



The Rise Of Post-Truth In Contemporary Indian English Literature.

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Abstract: The concept of "post-truth" - where objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief - has become increasingly prevalent in the modern era. This paper examines how the post-truth phenomenon has manifested in recent Indian English literature. Through analysis of works by authors such as Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, and Kiran Desai, the study explores how Indian writers are grappling with the blurring of truth and fiction, the privileging of subjective narratives over empirical evidence, and the role of literature in an era of political polarization and depleting trust in institutions. The paper envisage that Indian English writings provide a valuable lens through which to understand the complex interplay of truth, power, and storytelling in the post-truth era.

Keywords - post-truth, Indian English literature, Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, Kiran Desai

I. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has ushered in an era of "post-truth" politics, where objective facts carry less weight in shaping public discourse than emotional appeals and personal beliefs. This phenomenon, marked by the rise of "fake news," online echo chambers, and the undermining of mainstream media, has had a profound impact on societies around the world. India, the world's largest democracy, has not been immune to these trends, as seen in the country's increasingly polarized political landscape and the spread of misinformation on digital platforms.

In this context, the realm of literature has emerged as an important site for grappling with the post-truth condition. Indian English writings, in particular, provide a rich tapestry through which to examine how authors are navigating the blurring of truth and fiction, the prioritization of subjective narratives, and the wider implications of the post-truth era. This paper analyzes the ways in which selected contemporary Indian English novels engage with the post-truth phenomenon, offering insights into the evolving role of literature in a world where the very nature of truth is under siege.

II. THE POST-TRUTH LANDSCAPE IN INDIA

The concept of post-truth, as defined by the Oxford Dictionary, refers to "circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief." This phenomenon has gained traction globally, fueled by the proliferation of social media, the erosion of trust in traditional media and institutions, and the rise of populist, nationalist movements that thrive on the politics of emotion and identity.

In India, the post-truth landscape has been marked by the spread of false facts, the demonization of opposing political factions, and the weaponization of religion and caste for electoral gain. The 2019 general elections, for instance, were characterized by the widespread circulation of fake news, the polarization of the electorate along communal lines, and the use of emotive appeals that often overshadowed substantive policy debates. This trend has continued in the years since, with the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbating the crisis of truth, as conspiracy theories and unsubstantiated cures gained traction alongside official public health messaging. The propagation of information in such a situation seems to be governed by the rules of physics, such as diffraction and interference happens in light. When true facts based information strike a person who has a stringent attitude, the information gets a deviation from its intent and starts to progress in a deviated matter which happens in the phenomenon of diffraction.

In other cases when information about the same fact from two different sources with different perspectives either merge together, the information of the source is dominated by the second one and it becomes the prevailing result from truth for the people, as a result of the interference phenomenon.

III. THE IMPACT ON INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE

Against this backdrop, contemporary Indian English literature has emerged as a vital space for exploring the ramifications of post-truth politics. Prominent authors have used their work to grapple with the complexities of truth, power, and narrative in the modern era, challenging the dominance of simplistic, emotionally-driven accounts of reality.

In her novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), Arundhati Roy presents a multi-layered narrative that resists easy categorization as either fact or fiction. By weaving together the stories of a diverse cast of characters, Roy blurs the line between objective truth and subjective experience, inviting readers to question the very nature of reality. The novel's structure, which eschews linear chronology in favor of a fragmented, polyphonic approach, mirrors the post-truth condition, where "facts" are constantly in flux and certainty gives way to ambiguity because of interference phenomenon.

Similarly, Amitav Ghosh's *The Nutmeg's Curse* (2021) tackles the post-truth crisis through the lens of environmental politics and colonial history. Ghosh's sweeping exploration of the exploitation of nature and indigenous communities by global powers illuminates how dominant narratives have been shaped by the interests of the powerful, often at the expense of empirical truth. By unearthing marginalized perspectives and disrupting established historical accounts, the novel challenges readers to confront the ways in which truth has been co-opted and distorted due to interference.

Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006), while predating the current post-truth moment, nonetheless anticipates many of the tensions that have come to define it. The novel's depiction of the fraught relationship between India and the West, as well as its examination of the legacy of colonialism, speaks to the broader struggle over the ownership and interpretation of history. Desai's multifaceted, non-linear storytelling mirrors the complexity of these issues, resisting simplistic narratives and encouraging readers to grapple with the multiplicity of truths.

IV. CONCLUSION

Through the work of authors like Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, and Kiran Desai, readers are invited to confront the blurring of fact and fiction, the privileging of subjective experience over empirical evidence, and the role of storytelling in shaping – and challenging – dominant political and social discourses. The rise of post-truth has had a profound impact on societies around the world, and India is no exception. In this context, contemporary Indian English literature has emerged as a vital space for exploring the complexities of truth, power, and narrative in the modern era.

As the post-truth phenomenon continues to shape public discourse, the insights offered by Indian English writings will remain crucial. By grappling with the nuances of truth and the politics of representation, causing diffraction or interference of thoughts, these literary works provide a valuable lens through which to understand the evolving relationship between literature, power, and the pursuit of meaning in an increasingly uncertain world.

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