approve the marriage, they cut off the social relations with their children. In the present times, when the youngsters go to colleges & make friends from different communities, they get along well with each other, their chances of falling in love also gets higher. There are still taboos followed in Indian society against inter-caste or love marriages. Honour killings are quite prevalent in India. Honour killings are directed mostly against women & girls. The parents & relatives believe that the victim has brought dishonor upon the family or community by marrying on her choice. Even in the twenty first century, the mentality of people has not changed and they just cannot accept that marriages can take place outside their castes.

In the novel, Paritosh Shah, Gaitonde's friend and money lender, has daughter Dipika who wanted to marry Prashant Haaralkar. He was a dedicated student, had gone to the night college. He had a permanent job & lived in Chembur and supported his mother and younger sister. Paritosh Shah was unhappy with the proposal as the father of the boy used to work in the sanitation department. She was married off to some other guy but after two months she killed herself.

Defensive Machinery: The Research and Analysis wing (RAW) is the primary foreign intelligence agency of India. The main function of RAW is gathering foreign intelligence and counter-terrorism. It is also involved in the security of Indian nuclear programme. It is also responsible for analysing information about foreign policies to give advice to Indian policy makers.

DCP Anjali Mathur has been dealing and investigating the case of Gaitonde. She is an officer in the RAW wing. The case is of national security. She asks Sartaj Singh to help her as the mission is to be kept a secret. They had a generalized threat perception that some militant group could use a portable weapon in an urban area. She discusses about Kalki Sena and Hizbuddeen. They are working on the possible role of Gaitonde and his Guruji. She comes to know that the group has already acquired the nuclear material, the payload, which is big enough and can be used anytime. Finally, following one lead after another they manage to destroy the holocaust.

The Glamour World: The world of glitz and glamour mesmerizes all but the shimmer appears to be only on the surface while the underbelly seems to have dark and ugly side. Modelling, film world and fashion industry, all have attracted the

young girls but the path is not as easy as it seems. They have to win their ways by making many compromises in their lives. They have to bear the unnatural advances of the glamour people in order to grab their chances. The glamour industry has underworld connections. Some of the girls are able to set a foot in the film industry because of the links between the cinema and the underworld. Many lesser known actresses get caught in the underworld after the gangsters take a fancy to them.

It is not easy to break into the modelling and film world, if you are not born into a powerful and influential star family. There is a need to develop the connections, the need of a godfather who will help in the smooth ride to top. The young aspirants throw themselves at their mercy to win their favour.

The character of Jojo Mascarenas, was a model coordinator, who recommended models of various agencies. She used to send the young, beautiful and needy girls to rich aspirants. She herself wanted to become an actor. She went for many assignments and tried her luck in television world but she was exploited on the pretext of a role.

Similarly, Zoya Mirza had to struggle herself to excel in the film world. She ran away from her house to try her luck in Bombay. She came in contact with Jojo, who sent her to Gaitonde. Gaitonde slept with her and in return, she was funded by him. Gaitonde helped her in enhancing her beauty and body by getting surgeries done on her. He later produced a film for her as well. Many of the girls used to work in dance bars in order to earn their livelihood. Some of them made connections with high profile people, who offered them small roles in television

soaps or advertisements, like the Delight dance bar girl Kavita got a chance to act in a serial.

The exploitation of women have been continuing for long but now, since they are working, a change is expected but the exploitation and abuse has taken myriad forms. Exploitation at work place, domestic violence, psycho-sexual abuses have reached alarming levels.

Fake Spiritual Saints : India is the land of many spiritual leaders or the ‘Godman’ whose motive in life is to show the right path. While some of these people possessed supernatural powers and performed miracles while others shot to fame owing to the charity work they did for the society. Many saints like Sai Baba, Guru Nanak Dev led a very humble life but the present age gurus have cheated their audiences at some point in their lives. They are engaged in the business of prostitution, sex rackets, arms dealing, the use of drugs etc. Asaram Babu, Guru Rampal- to name a few can be projected as saints who just wanted to serve their own purposes and accumulate as much wealth.

The Gurujii in the narrative is destined with the power of vision. He is using his energies in sinister objects than serving the humanity. He is involved in nuclear terrorism and wants the Hindus to rule. He wants everything to be destroyed and believes in the formation of a new statehood based on idealistic principles.

The World of Gangsters: Gangster operations are quite active in metro cities especially in Bombay. Bombay or Mumbai is a witness to bomb blasts in 1993 and further terrorists attack on 26 November 2008. Many innocent people lost their

lives in those attacks. The cause behind the attack is to spread terror. Gangsters, while sitting outside India have been operating in India since, they have an easy access to the coastal route. They wish to excite communal hatred in people so that peace and harmony is disturbed. They wish to harm people, be it rich or poor, without any fault of theirs. They extort money, commit kidnappings and murders and serve their own ends. They want to rule the world their own way. Many Afghan and Muslim militias are overactive in propounding terror in the whole world.

In the present novel– G-company and S-company have their own networks. Both wish to extend their supremacy in their territories. They have connection with political groups and police force which make their task easier. The new advanced technology and weapons have made their systems easy to operate. They have advanced gang-arms, weapons, bombs which they can exercise of their will at any time.

The improved tools and technology are to be used for the betterment of humanity but presently, it is being used for its destruction. After the easing of restrictions worldwide, on the use of arms and ammunition, its impact has cast its dark shadows on the whole world.

The Plight of Widows: For long, Indian societies have blamed, the women responsible for the death of the spouse and hence they are ostracized from the families. They are forced to take shelters in various ashrams and centers. They are made to lead their lives with the stigma of being a widow and hence can't have access to common forms of luxury like coloured clothes, accessories, going out

and having enjoyment. Her life becomes a living nightmare but very slowly, the women are trying to come out from the tragedy of their lives. They earn and stand on their feet and carve their own niche.

In the text, Shalini Katekar's world turns upside down when her husband Katekar dies in a police encounter. She has to bear the loss and take care of her two children. The relatives instead of helping her try to extract the money or criticize her for her modern approach. She finds satisfaction in emancipating the poor women about general hygiene and health measures. She regains composure and confidence and tries to catch up with the changing times.

Thus, Indian society, as explored in the novels, is full of examples which reflect the coming changes in the modes and manners of people. Some changes which are for the betterment of the society need to be readily accepted but when they are retrogressive and harmful, they are to be shunted out. Indian culture boasts of tradition and custom like faith in God, superstitious beliefs, fasting rituals, but again, those practices which are detrimental and further promote the divisions in society, need to be avoided and instead, meaningful and healthy traditions like respect of the elders, domestic bliss, need to be glorified. The individuals need to focus on those set of principles which are acceptable and justified.

3.4 NOVELWISE ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERS

Compelling and credible characters are essential for a successful work of art. A disturbance threatens the well being of the character, thus upsetting or undermining the thought process. The problem must carry a sense of urgency that compels the character to act. The way one reacts to the situation, the traits he reflects, the behaviour patterns which are distinguishable reflect the character's struggle or predicament or how he overcomes the opposition. The modern sophisticated guns, explosions, murders, phobias leave one totally dumb founded emotionally-wanting and in state of deep loss. The relationship which the characters express help in understanding the nature and problems prevalent in metropolitan society.

Jago Antia: Jago Antia is fifty years old and forms part of the story 'Dharma.' He is an army man who has lost his leg in the battle field. It has been twenty years since he lost his leg but as the story opens, he is experiencing a twisting ache, two inches under his plastic knee. Everybody believed that Jago Antia was invincible. "He was famous for his stare, for the cold blackness of his anger, for his tactical skill and his ability to read ground, his whole career from the gold medal at Kharakvasta to the combat and medals in Leh & NEFA" (5).

The younger generation respected him for his politeness, for his courage. His real name was Jehangir Antia. He was so confident and labourious that he could shame people who were younger to him. He used to rise up early for practice and hence he was named as Jago Antia (early riser). He was never interested in

celebrations but the cadets celebrated his birthday on the pretext of regimental battle day.

He tried to take medication for the severe pain which he experienced in his knee but to no avail. Finally, Jago Antia had to relieve himself from the command for medical reasons and went back from Calcutta to his house in Bombay. It was an old house, looked after by the keeper, Amir Khan. His parents were dead. He decides to sell his house but somehow he comes to understand that nobody is willing to take the house as some ghost stories are doing the rounds. Jago Antia discourages the thought. In his dreams, he recollects the battle scene when he lost his leg. He had himself chopped off his leg with a khukri. Then, he sees the apparition, the shape of footprints and hears voice in the house.

A priest is called to ward off the ghost who tells him that it is the ghost of a child and is very strong. It is looking for something. Only one who knows about him must go up naked and ask what it seeks. Jago Antia goes upstairs all alone and he recollects his childhood, his parents and his elder brother Sohrab. They used to play and fight together. He recalls the incident, when Sohrab was flying a kite, Jahangir pressed on Sohrab to let him fly the kite, but Sohrab did not let him do it. Jahangir tried to hold the string but in the process, Sohrab lost his balance and fell down from the roof and was dead, Jahangir was left alone. Then, Jahangir recollected his seventh birthday which was after his brother's death. The parents asked him for presents and he demanded an army dress.

Jago, at this stage sees the vision of a small child wearing the olive green uniform bearing the name J. Anita. The vision questions him where he should go,

to which Jago replies "Jehangir, you are already home"(31). He realises that he had lost himself, his childhood, his mis-shapen and magnificent life because of his guilt factor. He refurbishes himself and at that moment, the vision vanishes. The story ends on a note of comfort and satisfaction as Jago Antia is a relieved man.

Sheila Bijlani: The story 'Shakti' deals with the protagonist Sheila Bijlani. Her father was a chemist. She was very beautiful and glamorous. Right from the school days, she arranged her hair tastefully, wore a short skirt. She was a quick learner. When she grew up, she became an air hostess with Air France. Going abroad was a big thing during those times and many proposals from rich men came her way, but she married Mr. Bijlani, a USA returned electrical engineer. He was a plump and sober man. There were rumours that she married him from his money. They worked together with patience and steadiness, and earned a reputation for themselves. Sheila wanted to be admired in big circles so she started throwing cocktail parties and lunches where she invited her special guests, the so called high gentry including, Dolly Boatwalla but Dolly never attended her parties.

When Sheila joined the lunch club, Dolly was forced to go to Sheila's house. Everybody praised Sheila for the upkeep of the house but Dolly didn't praise her. The ladies were wonderstruck at the painting of Hussain at Sheila's place but Dolly didn't give any reaction. Sheila shut the door at her and it was the beginning of the enmity between them.

Sheila felt very bad at the treatment meted out to her by Dolly. She made up her mind that she would defeat Dolly. Bijlanis diversified their resources and invested in different industries, in addition to the mixies which was their original

source of income. Sheila & Dolly had been waging war politely for so many years. The Bijlanis had applied for the membership to the Malabar Gymkhana but they were denied the permission as per the directions of Dolly's husband. Then, Sheila came up with the Shanghai club. The women waited for the coveted membership but Dolly did not receive any invitation. The animosity remained between them.

Sheila's son, Sanjeev came back to Bombay after completing his education and various courses in Photography and Art & History from USA. He fell in love with Roxanne, daughter of Dolly Boatwalla. Sanjeev shared his decision, to marry Roaxanne with his mother. For the sake of his son, Sheila tried to contact Dolly but she took away her daughter to London. Sheila waited for the right opportunity to strike back. She handled Sanjeev who was under severe depression. When she learnt about Dolly coming back, she went to meet Dolly. Dolly didn't meet her but Sheila, devised that she would buy Dolly's mansion. They would buy the Boatwallas-stock, shop and house completely. Bijlanis gathered all the shares, wealth and assaulted for Boatwalla Shipping International but the takeover was pretty difficult. Still, they carried on as the source of inspiration was their son for whom they were making all efforts. Finally, they overpowered the Boatwallas by a tip given by Ganga, their common maid. Then, the matters get settled. The marriage is solemnized. A new company is floated out- Bijlani Boatwalla Bombay International Trading Group.

Dolly Boatwalla: Dolly was long, sallow woman and wore old jewellery. She was arrogant and rude. Dolly and Sheila were introduced at a party but Dolly never took Sheila seriously. She lived in a mansion that was rough and patchy. All her

maids were dressed in uniform. The maids were French mostly Keralites. Dolly had domineering attitude and the habit of mimicking others. Dolly did not treat Sheila very well when she went to the latter's house at the party. This was the start of war between the two ladies. Dolly was married to Freddie Boatwalla, owner of the Boatwalla Shipping international. Under his wife's influence, Freddie denied the membership of the Malabar Gymkhana to the Bijlanis. Then came, the Shanghai Club to which Dolly was not invited. Dolly behaved as if the Shanghai club did not exist. She maintained her composure and remained magnificent but later enquired from Sheila about the membership of the club.

All her ruthlessness and roughness is dashed to the ground when she comes to know about her daughter's love for Sheila's son Sanjeev. She takes her away to London but all her efforts are fruitless as Sheila relaunches her attack on Boatwallas with renewed vigour. Finally, Dolly has to make a compromise and give her acceptance for the matrimonial relationship.

The cat fight between the ladies for supremacy is a common phenomenon in high bred society. There are ladies who are fighting to establish their hold; also there are poor people like the maid Ganga who are working out day and night to make the both ends meet. Money is not an issue for these higher strata of society; they need just to refurbish their brand image. They squander their money on kitty parties and clubs totally relegating the needy. This Indian culture is an import of the western world and it is one of the reasons that Bharat, representative of weaker class is lagging behind the high culture of India as they are completely ignored in the society.

Sartaj Singh: The character forms a part of story 'Kama.' He is a police inspector who is in charge of investigating the case of murder of Chetan Bhai Ganshyam Patel. The body was found in a ditch. The death had occurred because of a stab wound. The blade had pierced his heart. Singh came to know that Chetan Bhai was wearing a gold Rolex watch. Shankar Ghorpade, a drunkard was arrested with the watch. He did not confess his crime and said, if he opened his mouth he would be killed.

Sartaj Singh visited the home of Chetan Bhai. It was a luxurious apartment. Chetan Bhai was a textile trader. He exported to Middle-East and America. He was passionate about his red Contessa. He along with his wife went for a drive on Saturdays. His son Kshitij was blunt and had unflinching iron in him.

The leads take Sartaj Singh to Jankidas Publishing Company and further to Daman where the Patels used to stay in a boarding house. Sartaj traces the picture of a naked woman and other proofs and comes to an understanding, that the licentious nature of Chetan Patel led to his death. He realises that Chetan Bhai's wife had to make compromises and he forced her to do certain acts and there is no justification of that.

Sartaj Singh was a fiery Sikh gentleman. His father retired as a senior inspector in police force before his death. His mother lived alone in Poona taking care of her house and garden. His wife Megha is estranged from her. She wants a divorce but Sartaj could not come to terms in accepting it. Sartaj was a hero in his college days. He had the reputation of a casanova in the college. Megha was rich and beautiful; together they presented a handsome couple but ultimately they

realize they could not live together and seek divorce. He closes the file of Chetan Bhai Patel by implicating Ghorpade who is dead by then.

Kshitij: He is the son of Chetan Bhai Ghanshyam Patel, whose murder case was investigated by Sartaj Singh. Kshitij was nineteen years old. He was quiet by nature and an intelligent boy who got first rank in the exam. The mother doted on her son. He and his friends belonged to the Rakshak group. The Rakshaks were a cultural organization who used to distribute pamphlets. They attacked those who destroyed their culture.

Sartaj meets Kshitij as a part of his investigation. He was the only son of his parents, a pre-medical student and wanted to specialize in neurology. There was some sort of rudeness or iron in him which Sartaj could feel about the boy. Sartaj discovered that Kshitij had dumped the papers and other garbage from his house to the other side of the wall twice. Sartaj carried on his investigation and came to know about the sensual nature of Chetan Bhai Patel. Sartaj reached the place, owned by Mrs. Khanna where Chetan Bhai used to spend his weekends. The lady informed Sartaj Singh that Kshitij had threatened her about divulging any details.

Sartaj Singh takes Kshitij to police station and questions him about the indecencies committed by his parents. Kshitij remains silent and inert. Sartaj is eager to know the details but he also feels sympathetic towards the boy. Finally, Sartaj closes the file and Kshitij is let off. Kshitij had to experience torture and pain for what his father had done. He filtered out only that his father was not a good man. He did not want to destroy the family reputation and did not divulge

any details. Sex crime rate has increased in the modern society. The limits have been crossed but it is not an individual but the whole family have to bear the repercussions.

Again, the narrative shifts to Fisherman's Rest and Subranamanian narrates a new story titled 'Asta.' It deals with Iqbal and Sandhya who were working together as software programmer.

Iqbal: Iqbal worked with Sandhya. Together, they had developed new software and it was accepted by Mr. Das against the bid of bigger companies. The software was giving trouble and both Sandhya and he had been working to improve the program by removing the snag. Iqbal had been in a gay relationship with Rajesh. Rajesh had a body builder personality and worked in post office.

Iqbal was not liked by Sandhya's mother as he was a Muslim but Sandhya completely trusted him. He knew all about Sandhya and her family. When Sandhya, Iqbal and Rajesh go to an arty party, Rajesh confronts Ratnani, a big man but Ratnani refuses to recognize Rajesh. Rajesh goes missing after the party. Iqbal tries hard to trace Rajesh. He along with Sandhya visit Rajesh's house where they come to know about the missing complaint lodged in police station. Iqbal visits Bhaiyya gym where Rajesh used to train but he learns that Rajesh has stopped coming to the place since long and had joined the body building club. He also learns Rajesh is not employed in post office and has been in contact with criminals. He goes to the club and Ratnani's house to enquire about Rajesh but all results into nothing. Rather, he confronts Rajesh's reality and his contacts with the gangsters.

Meanwhile, Iqbal is enduring the pain of a missing partner and he is engrossing himself in his job. He goes to Accounts Branch for system repairs and he realizes the wrongs done by Munishiji and Raunakji being responsible for the system getting corrupt. He duly informs Sandhya and the culprits are removed and system is rectified of its anomalies. Meanwhile, he also helps Sandhya in arranging the party at her house. He is loving and caring towards Sandhya's son also.

Iqbal is a true friend and a guide to Sandhya. He supports and helps her but also informs her when she is wrong. He doesn't approve of her relationship with Anubhav, the painter. He arranges for the party, and gets things from the market when Sandhya desires so. Whenever Sandhya is overworked and exhausted, he comforts her. When the system crashes out, he goes all the way at night for repairs. He misses Rajesh, his partner. His relationship with Rajesh is pure and tranquil which is devoid of religious biases. He says, "When we told each other our full names we looked at each other for a moment and noted and dismissed the difference in our religions in one smile, that was all"(198).

It is narrated in the concluding stages of the story that Rajesh is traced out but the details are not provided. Iqbal understands that lost time never comes back and he survives with a void in his heart and life.

Sandhya: She is a software programmer, friend to Iqbal. She is divorced from Vasant. She lives with her son Lalit and her mother. She has a taste for stylish living. She has Swedish sofas and couches, glass-topped coffee table, blue carpet etc. Nobody is allowed to enter the drawing room. She is in relationship with

Anubhav Rajadhakshey, who is a painter and has uncertain income. He uses one of her rooms as his studio.

Sandhya's ex-husband Vasant does not approve of her relationship with the painter. He threatens Sandhya that he would prove in the court that she is an immoral woman and not fit to raise their son Lalit. He further says that he would snatch her father's property and their son from her. Her mother who is a traditional woman also wishes that she should endure her relationship with her ex-husband however painful it may be. She endures all the pain and struggles of her life with patience and with the true support provided by Iqbal.

She is disturbed by the error in the programme, strives hard, rectifies it with the help of Iqbal and develops an improved version of the programme. She realizes about Anubhav's relationship with Viveka Gupta and throws him out of her house. As a true friend, she also supports Iqbal, goes all out with him to Rajesh's house to find him. When Iqbal is drunk, she carefully takes him to the car and makes the driver to take him to his house.

She is an epitome of smart and independent lady who can carry on her own with élan. The system improves and recovers and fetches her money. She gets a new office but she is still dating Anubhav, a future hope. The modern westernized woman of today is ready to chalk out her own territory.

In the last story of *Love and Longing in Bombay* – 'Shanti', the reader once again meets Subramaniam who narrates his own story about falling in love with a

woman whom he sees as a passerby. She is a frequent passenger and her repeated visits to the station serve only to intrigue him and increase his obsession with her.

Shiv Subramaniam describes about the year 1945, when he was just twenty years old. He had a twin brother Hari, who was killed by a Hindu mob in Delhi. Shiv had been under depression, so he was sent to his sister's place who was married to a station master at Leharia. Shiv had done his B.Sc. and loved to read novels but after his brother's death, he grew silent. He used to visit the railway station regularly and he became friendly with Frankie Furtado, the assistant station-master. On his visit to the station, he got attracted to a woman who was wearing a grey saree. She was simple and a young woman, not wearing any ornaments. "The eyes were large, there was a thick plait falling over a shoulder and now she looked down and put a hand over her mouth"(233). He comes to know that her name was Shanti Chauhan and she was looking for her Air Force husband who got lost in World War II combat mission.

Whenever Shiv came home, he would "feel his self, his soul turn and turn inwards, again and again, until it was as thin drawn as a wire, shiny and brittle"(239). He did not realize what was happening to him. Gradually, he waited for Shanti to come back. She came and exchanged stories which she gathered from meeting various people in search of her husband. They develop a bond. Ultimately, Shiv proposes her but Shiv's family is against him marrying a widow. Shiv is bent on it and with the help of Frankie Furtado, marches towards Bombay where they get married. They start this new life leaving behind all the negativity and pain.

Then, the narrative shifts to the present where an old Shanti comes into the picture and offers the narrator to have dinner.

Sacred Games is a delightful study of various characters and their traits, it has moments of intense feeling, the loss, the pain, the betrayal – but it provides a reconciliation that losses and betrayal are part of the gameplan and the struggle has to be continued.

Ganesh Gaitonde: Ganesh is a small time crook, who becomes the biggest Hindu mob boss in India. His father was Raghavendra Gaitonde who was a poor Brahmin married to Sumangala. Raghavendra along with his wife went to Nashik where he was installed as the priest of Lakshmi Narayan temple with the help of a cousin named Suryakant Shenoy. The cousin used to help the family whenever he got the chance. Then, Kiran was born who was a bright child from the very beginning. As he grew up, he felt contempt for his father who was a weak man, pitied by others. Later on, he comes to know that his father had murdered Suryakant and fled. Their family was shunned by the village. The village men came to Kiran's mother and bestowed gifts on her and became her clients. Kiran could not take the insult anymore. When he was twelve, he left his home and boarded the train to Bombay. He changed his name from Kiran to Ganesh – the survivor who always lives. He got his training from Salim Kaka and when he was nineteen years old, he killed Salim Kaka and ran away with his gold. He sold the smuggled gold to Paritosh Shah who asked him to invest his money in business.

Gaitonde ably acquires the land of Gopalmath. He builds a basti in Gopalmath where spacious and pucca kholis are built up. All sorts of people live in

Gopalmath. He gathers money from shopkeepers, traders and in return provides them security. He has good relations with police. Local people come to him to settle their matters and thus the G-company is originated. He comes in confrontation with Cobra gang and S-company. He destroys the Cobra gang but S-company and Suleiman Isa threaten him throughout. Thus, a street kid with no resources but his own wits evolves into a violent, moral, spoiled man who is protected and catered to by his band of dependent henchman.

Gaitonde knows that he would be killed sooner or later. There is no escape. So, he wants to reign like a King. Fear was part of his reign. With the passage of time, Paritosh Shah becomes close friend and confidante of Gaitonde but he is killed and Gaitonde is shattered. He marries Subhadra Pevalekar because his friend Paritosh Shah wanted him to. He becomes a father. He escapes attempt on his life twice but his wife and son die.

While in prison, he comes in contact with various persons who mould his lifestyle and personality. He meets Mr. Kumar who worked for certain part of the government (RAW). He wants Gaitonde to settle out of India and carry on his fight with Suleiman Isa. He comes in contact with Guruji whom he supplied arms. He becomes a follower of Guruji, as Guruji guides him on various occasions, even about an attempt on his life. He also, comes in contact with Jojo Mascarneas, a model coordinator and producer. She recommends many girls to Gaitonde and his fellow prisoners. She also instructs him to follow Yoga and follow a healthy lifestyle.

On the orders of Mr. Kumar, Gaitonde has to stay on a yacht in Thailand. Mr. Kumar has given all the security training to Gaitonde and in return Gaitonde has to provide information about Suleiman Isa and his operations. He develops a life-long friendship with Jojo, sharing, fighting and enjoying but they meet only in the concluding pages of the novel. Gaitonde carries on his brutal tasks and becomes more vigorous. He comes in contact with Zoya Mirza through Jojo. He is completely smitten over by the girl. Gaitonde supports her. They meet in a flat at Singapore. Gaitonde finances her rise as a model. She wanted a perfect body and figure, Gaitonde supplies her resources for her medical toning and sculpting of her body. She turns out to be a diva. Gaitonde became notorious and was a regular feature in media :

Gaitonde regularly appeared in newspapers; dallied with bejewelled starlets, bankrolled politicians and bought them and sold them his daily skim from Bombay's various criminal dhandas was said to be greater than annual corporate incomes and his name was used to frighten the recalcitrant.(30)

Gaitonde becomes fascinating for his acts of unthinking bloodshed and revenge and also for his keen sentimental generosity. He lives under the delusion that he can produce the perfect Bollywood action movie for Zoya Mirza, as he is prompted by his blind devotion to a renowned holy man. He also gets a face makeover done in order to live in disguise.

While carrying the shipment of Guruji, his men develop serious complications and die. Gaitonde becomes inquisitive and wishes to question

Guruji. Guruji goes missing. Gaitonde searches for him at various places and makes it, his mission. His search culminates in Bikanur Farms near Amritsar. There, he finds a secret chamber with missing links. He finds lots of dollars in the chamber and runs away with it. After the episode, Guruji calls him and he discovers Guruji's plan about a nuclear bomb. Guruji excites him with the idea, "every story needed a climax, and a big story needed a big climax"(838).

Gaitonde is not convinced. He builds a nuclear shelter for himself in Kailashpada and settles there. He thinks of his trusted friend Jojo who has never betrayed him. So, in order to protect her, he asks her man to transport her to his new shelter. Jojo seems disinterested and is infuriated. In a fit of rage, Gaitonde kills her but later repents. He calls Sartaj Singh, informs him of the presence of the don of G-Company. As the police party reaches the spot, he kills himself. The leads are followed by Sartaj Singh who undergoes the quest to discover why Gaitonde blew his own brains rather than those of someone else. The search is interspersed with Gaitonde's memories of his criminal career.

Sartaj Singh: The character Sartaj Singh is in continuation with the writer's portrayal of the Inspector Sartaj Singh in the story 'Kama' in *Love and Longing in Bombay*. Sartaj Singh is the Sikh police officer in Mumbai, used to being identified by his turban, beard and the sharp cut of his trousers. He is forty plus, has gone through a failed marriage and his career prospects are on the slide. Others from his batch had climbed past him but he is just pedaling away. When he gets an anonymous tip about the secret hide out of the don of G-Company, he is determined to catch the prize. Singh becomes the unwilling ear to Gaitonde's last

words and dealing with the discovery of Gaitonde's body following his bizarre suicide. Singh is dragged into Gaitonde's sphere as Gaitonde posthumously recounts his autobiography. Singh tries to determine how Gaitonde's influence has grown in India from grossly criminal to an internationally threatening don. Sartaj Singh is a good detective like his father but he is no angel. When an ambitious social worker requests help with a rival; he takes the money and beats up the target as requested. The local social worker is then able to assist him with setting up of an encounter, one of those Indian police methods where criminals are lured into a trap and then eliminated.

He helps out Kamla Pandey when she is blackmailed by her so called pilot boy friend, Umesh. He doesn't feel like helping the lady but then he yields to the orders of her mother who had asked him to help her out in her crisis.

Sartaj Singh and his assistant Katekar had known each other for a long time and he had come to rely on him but Katekar's death during the investigation tore him away. He held himself responsible for Katekar's death. He missed the family life, so he used to go to his friend Majid Khan's house for passing his time. He loved old songs and movies.

He has a wonderful chemistry with Parulkar, the Deputy Commissioner for Zone 13. He considers Parulkar as his mentor. Sartaj thinks that Parulkar is the best player of the political game. "He was a grandmaster of the subtle art of contact and double contact and back channel, of ministers and corporate cultivated and kept happy"(9). Parulkar had connections with Suleiman Isa – the underworld don

which brings about his downfall and Sartaj Singh has a prominent role to play in his downfall.

Through his investigations, he has the chance to meet the RAW officers like Anjali Mathur and others who order him to carry on his investigations on Gaitonde till further orders, as it involves the matter of national interest. On account of it, he meets Mary Mascarnes, the love interest of his life. He discovers information about the life of Jojo, Mary's sister and the dead girlfriend of Gaitonde. He also learns about the mechanizations of one Guruji, who was a known figure and the source of guidance to Gaitonde. Guruji was involved in some nefarious activities dealing with nuclear plans to destroy Bombay. Singh understands the plan and with great efforts traces the location of Guruji and finally gets him punished through Commando Operation. He saves his country and its people. He gets the much deserved promotion but the secret about the nuclear material is not revealed as it would lead to chaos and confusion. Sartaj Singh is the undisputed hero in the novel where all characters are painted pale grey against him.

Guruji/Shridhar Shukla: Sridhar Shukla was born in Sialkot on 14th February 1934. His father was an aircraft technician and an asthmatic patient. After the partition, they settled in Jodhpur and then, Pathankot. He was a famous sportsman, the captain of Cricket team. Before his eighteenth birthday, he had borrowed his father's bike to go to cinema. On his way, he had an accident and he lost function of the lower part of his body. After the accident, he was visited by the visions. He saw the past and the future and he started his journey inwards, deep within his self. He believed that, "in my injury I found myself, from the outside I was brought to

the inside”(609). He read about scientific boons, computers, had a wheel chair, which could climb stairs by itself. He disliked Muslims dominating the world and believed in the coming of cataclysms, the end of Kaliyug.

Sridhar Shukla was an international swami. He had lunches with famous personalities. He was often on TV, sitting on the wheel chair and smiling. He was a good looking man with his thick white hair sweeping back over his head. He had centers in one forty two countries. He had made predictions, many of them turned out to be true.

He called up Gaitonde in connection with arms business, Gaitonde used to supply guns in the country for Guruji. He discussed religion and philosophy with Gaitonde. He tried to convince Gaitonde about the use of weapons as it was also used by Lord Rama and Lord Krishna to destroy the evil. He was sixty four years old but still alert and active.

He had formed a party Hizbuddeen, the party of the final day. This was the fake group, essential to Guruji's future plans. The party was funded by Muslims and used by Guruji to fuel his activities. Some of the money went to Kalki Sena which needed money for arms and recruitment. He believed that “there are choices we can make at every minute. We are bound by our pasts, by the consequences of our action”(737). Gaitonde finds a spiritual power in Guruji and gets attracted towards him and follows him blindly. In Gaintonde's view:

He was so enlightened, so far advanced that he was somewhat removed from the world of men and women. I knew that he valued cleanliness that he liked gardens and greenery, that he had vast amounts of knowledge about arcane subjects, that he liked to learn about the latest advances in technology as soon as they happened. But still he hovered a little above the earth. (738)

When Gaitonde's men fall to radiations, Gaitonde searches for an answer from Guruji but Guruji goes missing. He traces him to various places from North to South and locates his farm house. Guruji calls him and details him about the coming of acocalypse and destruction when he says:

Every golden age must be preceded by an apocalypse. It has always been so, and it will be again. For more than fifty years we have put off the fight on our borders and suffered small humiliations and small bloodshed every day. We have been dishonoured and disgraced and have become used to living with this shame. We will fight. The battle is necessary.(838)

But Gaitonde is not convinced. Finally, the sham Guru is traced out by the efforts of Sartaj Singh and given due punishment.

Jojo Mascarenas: Her real name was Juliet. She had a sister and mother. Her father was in merchant navy and died early. When she was fifteen, she came to stay in Bombay with her sister Mary who had been married to John. They lived in Goregaon. In six months, she became a Bombay girl. She took dance and acting

classes and very soon got modelling assignments. When she came to Bombay, she only spoke Konkan and some Tulu but she quickly learnt English. She was intelligent and picked up all by watching TV. John took her to meet some people in MTV who were his friends. She met producers and directors. Then, Mary caught her red handed with her husband. She took away her sister's husband who prostituted her. She had to make compromises and then she left John. She had her ways and became a model coordinator and producer. She recommended models to various agencies and put the girls in the videos. She owned a TV production company and sent the young, beautiful and needy to the rich and demanding. She was very laborious. She had her office in her house crammed with files. She had love for variety of shoes. She kept the apartment clean and was methodical in her work.

She was rough in speech. She was very rude with Gaitonde but developed a bonding with him. She was not ready to accept Gaitonde's viewpoint of nuclear fallout and wished to go back to her work. Gaitonde fearing her safety took her to the nuclear shelter but as the circumstances transpired, she was killed at the hands of Gaitonde.

Anjali Mathur: She is a DCP in CBI and attached with RAW and is incharge of investigating the Gaitonde case. She was the daughter of Jagdeep Mathur who worked for Intelligence Bureau. He went missing while following the leads of an informant. She was virtually adopted by Mathur's close friend and colleague, K.D. Yadav. Right from the childhood, she had the knack of reading and Yadav brought books for her.

She was married to a Kannadiga boy against the wishes of her family. The husband had studied economics, went on to make a career in IAS and had left her after four years of marriage. He complained about Anjali's obsession with her work.

She carries herself neatly, wearing suits and carrying dupattas. She is investigating and handling the issues of national security. When she was first of all assigned the Gaitonde case, her officials and colleagues criticized her that being a lady she could not handle the serious issues but she has proved everyone wrong through her sincere efforts and hard work. She contacts Sartaj Singh and makes him investigate all the details gradually passing and closing up from one lead to another. She even takes the help of her uncle K.D. Yadav, who is ill and suffering. She is at his bedside during his last days and understands the pain and struggle which he was going through. All her hard work is fruitful as she averts the possible nuclear disaster with the help of Sartaj Singh.

She has been portrayed as a lady of substance who is ready to undertake the challenges thrust on her. She is not weakened by the criticisms meted out to her. She remains firm and sticks to her job with K.D. Yadav as her pillar of strength.

Parulkar: He was the Deputy Commissioner for zone 13 in Mumbai. He had sloping shoulders and a pear shaped body and his uniform used to be crumpled. He was a sub-inspector under Sartaj's father but he overtook Sartaj's father and had risen through Maharashtra State Police Service. He had an astonishing and unparalleled career. He used to visit Sartaj's home along with his father for dinner but Sartaj's mother never liked him as she thought him to be an opportune seeker.

Parulkar had become Sartaj's mentor and guide. Parulkar had made a leap into Indian Police Service. As Sartaj called him "he was an aficionado of the subtle sport, he was simply the best"(9). He loved reporters and had a knack of convincing others by being jovial with them. When in his elements, he would discuss a successful operation by polishing and improving the story.

Parulkar was facing tough time with the government but he settled the issue. It was recounted that he had paid twenty crore rupees to the Chief Minister and much else to various functionaries to save himself. His unofficial earnings were handed over to Homi Mehta by Sartaj Singh who would funnel it to a Swiss account. He had links with Suleiman Isa's company. Many of Gaitonde's men had been killed and encountered by Parulkar on the basis of information given by S-Company. Big politicians and ministers had been after him due to his links with S Company.

Gradually, the government changed, Parulkar sided with the Rakshak government and back-trapped the S-company men and encountered them. Suleiman Isa got furious and trapped him via Sartaj Singh. His phone call with Suleiman Isa was tapped and leaked. He lost his reputation and committed suicide.

Kamala Pandey: When one flips through the pages of the novel, the first character to be introduced is Kamal Pandey. She is married to Mr. Pandey and is seen having a fight with her husband. She is an airhostess. The husband suspects her to be having an affair with a pilot. His doubts are very much confirmed in the following chapters, when she meets Sartaj Singh in connection with a case.

She was having an affair with a pilot Umesh Bindal who flew for Sahara. They had met at a party in Versova three years ago. The affair had begun a year after their first meeting and she had also broken off with him six months ago. Someone was blackmailing her on account of it. She had already paid them one lakh and fifty thousand rupees and they were demanding more. She had kept a list of numbers from which they had called her. She had burnt all the video tapes they had sent her.

Umesh was very attractive and handsome. Naturally, she fell for him. Although, they had a break up she was still, involved with him. Sartaj investigates and traces the case through Cozy Nook Guest House where they used to meet. His investigation leads him to Umesh Bindal who confesses his guilt. Kamala was the single spoilt child of her parents. Her parents were very rich and she maintained her own separate accounts. Umesh wanted to extract money from her.

When Kamala comes to know about the deception of Umesh, she realizes her mistake. She loves her husband and doesn't want to leave him. She gathers herself and is guilt-ridden that she has cheated her husband.

Shalini Katekar: Shalini had been married to Katekar for nineteen years. Katekar was a sub-inspector and assistant to Sartaj Singh. Shalini had a clean efficiency of keeping the things stacked. The Kholi was small and clean. They had two children Rohit and Mohit. She used to clean one house only because she wanted to be home when her sons were back from school. She had a younger sister Bharati who was married to a scrap metal dealer. Shalini was thrifty as she first of all thought of the family against her own pleasures.

She had to bear the pain of losing her husband who died during an encounter. She had to manage her household and her two sons. It took around nine and half months, for the relief amount to be released after her husband's death. His Provident fund and his savings were also small. To add to it, Bharati demanded money from her, as her husband wanted to start a travel agency but she very wisely tackled the situation and did not part away with the money. With the passage of time, Shalini joined a family welfare group and became a volunteer. She informed the poor women about health and cleanliness. Bharati's husband did not approve of her task of enlightening women about family planning measures. She was criticized but remained unperturbed. Her son Rohit joins the computer class, while Mohit bears a grudge against Sartaj Singh. Shalini transforms herself from the role of a dutiful wife to a working woman. She dresses smartly and elegantly and infuses confidence.

Zoya Mirza: She represents the leading film star of Bollywood. She is very pretty and beautiful almost 5 feet 9 inches tall. Her real name was Jamila. She belonged to an orthodox Muslim family in Lucknow. Her father was a small man who owned a small restaurant. While discussing with her brothers and father, she came to know about the fashion world. She was taller than her brothers. So, she decided and left her home and came to Bombay, where she came into contact with Jojo. Jojo recommended her to Gaitonde. They used to meet in Singapore at a flat. The flat belonged to Gaitonde's associates Arvind and Suhasini. They stayed in the upper half in the penthouse. Gaitonde spent a lot of money on her body reshaping procedures and surgeries. She was very much like Gaitonde who could change the

world through their energy. So, Gaitonde sponsored a movie for her. Then she won the coveted Miss India contest. When she became Miss India, the frequency of their meetings declined because of her professional commitments and finally, it was altogether stopped.

Sartaj meets Zoya Mirza in connection with her links to Gaitonde. Zoya is perplexed initially, but then maintains her composure. She supplies the information about Gaitonde, his telephonic conversations with Bunty, Trivedi, Sharmaji and Guruji. She also discloses that Gaitonde used to talk about Kaliyug and the approaching end of the world.

3.5 CONCLUSION

Vikram Chandra in his novels explores a range of Bombay life commanding with immense skill a city crammed with vitality and life. It is full of chaos and confusion. Virginia Crompton in *Literary Review* comments about the book of short stories, “Love and Longing in Bombay is very much set in Bombay and in the twentieth century – the nostalgic poise of the prose is blended with the sweep and chaos of modern Indian City Life.”(n.pag.)

The five stories portrayed in *Love and Longing in Bombay* are all love stories but they present strange mysterious quality. ‘Dharma’ points towards the author’s interest in ghost stories. An old soldier comes home to his parent’s house to find that it is haunted. ‘Shakti’ deals with high society, the battle between two society hostesses, each one trying to overpower and snuggle the other. ‘Kama’ is a detective story which deals with a murder investigation. Sartaj Singh handles the inquiry and takes unknown paths and leads which make him understand how the victim came to die, but also about his own life and his understanding of marital relationships. The next story ‘Artha’ deals with the love of a gay couple and the drives of a gifted programmer for perfection in her code while the gang operations form the backdrop of the story. The final story ‘Shanti’ stands apart from the others. Subramaniam invites the narrator to his house, to hear a story which in fact, turns out to be the story, how he met and married his wife Shanti.

The protagonist Subramaniam is the connecting link who is at the beginning and the end of the book. There are two set of narrators, very different from each other but surviving in the complex megapolis. Subramaniam represents

the image of mysterious and knowledgeable. He evokes a vision of old, difficult and intricate Bombay which is mature and sensible to handle any situation while Sharma represents the new information age- rash and impulsive, materialistic, pragmatic and lacking in defensive mechanisms. The blending of traditional and modern ideals is very much prominent in the stories. Many of the stories are left deliberately incomplete by the novelist. Characters look to find answers to the mysteries but many of the key elements are left unresolved and unexplained.

The writer by the employment of ordinary protagonists presents a very modern setting of his narrative. The changes coming in society, the distinctive changes in thought process, behaviour, club, parties, sexual-encounters, marital-disputes, widow remarriage are indicative of the modern trends in the society but it also reflects that old concepts have still, their roles to play. The faith in superstitious beliefs, horoscope-matching, non acceptance of widow remarriage and love affairs is a testimony to the fact. The firm base is still traditional which leads to friction and differences in approach.

Sacred Games is a crime thriller. A seasoned Bombay police officer gets a life time opportunity of catching his bait – the powerful Ganesh Gaitonde, the criminal warlord of the G-Company. The confrontation between Sartaj Singh and Ganesh Gaitonde lies at the heart of the novel. Sartaj tries to seek the knowledge of his prey but it becomes clear that the game the two players thought they were playing is in fact, a part of much larger plan, one that expands beyond the city and implicates the planet.

The novel moves through various landscapes, love life of a police officer, a widow battling poverty and urban pressures, young woman's struggle for filmhood, a woman who prostitutes other woman and ironically produces TV shows about women's sufferings, a right wing religious leader conducts an enormous sacrifice for the safety of citizens, a gangster who leads his company to victory but discovers the strange emptiness of getting what it wants, the wrenching violence of the 1947 of India, to the spectacle of nuclear terrorism.

The main storyline makes up a small fraction of nine hundred marathon pages of the books. There are numerous stories within the story. There are some chapters which are termed as insets by the author which portray characters which may not be directly integral to the plot but have an interesting back story. The novel moves along and presents a confusing plot structure. The Indian words are used in the text, although, author has provided a glossary in the international edition of the book for the readers. Still, it poses a difficulty to flip through the pages to understand the contextual meaning. Some of the subplots could have been avoided. They certainly add to the pages of the book and if discarded could have made it much more readable.

The book works at multiple levels. It is a deep introspection of the amazing megapolis which breeds, nourishes and nurtures all sections of people. Religion, underworld, weapons of mass destruction are all covered by the broad canvas of the novel. Gaitonde is drawn into the unholy world of local politicians and communal tensions. His wealth increases and his connections carry him to

Bollywood. He stumbles upon Zoya Mirza whose face and body isn't genuine but he enjoys her all the same.

All the digressions from the ideal are very much visible in the novel but still all the lives, ordinary and extraordinary flow around each other to weave a complex web which holds the last words, reach for only the 'life itself.' The fourth chapter of the study also elaborates and explores the complexities of living in the city of dreams- Mumbai.

WORKS CITED

- Chandra, Vikram. *Love and Longing in Bombay*. Boston : Little Brown & Co, 1997. Print.
- , "Bombay Dhamaka." Rev. of *Sacred Games*, by Garth Risk Hallberg. *M. M. Millions.com*. MM, 28 Aug. 2007. Web. 15 Aug. 2013.
- , "Gangstar Raj." Rev. of *Sacred Games*, by Paul Gray. *New York Times* 7 Jan. 2007, late ed.: E5. Print.
- , *Red Earth and Pouring Rain*. Winchester, MA : Faber, 1995. Print.
- , Rev. of *Love and Longing in Bombay*, by V. Shankar Aiyar. *Indiatodayin*. Indiatoday, 15 May 1997. Web. 10 Aug. 2013.
- , Rev. of *Sacred Games* by Ahmad Saidullah. *Quarterly Conversation* 2012 : 12-14. Print.
- , *Sacred Games*. Boston : Faber & Faber, 2006.
- Crompton, Virginia. "Love and Longing in Bombay." *Vikramchandra.com*. N.p. 2004. Web. 10. Aug. 2013.
- Dhawan, R. K. Ed. " The New and the Old : Indian Writing at the Turn of the Century." *Indian Writing in the New Millenium*. New Delhi : Chaman Press, 2000. Print.
- Geetha, B. "Vulnerable in Virtual Space." *Tribune* 7 Nov. 2014 : 9. Print.

Ghosh, Ranjan. "Critical Perspective." *Britishcouncil.org*. British Council Literature, 2009. Web. 10 Aug. 2013.

Nagindrappa, Manikamma., and M. K. Radhika. "Women Exploitation in Indian Modern Society." *International Journal of Scientific and Research Pbs* 3.2(2013). Print.

Prasannarajan, S. "Sacred Games by Vikram Chandra." *India Today* 7 Aug. 2008 : 26 – 28. Print.

Sangari, Kumkum. "The Politics of the Possible." *Interrogating Modernity: Culture and Colonialism*. Ed. Tejaswani Niranjana and P. Sudhir. Calcutta : Seagull Books, 1993. Print.

Sarda Rajshree. "Successful yet Scared." *Tribune* 27 June 2011 : 8. Print.

Sharma, Sagar. "Gender Based Violence is Part of a Continuum." *Spectrum* 1 Apr. 2012, city ed.: 1. Print.

Uppal, Mehak. "Grand Central." *Spectrum* 30 Nov. 2014, city ed.: 9. Print.