

Exploring the Extravagant Society: A Study of Shining India through New Theme and Settings in Postmillennial Indian English Fiction

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Abstract:

The Paper attempts to make a critical study of shining new India through the evaluation of new themes and settings in postmillennial Indian English fiction. Lifestyle of postmillennial Indian youth is submerged in Western Café culture, dating culture, nightclub culture. Keeping track with rapid social transformation the theme and setting of Indian English fiction is also making adjustments in order to cater to the contemporary youth. Therefore, shopping malls, restaurants, cafés, airport, motorways, nightclubs, hotels, virtual media has emerged as settings of contemporary Indian publications as Indian youth frequent these extravagant places regularly. With a close reading of select novels- Ruchita Misra's *The Ineligible Bachelors* (2011), Sudeep Nagarkar's *It Started With a friend Request* (2013) and *You're Trending in My Dreams* (2015)- the paper demonstrates an extravagant, shining, and globalized postmillennial India which is reflected in the new body of Indian English fiction.

Keywords: Postmillennial India, chick-lit, Indian English Fiction, extravagant places, theme and setting

1. Introduction:

Since the economic liberalization in 1991, American consumer culture has slowly entered into the Indian society, and the young generation which grew up in the 1990s and the 2000s were the first ones who were massively influenced by this imported culture. In the postmillennial India, shopping malls, cafes, restaurants, supermarkets, pubs, discos, nightclubs, and multiplexes have mushroomed in every metropolitan city and in some of the small towns as well. Teresa Platz Robinson argues that “the emergence of a visible, commodified, leisure culture in the form of cafes, targeted at and appropriated by young adults from the middle and upper classes, is a striking phenomenon in the transformation of urban life and cityscapes in India since the economic liberalization in 1991” (1). The growing middle class and its economic prosperity has resulted in increased crowds in transit places as well. People are travelling more, thereby frequenting airports and motorways regularly; spending leisure times in holiday places, visiting food chains and coffee chains in malls, watching movies in multiplexes. Globalized Indian youth are more active in these leisure activities, which is in contrast to the older generation's values and aesthetics, and “by engaging in practices that their elders and wider society disapproved of, such as *timepass*, conspicuous consumption, smoking, and drinking alcohol, premarital relationships and sex, the young adults of the café culture were challenging and asserting their independence from their parent's values” (Robinson 2). In the older generation, “government jobs and state resources” took priority but the current globalized generation focuses more on the “accumulation of wealth in the market through jobs and

commodities” (Robinson 8), and the marker of status to this young generation are “owning a house, a car, a TV, mobile phones, and computers, going out to eat and on vacations” (Robinson 21).

These socio-cultural and economic changes in society have influenced the literary landscape as well. Contemporary writers and critics have been inspired to have a closer look at these changes and devote their time to incorporate these transformations into their works. Krishna Sen and Rituparna Roy’s *Writing India Anew: Indian English Fiction 2000-2010* (2013) attempts to capture a long range of thematic pulse of published works which encompasses mythological, historical, new urban centric narratives, globalized India, science fiction, and graphic novels. They divulge that the Indian literary canon which was established in the 1980s by stalwarts like Rushdie is getting strengthened but that there has been a huge diversification in the field with the arrivals of new authors, readers, themes and forms. *Reading New India: Post-Millennial Indian Fiction in English* (2013) by E. Dawson Varughese introduces a diverse body of Indian writing in English which is emerging from all strata of the Indian society emphasizing themes of young and new India, urban India and a growing middle class. The book takes up a sociological approach more than that of literary criticism. Alex Tickell’s article “‘An Idea Whose Time Has Come’: Indian Fiction in English after 1991” (2016) focuses on the period after the economic liberalization in 1991, analyses the socio-economic and cultural transformations in Indian society, and the effect of these transformations in the production of fiction writing. The article investigates the factors which contribute to the growing significance of Indian writing in English and Indian authors in the international market, and the shaping of a changing perception of postmillennial Indian fictions. E. Dawson Varughese’s article *Genre Fiction of New India: Post-Millennial Configurations of Crick Lit, Chick Lit and Crime Writing* (2016) assesses the globalized new India in the postmillennial period and examines the literary changes brought about by the economic and cultural changes in society. She elaborates on the emergence of diversified commercial fiction and put emphasis on new genres crick lit and chick lit along with the growth of crime fiction. Apart from these critical works, some extensive research works (Ghosh and Dhawan 2013; Sablok 2013; Agarwal 2013) have been devoted to individual authors.

Extensive review of existing scholarship on Indian writing in English in the 21st century reveals that most of the works have devoted their attention to the growth of Indian commercial fictions and the consolidation of a robust domestic market. But there has been a distinct research lacuna on the use of stylized, glittering and extravagant globalized spaces as settings of contemporary Indian English fictions and the emergence of new theme in the form of chick-lit. This research paper takes up this lacuna as its objective, and explores the incorporation of post millennial extravagant Indian society in fiction writings through the critical evaluation of Ruchita Misra’s *The Ineligible Bachelor* (2011), Sudeep Nagarkar’s *It Started With a friend Request* (2013) and *You’re Trending in My Dreams* (2015).

2. Chick-lit: A new theme in postmillennial Indian English Fiction:

Postmillennial Indian English writers are resorting to content which revolves around young characters, who are primarily living in metropolitan cities. Main characters of their stories range within the age group which falls under the category of 20 to 30 years old. The storylines are developed around their career goals, corporate job sectors, insecurities and complexities of their relationships. Although characters are of the mix categories but in most of the fictions the lead character is a woman who is studying in a college or have stepped out of college and entered into the corporate sector. The evaluation of these factors points out to the emergence of chick-lit in the postmillennial Indian English writings. The main characters who belong to the twenties and early thirties are “navigating their generation’s challenges of balancing

demanding careers with personal relationships” (quoted in Ferris and Young 3). Kasturi in *The Ineligible Bachelors*, Aleesha and Tamanna in *It Started with a friend Request* reflect these two important aspects. Kasturi is highly educated as she holds a Master’s degree from a reputed Management institute yet her mom is only concerned about finding a suitable groom for her. She narrates “I have not been home for a month yet and I am thinking of appearing for CAT again, only to go back to B- school. Mother... seems possessed with the lone, sinister wish of getting me married to the first guy she can lay her hands on” (Misra 2). The author here gives a vivid portrayal of the young postmillennial Indian women who faces the dual trouble of family pressure of getting married and their personal ambition of establishing their career. Kasturi, who is a representative of postmillennial Indian women and belong to the twenties or early thirties, has to navigate very carefully without ruffling any feature of her parents while making sure she fends off all possible grooms effectively and concentrate on her job.

Devoted critical works on the primary characteristics of chick-lit reveals that “almost all chick-lit utilises a first-person narrative or point of view” and “employs the epistolary/ diary format” (Carvalho 19). Select primary texts which are taken up for this paper are all written in the first-person narratives as the story is narrated by Kasturi in *The Ineligible Bachelors*, Aleesha in *It Started with a friend Request*, and Ahana and Varun narrates in *You’re trending in my Dreams*. All these stories are written in the form of diary writing. Kasturi writes with the mention of date and year along with particularly devoted chapters resembling multiple topics written in a diary. Aleesha, Ahana and Malvika’s story also includes particular chapter divisions which has the point of view of main characters who are all in their twenties and they are studying in colleges. India has always been a predominant patriarchal society, and only in the last two-three decades society has opened up a bit. Still, women are expected to do what society assigns them in most part of the country. This has been a bone of contention between old and young generation in the postmillennial India as women are progressive, educated and influenced by liberal ideologies. Women are more expressive and critical of the mindset of backward mentality, and they can spontaneously express their point of view in their narrative diary format. These stories are written in diary format because “the diary turns confessional under the cover of fiction, allowing the writer to articulate thoughts that cannot easily be publicly voiced” (Carvalho 19). The women in discussion are all “confident, independent, even courageous women taking responsibility” (Mazza 21). It is interesting to get the point of view of this situation Kasturi is in. Her confessional ranting about the whole saga of getting trapped in this situation echoes the millions of Indian postmillennial women. She bemoans:

I am intelligent, reasonably good looking, well-educated and will soon be earning well enough. But of course, how does it matter at all? What is the use of it all if it does not serve the ultimate and supremely noble purpose of getting me a rich, handsome IIT/IIM husband who will forget his mother the second he sets eyes on me?

Since I have reached the ripe age of twenty-three (only for god’s sake!) and have no boyfriend in tow, my mother, my mother’s mother, my mother’s sisters-in-law, my mother’s sisters, my mother’s brothers- all seem to think that I am doomed and run a high risk of ending up in an old-age home.

(Misra 3)

Chick-lits portray the social and cultural changes that are taking place in the society. The value system of the old generation is going through a massive transformation, and social bondages and other cultural conventions are obliterated because of many other changes that have taken place in last two- three decades. Aleesha and Tamanna’s parents belong to a generation who believed in family traditions and a sense of close community bonding. They would lend their helping hand to their community people even at the cost

of comfort, personal satisfaction and individual privacy. But postmillennial Indian generation are part of postmodern society which celebrates the fragmentation, and are hugely influenced by consumer culture which propagates individuality, personal satisfaction, freedom and comfort annihilating the community sense of social bondages of earlier generation. When Tamanna's father informs her that Aleesha is going to Mumbai for the first time and therefore she would live with Tamanna, she is furious. Tamanna replies to her father, "you know I don't like others intruding my privacy. I mean I wanted a room partner but not a family friend. I wanted someone who would live her life and let me live mine... you would have at least asked me once before letting her stay with me" (Nagarkar 2013, 22).

All these texts vividly portray a social reality and cultural shift towards more liberal thinking mindset of male-female going out together, have night out in disco and pubs, and be absolutely normal about having multiple friends from opposite gender- things which are contrary to the value system of earlier Indian social organization and cultural codes. In *You're Trending in my Dreams*, Varun, Ahana, Malvika and Garima share the apartment, in *The Ineligible Bachelors*, Kasturi, Varun and Anu spend most of their time together in canteen as they became very close friends, and in *It Started with a Friend Request* Tamanna and Deep goes to Goa and live in a same hotel room which the earlier cultural codes and social conventions would not approve of before marriage.

Young women of postmillennial India prefer to stay single, enjoy individual freedom and get into multiple relationship rather than getting married early and become a housewife contrary to the social expectation of the earlier generation. Indian chick-lit employs these important socio-cultural changes as themes of their plotlines. These stories reflect a "dramatic shift from the 'boy meets girl and lives ever after' plot to the 'girl meets boys with no tidy ending' story. They focus on "a more realistic portrait of single life, dating and the dissolution of romantic ideals" (Ferris and Young 3; Regaisiene 70). Kasturi, in *The Ineligible Bachelors*, goes on multiple dates on the insistence of her mother for deciding on a suitable groom but prefers to be happily single. Eventually she falls in love with Rajeev sir in her office and starts dating him. On the other hand, Rajeev sir is involved in multiple relationships at the same time, therefore, cheating with all the girls. Kasturi leaves Rajeev sir and starts dating Purva, another man she already rejected before. In *It Started with a Friend Request*, Tamanna is not ready to get married early but prefers to marry the man she loves in her office. But just like *The Ineligible Bachelors* in this story also the man who Tamanna is in love with is cheating with multiple women. Deep is secretly having affair with Aleesha and Tamanna both until he is exposed in the end. Recurrent theme is found in *You're Trending in my Dreams* as well. In this story, Ahana's boyfriend was having affair with another girl. The boyfriend is exposed and beaten up by Ahana. After the break up Ahana is very happy to be back to the single life and throws a big party to her friends. In all these stories, young characters are seen to be having multiple relationships, they are not ready to get married and settle down early in their life. Young girls, especially, are happy to be single rather than getting married because of societal pressure. They get into relationship with the men they like, and even after the break up they are exploring new relationships.

3. Emergence of new settings in postmillennial Indian English Fiction:

The employment opportunity has been up ever since the communication innovation has made information readily available and gave greater access to international contacts. The mushrooming of multinational companies and the rapid growth of electronic media has also played its part in the formation of huge potential for the employment which led to the mass migration from rural to urban places. The result is very much apparent in the way the Indian middle class is growing with greater ambition of consumption.

Consumer culture of the age is ready to provide them with alluring lifestyle and glamorous leisure sites which put dreams and desires in the eyes of the consumer and “generate direct bodily excitement and aesthetic pleasures” (Featherstone 13). Unprecedented advancement of technology, communication systems and fast flow of information has engulfed contemporary Indian society. Contemporary job opportunities have taken the youth out of their homes or rather home towns. People are migrating into metropolitan cities and staying in rented spaces in those cities. These migrating people spend their time during weekends or holidays by frequenting malls, cafes, supermarkets, restaurants, pubs or multiplexes. Therefore, a significant amount of their life they spend in newly emerged glittering places, which are shopping malls, multiplexes, restaurants, and cafes. These glittering consumer places, which are often used as entertainment venues, are also known as hyperreal places. According to Russel W. Belk, “hyperreality is a stylized reality... a sanitized version of reality, cleansed of strife, world problems, dirt, prejudice, exploitation, or other problems of everyday life” (29). Shopping malls, restaurants, cafes, supermarkets are fantasized places in which no dirt of the real world could be traced. These places are well maintained, well-manicured and cleansed of strife and dirt. Globalized Indian youth frequent these spaces often.

Since these hyperreal places are frequented by people who are often in the age group of 18-30, contemporary Indian English fiction writers are incorporating these places as settings of their stories which primarily cast young college students or those who have just started working in corporate settings. The settings of contemporary fiction are not the traditional places as they are constantly frequenting glitzy consumer places and moving from one space to another. Contemporary settings include college campuses, office spaces, restaurants, cafes, bars, nightclubs, rented apartments, shopping malls, and multiplexes. These reader centric spaces are used as settings in order to make the stories popular among contemporary youth. When the postmillennial Indian youth read these stories, they can associate the characters with themselves.

4. Shopping malls, associated restaurants and movie theatres as settings:

The rapid growth of the urban sector, more disposable incomes and the desire of leading a high-end lifestyle have contributed to the transformation of Indian mall culture and its retail destinations. In the initial days when Malls started emerging in India “developers attracted consumers to malls through the promise of a wide assortment of stores and merchandise available in a single location” (Bloch 1994). But today’s globalized malls are not restricting themselves only to providing shopping for clothes and its accessories but are also focusing to include essential outing experiences like fine dining, cafés, pubs and cuisines in one large shopping complex. Shopping malls are, therefore, “not only a shopping destination” but have turned into places where friends, families and peers get together and spend quality times to “rejuvenate, socialize and entertain” (Khullar 2018). The young generation is technology savvy, and they are aware of global trends and fashion enthusiasts. Mall administrators are focussing to cater to these customers by offering them opportunities which they like and long for. Malls adopt various approaches to lure the young generation and some of the strategies are to provide “dazzling discounts, perfect ambience of shopping, attractive multinational brands”, and to create these places an entertainment space “where people could relax themselves from the hectic work schedules and tensions and enjoy shopping, fooding and many more” (Sengupta 2018).

In Sudeep Nagarkar’s *It Started with a Friend Request* Akash and Aditya, who are very good friends, are seen to be visiting Infinity Mall. After getting to the mall, they “catch the 7.30 pm show of the movie

Pyaar Ka Punchnaama” (16). They took two last row tickets and had a wonderful and fun evening. Later, Akash and Aditya plan to meet in a restaurant to discuss about a bigger plan. They reach to the Garden View Bar & Restaurant and “ordered one bottle of Kingfisher and packet of peanuts to munch on” (45). On Aditya’s insistence Akash reveals that he is going to propose to Aleesha; and he is going to do it during the interval time while watching a movie. They contact the movie theatre manager, pay for the arrangement and seal the deal. On the day of the event, they visit the Fame Cinemas at Raghuleela Mall. Aleesha joins Akash to watch the movie. During the interval the text appears on the screen “Aleesha! Aleesha! Aleesha! I don’t know what will be your reaction after watching this short movie. But I am sure you won’t hit me” (57). There appears a long text in the form of a love letter on the screen. Aleesha is overwhelmed and overjoyed with emotions, and tears roll down from her eyes. In the end of this long letter which expresses the love of Akash for Aleesha, there appears “a photograph of Akash and Aleesha on the screen with ‘made for each other and together forever’ written on it” (58). In another fiction of Sudeep Nagarkar, *You’re Trending in my Dreams*, Ahana is seen to be watching a movie with her boyfriend Sid in a PVR cinemas in a mall. While they watch the movie a stranger tries to molest Ahana’s friend Garima and it becomes a big issue. A major chunk of the scene happens inside the cinema hall of a mall.

Ruchita Misra’s *The Ineligible Bachelor* revolves around the protagonist Kasturi. The main plotline deals with the obsession of the parents of Kasturi to find her a bridegroom and get her married. They send Kasturi details of potential future bridegroom and ask her to meet them to find out if they are suitable for her match. On weekends Kasturi meet them in different restaurants in order to satisfy the demands of her parents. Kasturi meets the first potential candidate Amay at the Big Chill restaurant. They arrive at the restaurant at the scheduled time and have a nice conversation. Kasturi and Amay met for the second time, and this time they decided to meet at Select City Mall’s food court. Although Kasturi reached late but they spent a significant amount of time in the food court of the mall. Kasturi’s mother sent her the details of the second potential groom who is Dr. Purva Dikshit. Purva and Kasturi met on a restaurant called Dilli Haat. She meets with another candidate Vipul Vikas in Pizza Hut restaurant.

Postmillennial texts are using restaurants, movie theatres and shopping malls as settings where the primary characters spend significant amount of time. This is a deliberately employed strategy to connect to the target readership who are in their twenties and early thirties. Postmillennial Indian youth spend a lot of time frequenting these places, therefore, the purpose of using these places as settings serve well because it helps the fictions to become popular among the youth which, in turn, helps to sell a greater number of books.

5. Pub, Disco and Nightclubs as new settings:

Postmillennial youth in metro cities head towards bars, pubs and discos to have a good nightlife after rigorous schedules in their workplaces. These places are hotspots for urban youths, and buzzing with music and dance in weekends while they are flocking into it. Youth of metropolitan India try to avoid their usual places like home or the workplace at weekends, and want to go out somewhere to be able to relax, have a nice conversation with their friends or lovers without any iota of worry of their working places. Pubs, bars and discos provide them with an atmosphere in which they can relax and have a breathing space from their busy schedule and tremendous work pressure. Rahul Singh, the founder & CEO of The Beer Café, which has close to 50 branches in 13 Indian cities, shares his opinion:

Socializing is today an inescapable phenomenon and everybody wants to drink better. Cafes, bars and pubs are a great place to hang out. In the metros most working professionals primarily spend their time at

home, in the office or commuting between the two! Having a place in the neighbourhood actually helps one leave behind all the stress and unwinds in a comfortable setting. With live sports match, music performance, stand-up comedy or gaming nights- it's gone beyond just drinking and transformed into more of a lifestyle leisure activity where one can party, have a good time with old friends or make new ones. (Saha 2015)

In *It Started with a Friend Request* it is informed that Aleesha has just shifted to Mumbai for she has joined a college. She is staying with Tamanna who is the daughter of Aleesha's father's friend. In the first weekend itself Aleesha has a taste of Mumbai's nightlife. Since Tamanna has been staying in Mumbai for the last two years Aleesha asks her, "Tamanna di, you must be used to nightlife of Mumbai by now, right?" (11). Tamanna decides to take Aleesha out and have her experience the nightlife of Mumbai. They first go to Malabar Hills and have a wonderful evening. They decide to go to 'The Pizzeria' at Nariman Point for dinner after that. Aleesha insists Tamanna to go and experience some disco time and have some drinks. Tamanna agrees to take her to the nearby Thrive disc in Colaba which is a very popular place. Saturday night Thrive disc is crowded with young people and most of the people are college students. The atmosphere of the disco is expressed by the author; "it was full of college student who came in to party late at night, already piss drunk... Thrive has an absolutely wannabe-ish crowd consisting mostly of students trying to get a roof to hide from their parents" (12). Aleesha is blown away by the atmosphere of the disc since it was her first experience in a disc. Readers are given an idea of the atmosphere inside and about the crowd:

It was a typical Thrive weekend night. Smoke filled the air and the teenagers were grooving madly to the latest songs being played by the DJ. Tamanna ordered a drink for Aleesha and herself. Time flew, and soon both of them were three shots down. (12-13)

In *The Ineligible Bachelors* important events also take place in disco and nightclub. In the office Kasturi and Rajeev sir develop some feelings for each other. A romantic relationship is built throughout the story only to be revealed in the end that Rajeev sir was cheating with Kasturi all along. This vital information is known by Kasturi's friends Ananya, Varun and Amay. They took Kasturi to Ecstasy disc because Rajeev sir was supposed to be there with his other girlfriend. As they enter into the disc, they realize that it is full of people in the weekend. Kasturi narrates the situation inside, "I am in the disc and am surrounded with people gyrating their sweaty bodies to loud music. Sweat. Music that's too loud. People who are too drunk" (215). Having seen young couples enjoying and dancing together, Kasturi starts missing Rajeev sir, and thinks it would have been wonderful if they also would have enjoyed in this disc together. Right after that she realizes that in one of the corners of the disc two silhouettes cuddling and kissing passionately. She suddenly hears a familiar voice uttering the name of Teena and her heart stopped breathing for a moment. Kasturi recounts, "I turned around and squinted to see the frame that belonged to the other voice. Even though it was dark, there was no mistaking Rajeev's frame and voice as it murmured Teena's name" (217). In the disc Rajeev's disloyalty is revealed. This whole chapter takes place in the disc.

In *You're Trending in My Dreams*, Ahana breaks up with her boyfriend because the man was cheating on her. Ahana catches him red handed in a café with a girl, and they break up. In order to celebrate the break up, Ahana throws a party to her friends in the Palladium Mall in Lower Parel, Mumbai. With excitement Ahana exclaims, "Okay guys, how about going wild tonight?" (52). They arrive at the mall and head to the bar where they would be spending the night drinking and dancing. As soon as they reach it, they start drinking, and "within an hour, the girls had already gulped down four glasses of draught beer. Ahana felt

a little dizzy and just to check her level of drunkenness, she tried walking back and forth in the bar” (53-54).

The emergence of hundreds of bars, pubs and discos in all of the big cities in the last ten years has transformed the nightlife of India. They not only provide cool ambience and beautiful atmosphere but also offer tempting mocktails and diverse menus to choose from while music is playing in the background throughout the evening and night. The rise of the bar and pub culture has given the youth experience of a lifestyle which they grew up watching on their mobile and television screens. They offer the youth exactly what they aspire to experience with Instagram worthy settings. Keeping the contemporary trends in mind, authors of postmillennial Indian writing in English are employing these places as settings of important events of their stories.

6. Café serving as a setting:

Coffee culture is not new in India as it can be traced back to the 17th and 18th centuries. The first recognized coffee house was established in Kolkata in 1876, and this coffee house was the space for political debates and discussions for intellectuals. Consumer culture, and the arrival of global coffee chain houses have transformed the coffee culture of India. Modern coffee houses provide a cool atmosphere with the installation of air conditioner and wi-fi. Globalized Indian youth is highly attracted by this wonderful ambience of contemporary cafes which have become “hot-spots for Indian youngsters, where they can chill, get together, or go on dates” (Realtors 2018). The culture of hanging out with friends and their loved ones in cafes is changing rapidly among young millennials because they “look at coffee consumption as an aspirational experience, a new lifestyle, especially as far as out-of-home coffee consumption” (Anien 2019). Therefore, the way cafes and coffee culture has been transformed in contemporary India is pretty evident. The coffee market and the hospitality business of café has never been so promising in India because “large-scale developments, fast-paced urbanization, increased per capita income, and ready disposable earnings are creating a favourable environment for the coffee culture to prosper in India” (Realtor 2018).

Ruchita Misra’s *The Ineligible Bachelors* revolves around Kasturi, her office space and her friends Ananya, Varun and Rajeev sir. While Kasturi is seen spending a lot of time in the office cafeteria with her friends, she goes to different cafes at weekends with Rajeev sir to spend some quality time as they are in a relationship in the story. The main part of the story takes place in Kasturi’s office in Delhi. Whenever Ananya and her friends are frustrated with the work pressure and bored of making the same kinds of useless PPT for multiple meetings, they go to the office cafeteria and have some relaxation. Kasturi narrates the frustration about the office works and the nice time they have in the cafeteria, “Anu, Varun and I were sitting in the office cafeteria having lunch which had already taken up two glorious hours. In our defence, we all felt the need for a break, a relief from the excessive PPT making sessions and photocopying effort we had put in through the morning hours” (26). As the story moves on it is realized that Rajeev sir and Ananya visit different cafes and have their own time at weekends. In one of the incidents, they decide to visit CCD but they make sure that no one from the office follows them. Kasturi notes in her diary, “Rajeev sir and I went for coffee today. We were very secretive and like celebrities who do not wish for the paparazzi to follow, we left the office premises separately” (92). Even during the office hours, they often meet in the office cafeteria and have coffee together. Coffee has become an integral part of their relationship. There are instances when Rajeev sir flirts with Kasturi by personifying coffee and

invoking her. From the diary note of Kasturi readers get to know a conversation over message between two of them;

‘Coffee misses you.’

I smiled. Sometimes he could be really cheesy.

‘I don’t miss coffee at all,’ I replied playing along.

‘Will you meet coffee for coffee tomorrow?’

‘Why would I meet coffee when I do not like coffee?’

‘Coffee is very hurt. Coffee wants you to meet coffee because coffee has something very important to tell his sugar lump.’ (112)

7. Conclusion:

The paper critically explores how the settings have moved from traditional places to glitzy consumer and entertainment places in contemporary Indian English fictions. The characters in the select fictions are not static in their designated places or at their traditional home. They are constantly moving in the globalized spaces which have a lavish and extravagant touch. These are stylized hyperreal spaces, devoid of any dirt and imperfections of the natural physical world. Since the characters are continuously moving around in different locations and staying away from their parents and friends, phone conversation and virtual communication is also integral part of these stories. Postmillennial Indian youth is frequenting globalized consumer places for spending quality time. Shopping malls, restaurants, cafes, pubs, nightclubs, social media sites, are very popular among contemporary Indian youth. Therefore, Indian English fiction writers are adopting these extravagant places as settings of their stories. It helps them to connect with the lives of the millions of contemporary youths and helps them to popularize their writings among them. Those who are buying these books and reading these stories can associate themselves with the characters of the stories as it reflects their lives. The use of these places as settings captures the attention and interest of postmillennial youth. Precisely because of these reasons a host of writing emerges in the field of Indian Fiction writing which portrays the postmillennial extravagant Indian society. As the value system and aesthetics of the new generation has changed significantly there is a need to incorporate alternate themes, and settings to suit the taste of the contemporary generation. Therefore, new authors are writing for the new generation, and employing new themes and settings to connect with them. The authors of these stories are trying to truly represent the postmillennial condition of the society in the contemporary Indian writing in English.

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