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UNFURLING THE CRIME AND GLAMOUR IN VIKRAM CHANDRA'S SACRED GAMES--
THE DETECTIVE FICTION

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ABSTRACT

This paper mainly focuses on crime and glamour in Vikram Chandra's *sacred games*. A sprawling, exuberant, old fashioned story, detailing the intertwined lines of the gangsters of modern Mumbai. Detailing the detectives and criminals schemers and observers of this world he has created an engaging novel that searches for moral warmth in a time of betrayal and greed. The confrontation between Sartaj and Ganesh lies at the heart of this epic novel. *Sacred Games*, though often suspenseful, is never filmi. Although the meat of this novel clings to the bones of a crime story and there is certainly plenty of crime in it. It is a novel of full of smells from the slums, the traffic, the street stalls. It reveals simply breath taking and multiple characters, part thriller, part love story, part critique, corruption, part reveling in the joy of life in Bombay. Its fair share of violence, love, loyalty, betrayal and beauty in this fantastically woven tale.

Key words: Sacred games, suspenseful, violence, love, loyalty, betrayal and beauty

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INTRODUCTION

The beginning of Indian novel in English, with relation to colonialism can very much be traced to the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, by which time English education was more or less steadfastly grounded in the three major centres of British power in India - Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. According to M.K. Naik and Shyama A. Narayan in their famous book *Indian English Literature*, "In spite of the fascination for magic realism in recent times, fiction of social realism still flourishes, and will perhaps always flourish, because the novel, born of social reality, may deviate from it, but will always continue to find external reality an eternal source of substantial artistic material" (2000-53, 54).

Novel is a fictional narrative, long and complicated in structure, with life like representation of actions and characters. The modern novel is the typical growth of the eighteenth century. The word "Novel" is derived from Latin word "Novellus" and Italian word "Novella", which means a "tale" or "Short story". There are many types of novels as Historical novel, picaresque novel, Epistolary novel, Gothic novel, Regional Novel, Psychological Novel, Sentimental Novel, Historical novel, Romantic novel, Detective novel and science fiction.

Detective features:

- Mystery, crime or another puzzle to be solved.
- Main character is a detective who sets out to solve a mystery.
- Suspects and their motives; there must be weighted and evaluated.
- Over clues about crime are presented.
- Hidden evidence is presented, i.e., essential details are offered in such a way that they seem unimportant.
- Inference Gaps-mysteries, by their very nature, do not tell the whole story. It is up to readers to notice the gaps in the story and try to fill these gaps by using and connecting the information that is presented.
- Suspense- having to hold various possible conclusions at bay as reader waits to see what happens, they are expected to enjoy the suspense, and to read to find out what will happen.

Mystery or detective novels flourished by the British writer Arthur Conan Doyle, Dorothy Sayers and Willkie Collins. Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* stories first appeared in serial form in monthly Strand Magazine. Another successor was Willkie Collins. His detective novel *The Woman in White* was published in 1860. It was a new type of fiction which did not depend on characters or incidents alone but on the clever manipulation of incidents to hide a secret and finally to reveal it. In 1866 Collins masterpiece in detective fiction, *The Moon Stone* was published. It was a better constructed novel than *The Women in White*.

Vikram Chandra is an Indian writer. He was born in New Delhi in 1961. His father, Navin Chandra, is a retired executive. Chandra's first novel, *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* won the 1996 Commonwealth Writer's Prize. Chandra's *Love and Longing in Bombay* a collection of short stories was published in 1997. Chandra's latest novel, *Sacred Games* published in 2006. In this novel, Chandra focused that the Bombay underworld brought to bring life in this bestselling novel in which police detective's Sartaj investigates the suicide of crime boss Gaitonde.

Sacred Games as Detective fiction

Crime fiction focuses on crime, usually murder. It typically continues to increase the tension until the final conclusion. The sleuth gets to solve the crime and while doing he faces problem either from other characters or environment. In crime fiction, some savory character commits the act. These characters might be thugs, gangsters or petty thieves that sleuth must investigate and possibly trust in order to solve the crime. In crime fiction, the hero might be a police officer, who can still be tough and resourceful. He is pitted against villains determined to destroy him. In crime fiction, thrillers keep the emphasis away from the gangster or the detective in the crime related plot and rather focus more on the suspense and danger that is generated.

Hard-boiled is a type of crime fiction. It was published in pulp magazines. The protagonist is usually not a detective but instead a victim, a suspect or a perpetrator. He is sometime tied directly to the crime, not an outsider called to solve to fit the situation. Other common characteristic features are the emphasis on sexual relationship and the use of sex to advance the plot and self-destructive qualities of the lead characters. This type of fiction also has the lean, direct writing style. The Hard-boiled detective was a character who had to live in streets of the city where fighting, drinking, swearing, poverty and detail were all part of life. This new type of detective had to balance the day-to-day needs of survival against justice. Living in the toughest of environments and required to be tougher than the evil surrounding him. In this new world, the hard-boiled detective began to administer a new form of justice. The hero was thrust into a world where he had to choose between different levels of evil and no one was truly on the side of good. His survival often depended upon a shoot first; ask question later approach where the ability to reason out a murder is less important. The Hard-boiled detective was in response to the rising crime and gangster activity caused by prohibition and then the great depression.

Chandra brilliantly develops the characters; the two main characters are Sartaj and Ganesh Gaitonde, a Hindu gangster who runs vast empire of criminal activities. The parallel development of Sartaj and Gaitonde is skillful and beautifully done. They are both vulnerable men. One morning Sartaj is stunned to receive an anonymous tip that the legendary mafia crime lord Ganesh Gaitonde is held up in a nearby safe house. As Sartaj and his colleague, the constable Katekar waits outside, Gaitonde talks to Sartaj through the intercom of

the bunker's security system telling the story of his rise to power from humble beginnings. Sartaj tries to keep the feared mafia don talking, but by the time he and Katekar get into the building, the notorious criminal has committed suicide and killed his female companion.

Sartaj and his colleague investigate cause of Gaitonde's suicide and the identity of the dead woman, the veteran cop is unprepared when his superiors inform him that the case will be over seen by the government's top intelligent agency RAW who urges him to find out everything he can about Gaitonde's last day and about the woman found with him above all this investigation must be kept secretly. When Sartaj Singh plods off dutifully in search of details, Gaitonde resumes the autobiographical narrative so rudely interrupted by his suicide. One of the sub-plots of the novel involves an Indian intelligence officer K.D.Yadav, who has knowledge about Gaitonde. Yadav's niece Anjali is also an intelligent agent who works with Sartaj in unraveling the conspiracy involving counterfeit currency, arms and ultimately an apocalyptic plot to engineer a nuclear war between India and Pakistan by shadowy groups. Gaitonde had connected these groups. K.D.Yadav narrates the story of Gaitonde. Now the story moves backward. Ganesh Gaitonde is another protagonist of this novel. He is just the opposite of Sartaj Singh. He is an arrogant and merciless killer with enormous ambition. Gaitonde metamorphoses from a runaway teen aged Kiran to a gangster in Mumbai, assuming the name Ganesh Gaitonde.

Ganesh makes relationship with Guru -ji and has as his spiritual guide an internationally famous Guru-ji. He has discovered that his guru-ji has organized, with Ganesh make relationship with the Guru Swami Shrinidhar Shukla. He becomes a man with mission and is fed messianic fantasies by Guru-ji who names him Arjuna to signify his warrior status in preparation for rooting about kaliyug. This ruthless gangster also has a tender side. He cannot consent to mass destruction. He takes good care of his employees. In spite of his wealth and power, Ganesh feels empty and alone, after he loses his wife and son. He feels uncomfortable to admit his family history and also fears about his futures to Guru-ji and he becomes his confident and supporter. His Guru's philosophy is to change his mind.

Ganesh Gaitonde, the wealthy head of one of Mumbai's most powerful criminal gangs, has secretly collaborated with the Indian government, an atomic attack that will destroy the city, in order to attribute responsibility to an Islamic terrorist organization that has been created for this purpose. The don Ganesh Gaitonde has unwittingly helped in the importation of nuclear material. Later he realizes his mistake and tried to stop the attack, and is waiting in the atomic bunker at Kailashpada, where he will survive the city's destruction. His only companion is Jojo Mascarenas. They planned to stop an atomic attack, organized by his Guru-ji swami Shrinidhar Shukla. The plot moves forward along parallel track. One day, Sartaj Singh gets anonymous tips that Ganesh Gaitonde wants to meet him Sartaj Singh does not know why the gangster has chosen him. The day before he had been called to a man barricaded in his bed room whose wife wanted to kill him and who kept stabbing a kitchen knife into the door panels. During an argument the husband had thrown his wife white pomeranian out of window of their fifth floor flat. Thinking of the poor little body on the pavement Sartaj Singh says.

Love is murdering gaandu. Poor fluffy

When Gaitonde takes him the next day to the Kailashpada bunker, Sartaj Singh does not know that he once looked at the terrible head of the Mumbai underworld with humanity. He does not even know that he has met him, as he was disguised. Gaitonde chooses him because he is a guardian of order whose humanity is not cancelled out by his uniform he is only person to whom he can give up himself and his story. Sartaj Singh arrives in the Kailashpada bunker and usually tries to convince the gangster to leave it. He remains there, listening to Gaitonde as he tells the story of his first exploits in Mumbai and at a certain point becomes interested in the story, but when the bulldozer that he has requested manages to make a hole in the bunker's walls he stops listening.

You're coming in. I am still talking but you aren't listening

To me anymore. Your eyes are a fire. You want me, you and

Your riflement. But listen to me. There is a whirlwind of memories in my head, a scatter of tattered faces and bodies. I know how they skirl through each other, their connection and their disjunction, I can trace

their velocities. Listen to me, if you want Ganesh Gaitonde, then you have to let me talk otherwise Ganesh Gaitonde will escape you as he escaped every time, as he escaped every last assassin. Ganesh gaitonde escaped even me almost. Now at this last hour, I have Ganesh Gaitonde, I know what he was, what he became Listen to me, you must listen to me. But you are now in the bunker.

At last, Sartaj Singh does have time to hear Gaitonde's story it is out of his determination to deliver his story and himself that the investigation is born that will lead to Sikh inspector's saving Mumbai from the atomic explosion.

CONCLUSION

Sacred Games is a novel as big, ambitious, multi-layered, contradictory, funny, sad, scary, violent, tender, complex, and irresistible as India it-self. It portraits the entire lives of the Mumbai people. A policeman, a criminal over lord, a Bolly Wood film star, beggars, culprits, spies, terrorists, the famous the wretched and the blood thirsty interweave with cataclysmic consequences amid the chaos of modern-day. Mumbai, in this soaring, uncompromising, and unforgettable epic master (Piece) work of literary art. If we step ourselves in this story we will enjoy the delicious Masala Chandra has created. We have an idea of how the country manages to hang together despite age. Old hatreds, hundreds of dialects, different religious practices, the caste system, and corruption everywhere. Thus Vikram Chandra portrays crime and glamour in his novel *Sacred Games* skill fully

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