

INTRODUCTION

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Introduction:

The present study tries to analyze and interpret the select novels of Eric Clifford Ambler in the context of the concept of Thriller or Thriller fiction. Eric Ambler is one of the most prominent authors of the twentieth century British Literature. He is considered as 'the Master of Thriller Fiction', who has produced a number of best thriller novels in his lifetime. His novels focus on contemporary social realities: a crime, robbery, murder, assassination, blackmailing, serial killer, drug-smuggling, spy or detection, and war. He depicts photographic representation of his era and milieu which include dirty, dingy, war-shadowed, industrial Europe in the modern period.

Eric Ambler tries to depict fictional world in his novels. He reflects the real world which includes crooked businessmen and financiers, drug dealers, pimps and gun-runners, criminal gangs, a world of espionage, assassination, moral and political decay. His major characters are real people with proper jobs: writers, journalists, teachers, scientists, lawyers, and engineers who unconsciously entangle in the world of violence and danger. They go from the strange situation to fight against such kind of immoral things in the society.

Indeed, they are ordinary people who come from different parts of the society. They are ordinary citizens who involve accidentally or sometimes innocently in the national or international intrigues. His villains are not real people, but the actual kind of people, who generate violence in the society. Through these characters, he tries to show two faces of the human being that are good and evil existed in human nature in the world. At first evil dominates on good but the good is a safe at the last movement in any

condition. Evil tendency of the people spoils the society and good tendency makes it stable and secure.

Eric Ambler emerged as thriller novelist who is well known for espionage thriller. Earlier British espionage thriller stories are xenophobic, romantic heroes' who defeated vast conspiracies to dominate the world. However, he has drawn his heroes and villains realistically. His heroes are not professional spies or detectives but the ordinary men fight against dangers. His villains are frequently violent fascists and Nazis. Along with such type of characters, he has created great thrilling incidents in order to shows horror in the society. However, his best thriller novels become the models for generations of writers.

He does not focus on the particular sub-genre of thriller fiction but he discusses espionage, suspense, adventurous-action, historical and political events which offer some clues of what's going on in the world. He tries to reflect the feelings of ordinary Europeans in the twentieth century and produces sophisticated Europe in the 1930s. He shows a queasy atmosphere and political intrigues in the contemporary society. In short, social and political comments are embedded in his novels. He creates the realistic world which appears fascinating rather than horrible by nature.

His novels are full of excitement, adventurous action, mystery, crime, suspense, surprise, tension, horror, terror, and fear. Through these elements, he has created fast-moving plots that contain many actions, sudden plot twists keep the people unsure about what happen will next. He also handles who-dun-it, why-dun-it, and how-dun-it techniques to investigate the real murderer. So the readers are very curious to move quickly to the next page. Such page turner thriller stories keep the readers on their seats while reading.

The present research work attempts to take a survey of thriller fiction. It is one of the genres of genre fiction or popular fiction which contains various elements of excitement, mystery, suspense, tension, surprise, shock, horror, terror, dread, anxiety, and fear. These elements find in other genres of popular fiction, which is not only made for the sake of entertainment but focuses on the real picture of the society. Like a mainstream fiction, it handles the real issues which conceal in the society.

Thriller Fiction highlights the major problems in day today life. It contains certain characteristics including thrill, curiosity, surprise, pace, police procedural, puzzle, and adventurous action. These characteristics find in its subgenres: Legal Thriller, Medical Thriller, Crime Thriller, Political Thriller, Suspense Thriller, Psychological Thriller, and Techno Thriller. There are various eminent authors Rider Haggard, Anthony Hope, Alistair Maclean, Edgar Wallace, Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, Lionel Davidson, John Grisham, and Robert Ludlum try to handle these sub-genres in their novels. Eric Ambler is one of them.

Life and Works: Eric Clifford Ambler

Eric Ambler is one of the most fascinating British authors and screenwriter of late 1930s. He was born on 28 June, 1909 in London, England. His father Alfred Percy Ambler known as Reg, who was a talented musician and mother Amy Modelin Andrew was a singer, both worked as music Hall entertainers. Ambler was first of three children of his family. His brother name is Mouric, a successful photojournalist and later he abandoned all to become Lutheran Pastor. Ambler was very close in age to his brother who born in 1912, but his sister Joyce was fourteen years older than him. Joyce was a personnel officer in a multinational corporation.

Eric Ambler is very much influenced by the First World War (1914-18) and the Second World War (1939-45). His vivid childhood memories concerned with the bomb attacks on London during World War I, because the suburb where the Amblers lived within the range of German Zeppelins and planes. Later his family lived on the outskirts of London to avoid the German bombs during the period of First World War. Thus, the most of his childhood memories are reflected in his literary works. In his preface of the book *Eric Ambler*, Ambrosetti writes:

The terrors of the twentieth century were correctly seen by Ambler to be significantly different from the external forces of nineteenth-century naturalism-portrayed in Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Charles Dickens's *Hard Times*, and Stephen Crane's "*The Open Boat*." (x)

Being a teenager, Ambler joined his parents on the stage but they gave aspiration and encouraged him to concentrate on his study. Incidentally, he received a scholarship of London University and became an engineering student. However, he was not interested in the field of engineering because he was inclined to write plays. In the Joel Hopkins interview, Ambler says that:

My father insisted that I not go on the stage or have anything to do with the arts, which he had, so I thought, naturally, I should go the other way. I think a lot of people decide too early what they want to do. I did. I won a scholarship to London University, but from the moment I became an engineering student, I was a potential dropout because I began to try and write plays...not novels...and lyrics to songs (256).

Thus, instead of the music hall, he entered Colfe's Grammar School in 1917. In 1924, he studied engineering at Northampton polytechnic in Islington. He arrived at Islington on the day of examination, where he heard that there were only four scholarships but two hundred applicants were present for this examination. He went in depression and weeks before the result of the examination he lost some of his interest in the field of engineering. When he received a letter from the university, he was glad that he won the top scholarship. Another reason of his gladness is that he received secondhand bookshops that he was in already searching. He had a habit of reading the books of different writers, so he read various books in his free time and was very much influenced by them. In his autobiography, he puts:

When a letter arrived saying that I had won the top scholarship, I was pleased, naturally, but not perhaps as pleased as I should have been. I was already searching in secondhand bookshops for Everyman editions of the plays of Ibsen. Fired by...a London performance of Pirandello's Six Characters in Search of an Author, I had decided to become a playwright. (Ambler 63)

He was very good in science. At the age of fifteen, he scored a perfect hundred percent in the subjects of Chemistry and Physics in the University examination. He was awarded one only four of the prestigious scholarship at the University of London. In his interview with Joel Hopkins, he confesses: "I was a Juvenile delinquent. I used to steal cars and such, but I was very good in science" (286).

He was a clever boy but not interested in the trade of Engineer. He found it was dull and left without a degree in 1927. Then, he joined as an apprentice engineer at Edison Swan Electrical Company where he began

writing fiction in his spare time including a biographical novel about his father. He initially spent his spare time at the library of the institute of Electrical Engineers. He spent his whole mornings in the public galleries of the King's Bench Division or the Criminal Division of the Court of Appeal. ✓The novelists George Gissing, John Galsworthy, and H. G. Wells, the Russians, notably Fyodor Dostoyevsky more impressed him. He recalls:

At school we were reading the essays of Addison, Steele and Lamb to show us how English should be written, and Milton's Camus because, I think, copies of a school edition happened to be available. The only French prose we read was *Le Roi des Montagnes*, also available...Green's short *History of the English People* had been adorned by him in the margins with skillfully disrespectful drawings of the great men referred to in the text. Among his books, too, was a Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary* which was to become important to me. (Ambler 47)

He interested to read the novels and plays, who rejected all the orthodox religious texts as he was very much fan of the books of various authors. The social sciences' constructions of reality were also known to him through his close readings of Carl Jung, George Gissing, Friedrich Nietzsche, Oswald Spengler, and G. I. Gurdjieff. He read the books of ✓Charles Darwin and Sigmund Freud. He continued to pursue his habit of intense reading. Graham Greene, W. Somerset Maugham and George Orwell are contemporaries of him and Ian Fleming, John Le Carre and Len Deighton are successors of him.

He is an outstanding author of Thriller Fiction, who has created a number of excellent books over the period of fifty years of his lifetime. He started his career as a writer at the age of thirty. In 1930, he resigned the post

a copywriter at an advertising agency in London and became a full-time author in 1938. Between the years 1936 and 1940, he has produced a group of remarkable thriller novels: *The Dark Frontier* (1939), *Uncommon Danger* (1937), *Epitaph for Spy* (1936), *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1939), and *Journey into Fear* (1940). The fundamental nature of these five novels is adventurous thriller and suspense thriller. In *The Guardian* in 1997, Julian Evans called him as, “the begetter of the modern thriller” and praises his early novels for mirroring “the queasy atmosphere and conspiratorial politics of 1930s Europe” (Web).

These five best-sellers novels took a prominent place in Europe in the period of pre-world war II. They depict the real picture of the world. In other words, they show what is going on in the world. “Thrillers are respectable now,” he said in a 1981 interview with Herbert Mitgang of *The New York Times*. Further, he adds:

Back in the beginning, people weren't quite that sure about them, but they really say more about the way people think and governments behave than many of the conventional novels. A hundred years from now, if they last, these books may offer some clues to what was going on in our world. (Web)

He has written novels and number of screenplays. His knowledge of engineering helps him to point out technical matters in his writing career. However, some of the heroes of his several novels are from engineering field.

He has accumulated background material by travelling in Europe and talking to refugees. So, the most of his novels set in Europe, in which, he has reflected the feelings of ordinary European people. He moved to France because he felt that it was a more stimulating environment to write about the

people he visited. The result is that *The Mask of Dimitrios* establishes him as the 'Father of the Modern Thriller novels'. There are some authors who follow it as the best model of Thriller Fiction.

His writing career was interrupted by the outbreak of the World War II. During the period, he served in the British Army as a private soldier. In 1944, he had become an assistant director of the army film Unit. Then, he achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He ignored to the writing career due to army service and after serving army for the period of ten years; he turned to the novel writing. He comments:

I had not written a book for ten years and in the Army had lost the habit of a concentrated and solitary writing routine. The process of its recovery was slow. Besides, during those ten years the internal world which had so readily produced the early books had been extensively modified and had to be re-explored. (Ambler 226)

He discharged from the British Army in 1946. He worked in the British film company as a screenwriter from 1946 to 1958. In 1958, he divorced his first wife Crombie and the same year he married a film producer and screenwriter Joan Harrison. They moved to Switzerland in 1969 and returned to Britain sixteen years later. Then he was busy to write pre-war thriller novels. According to Ronald J. Ambrosetti:

The work from Ambler's middle and later years is connected to the prewar novels; I have attempted to illustrate how Ambler not only transformed the popular genre of the spy novel but also continued to change and transform the contours of popular literature well into the 1950s and 1960s. Like one of his

marvelous metamorphic spy-protagonists, Eric Ambler developed as the author as trickster. (xii)

He wrote some novels under the pseudonym of Eliot Reed collaborated with the Australian writer Charles Rodda: *Skytip* (1950), *Tender to Danger* (1951, reprinted in 1952 as *Tender to Moonlight*), *The Maras Affair* (1953), *Charter to Danger* (1954), and *Passport to Panic* (1958). Some of his novels republished in USA.

When he looked around the world, which was very horrible by nature. However, his strong feelings suggested him to write popular novels, which deal with post-war thriller. His significant post-war thriller novels are *Judgment on Deltchev* (1952), *The Schimer Inheritance* (1953), *The Night Comers* (1956), *A Kind of Anger* (1964), *Dirty Stories* (1967), *The Intercom Conspiracy* (1962), *The Levanter* (1972), *Doctor Fringo* (1974), *Send No More Roses* (1977), and *The Care of Time* (1981). He also wrote short story collection *Waiting for Order* (1991). Julian Symons, a novelist and critic praises him saying that Eric Ambler belonged to the breed of thriller writers “who charms us by the elegance of their prose and their subtlety in dealing with places and people” (Web).

He has written screenplays including- *United States* (1945), *Highly Dangerous* (1950), *The Clouded Yellow* (1950), *Campbell's Kingdom* (1952), *Gigolo and Gigolette* (1952), *The Card* (1952, distributed in America as *The Promoter*), *Rough Shoot* (1953, distributed in America as *Shoot First*), *The October Man* (1947), *The Cruel Sea* (1953, for which Ambler receives Oscar nomination), *Lease of Life* (1954), *The Purple Plain* (1954), *Windom's Way* (1954), *The Night-Runners of Bengal* (1955) and *Body Below* (1955), *The Yongtse Incident* (1956, also issued as *Battle Hell*), *A Night to Remember* (1957), *The Guns of Navaron* (1957), *The Night-*

Comers (1957), *The Wreck of the Mary Deare* (1959), *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1962) and *last Love Hate Love* (1970). He published his autobiography *Here Lies, Eric Ambler* in 1985.

A few of his novels turned into fantastic films i.e. *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1939, film 1944), *Journey into Fear* (1940, film 1942), and *Topkapi* (1962, film 1964). His important contribution is in a scriptwriting. He produced a British film industry in the 1950's and his work in Hollywood in the 1960's documented. His a dozen of films were based on his scripts. For his *The Cruel Sea*, he was nominated for an Oscar Award. His *A Night to Remember* is the best film about the disaster of the Titanic. *The October Man*, *The Purple Plain* and *The Card* all of which assembled the cream of British acting talent.

Eric Ambler is widely known as one of the most significant writers of the twentieth century. He bagged several awards and honors throughout his literary career. In the year 1954, he received Oscar Prize for his Best Writing Screenplay *The Cruel Sea* (1953). In 1955, he owned the Bafta (BAFTA) Film Award for his Best British Screenplay *The Purple Plain* (1954). Then he was awarded Crime Writer Association Gold Dagger Award for his novels *Passage of Arms* (1959) and *The Levanter* (1972). He received Silver Dagger Award from Crime Writers Association for his *Dirty Stories* (1967).

His novel *The Light of Day* (1962) published as *Topkapi* received Edgar Allan Poe Award from the Mystery Writers of America for Best Novel in 1964. In 1975, the Mystery Writers of America honoured him with its Grand Master Award and Queen Elizabeth II gave him an opportunity to become an officer of the Order of the British Empire. In the same year, the Swedish Academy of Detection awarded him a Grand Master Diploma Award. Next, the novel *Doctor Frigo* subsequently won the French Grand

Prix de Literature Policiere for 1976-77. He received Edgar Allan Poe Award for Best Critical/biographical work in 1987 for his book *Here Lies: An Autobiography*, which published in 1985. He was the recipient of the first Diamond Dagger Award from the Crime Writers of Association.

✓ He is most influential author who introduces a new genre of spy fiction. His novel *The Mask of Dimitrios* must have influenced on Graham Green's screenplay for *The Third Man* (1949). Surely its impact on the fiction of modern writers including Robert Harris, John Le Carre, Len Deighton, Alostair MacLean, and Alan Furst. He is very famous for his superb writing and well construction of the plots of novels. He is a genius author who anticipates the horrors of the twentieth century in the literary and historical fusion in the novel of intrigue and espionage. Ronald J. Ambrosetti appreciates him:

“Ambler was the first, in a long and ongoing line of literary craftspersons, to reveal the soul of the spy as the corrosive and vitiated soul of the twentieth century”. Over the shoulders of the spy novelist loom the baleful figures of Franz Kafka, Feodor Dostoyevski, and Jung. Ambler's novels are the conduit of this tradition in both the spy genre and many non-generic best sellers of the past fifty years. In addition to his contributions to literary and cultural history, Ambler provides another valuable insight for readers and students of our time. (x)

He is an award winning writer married twice time. His first wife was American fashion correspondent Louise Crombie and his second wife Harrison died in 1994. He died four years later his second wife died on 22 October, 1998 in England at the age 89 due to a long illness.

No doubt he is the most entertaining author. Keating remembers him as: “a very generous man, very affable and modest... very witty too. He called his autobiography *Here lies Eric Ambler*” (Web). According to Milward Kennedy “Eric Ambler provides a welcome reminder that, in accomplished hands, the “Thriller” as much as the detective story can rank with the best fiction of any type... Ambler, who has progressed with each book that he has written, is now in the very top class” (Web).

Significance of the Study

Eric Ambler is a prominent author of twentieth century British Literature. He has achieved a significant place in the history of modern thriller fiction which is one of the genres of genre fiction or popular fiction, emerged in the 20th century. His fiction has given a new aspect of life and advanced the modern and postmodern scenario of British literature. The technique of thrilling develop in the areas of novels, plays and films, but not much attention of critics, scholars and researchers are given to this type of fiction. The analysis of his novels will help to understand the concept of ‘Thriller’ and definitely add certain perspective to perception of the select novels.

Reviews of Relevant Literature

Eric Ambler is one of the prolific writers of the twentieth century. There is no much study has been carried out on his works. There are a few articles and reviews written on his novels. These are following-

In the book *Here Lies: An Autobiography* (1985), Eric Ambler reveals his whole life story which covers the period from his childhood to adulthood. It provides some insight and information about his early life. Ambler depicts photographic representation of his life i.e. before becoming a novelist he is a music hall entertainer, attended the University of London, served as an

engineer, a stage actor, and an advertising copywriter. He describes his childhood in South London, his jobs in engineering then in advertising, early success as novelist, his war years in the army, and his postwar fame as the writer who gives the thriller a new style and depth.

Peter Lewis' book *Eric Ambler* (1990) is the first detail study of Ambler's life and literary career. There is an insightful discussion on his popular novels. Through the book-by-book, he explains major themes and methods of Ambler's writing. He insightfully discusses his popular novels such as *Dark Frontier*, *Background to Danger*, *Epitaph for a Spy*, *A Coffin for Dimitrios*, *Journey into Fear* and *The Light of Day*.

In the book *Eric Ambler* (1994), Ronald J. Ambrosetti does the comprehensive study of the author's life and works and brings Ambler's contributions out of the shadows. He wrote about Ambler's contribution in literary and cultural history that really provides new insight for the readers. He was aware that Peter Lewis (1990) and Peter Wolfe (1992) published the books about Eric Ambler and it was the third book published about him. In his Preface of the book he says the intention of the writing of this book:

...I have tried to give minimal sketches so as not to duplicate the Lewis and Wolfe work and at the same time devote more space to the lines of investigation and criticism that unfolded as I explored the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of Ambler's fiction. To say that the approach that evolved is a Jungian study of Eric Ambler and the spy novel would be misleading; but I found, in time, as the Ambler's recurrent themes emerged, that Ambler needed to be re-evaluated in the light of the significant intellectual currents that shaped his own

literary and psychological life. Friedrich Nietzsche, Jung, and Spengler were unmistakable influences. (xi)

In the book *The Readers Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction*, Joyce G. Saricks gives detail explanation about thrillers and its subgenres. Along with the definition of the thriller genre, he discusses five subgenres of thriller fiction: legal thriller, crime thriller, medical thriller, political thriller, and techno-thriller. He further explains the characteristics and quotes the examples of these subgenres. It covers other genres of popular genre or genre fiction. There are adventure, fantasy, historical fiction, horror, mysteries, romance, science fiction, suspense and westerns.

✓ Martin Priestman's book *Cambridge Companion to Crime fiction* covers crime fiction from the eighteenth century to the end of the twentieth century. It discusses the detective fiction which includes the writers like Arthur Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie and Raymond Chandler. It shows that a crime plays the substantial part in the thriller and spy fiction. Thriller and spy fiction contain the prominent authors Joseph Conrad and Alistair Maclean. Eric Ambler is one of them. It also includes chapters related with treatment of crime in the 18th century literature, French and Victorian fiction, women and black detectives, crime in film and on TV, detective fiction and detective form. It provides the history of crime fiction and its critical reception.

The book named *Crime Fiction* by John Scaggs is a chronological study of crime or crime fiction. It talks about crime, mystery and detective fiction, the hard-boiled mode, the police procedural, the crime thriller, and historical crime fiction. The crime thriller contains outline of a crime thriller, a noir thriller and the anti-conspiracy thriller.

In the article *Beyond the Balkans – Eric Ambler and the British Espionage Novel, 1936-1940* by Brett F. Woods analyses Ambler's half dozen novels in the context of the theme of espionage. These are classic novels published between the years of 1936-1940.

In the article *Eric Ambler Who Elevated the Genre to Literature, is Dead at 89*, Eric Pace covers points such as an advertising man with real imagination, 1935 novel foresaw atomic bombs, average people in sinister situations, turmoil and chaos in the third world. Through these points, he shows Ambler's novels deal with what is going on in the contemporary world. Some of his novels became models for generations of other writers.

John Self wrote article *Eric Ambler: Journey into Fear*, which is published in 2009. In this article, he wrote about his best espionage thriller novel *Journey into fear* both satisfying and surprising enough to draw in readers. It focuses on the protagonist Graham who is an engineer and faces a lot of obstacles.

The book *100 Masters of Mystery and Detective Fiction* edited by Fiona Kelleghan, contains several articles and each article includes the author name, birth and death information, pseudonyms and types of plot. There are descriptions of principle series of author's works. It evaluates each author's impact on the particular genre. In short the biographical section offers concise overview of the author's life and the analytical section examines most representative works and their unique contribution to the genre. Robert Burner's *Eric Ambler* is one of the articles included in the book. It focuses on the theme of espionage with the help of Eric Ambler's novels and shows that Amblers importance in the development of the genre.

In the magazine *Crime Time* there are several articles on Eric Ambler. Mark Chambl's article *Eric Ambler Spy Master General* is one of them,

which discusses Ambler's major novels in the context of the concept spy thriller. Chambell discusses how Ambler handles new genre like espionage in his novels. His prose work is always sharp and concise. So he is called 'the master of spy thriller novels'. Another article *Screening Eric Ambler: His Work in Films* by Bob Cornwell explains Ambler's works which made into film. He says Ambler's various works adapted into the films, but they were rarely discussed. So this article focuses his major works which adapted into films. The next article *Ambler: A Publisher's View* by Ion Trewin expresses his personal view after his meeting with Ambler. In the article *Eric Ambler: Father of The Modern Thriller* by James Clar comments as Ambler is the father of the modern thriller who influenced the major writers creative output. Mark Champbell and Michael Carlson express their two views on his novel *The Levanter* in the article *The Levanter: Two Views*. The article *Forever Ambler* by Russel James depicts Ambler's fine writing and impressive grasp discussing with his works. *Collecting Crime: The Mask of Ambler* by Mike Ashley points out that Ambler won well known the CIA Award. It is only received by those authors whose work comes under the category of crime fiction. In the last article *Rathbone on Ambler* by Julion Rathbone describes his thrillers are about real places, and real people written which were in a lucid prose.

Ambler's interview with Joel Hopkins was published in *Journal of Popular Culture* in 1975. In it he revealed conscious efforts of his life. He also talks about the intention of thriller writing. So he focuses on his successful literary activities between 1937 and 1940 which produced five thriller novels.

Thus, the review of the literature is concerned. A few books, articles, interviews are available on the works of Eric Ambler. However, it is not possible to elaborate each and every critical appreciation about Eric Ambler

literary work. Hence, at last it is appropriate to say that he is living author of 20th Century British Literature.

Hypothesis

The present study hypothesizes that thriller is the main element in the select novels. Along with thriller, both novels are full of excitement, adventurous-action, mystery, suspense, surprise, tension, fear, violence, horror, and, terror.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

In the light of above hypothesis the objectives of the present study as follows:

- To discuss the concept of thriller in the light of the novels Eric Ambler.
- To draw the theoretical framework of thriller fiction with certain characteristics.
- To analyze the select novels of Eric Ambler in the light of various kinds of thriller.

In order to understand the concept of 'Thriller' the present research work will undertake a critical review of the literature available on the topic and have a brief review of the thriller fiction. The discussion is further elaborated and fore grounded by analyzing the select novels.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

Eric Ambler is one of the greatest living writers of modern thriller fiction who is well-known for creating such wonderful thriller novels. He has written a number of novels, short-stories, non-fiction works, and screenplays. Here to study his all works is not possible. Therefore, his other

works are excluded and selected only two novels for the present research work. These two novels can be analyzed with the context of thriller fiction, which is a broad genre of literature. The scope of the present study is limited to analysis of the select novels with reference to the select themes. The following novels are selected for the present study- *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1939) and *Journey into Fear* (1940).

Research Methodology

✓The present study focuses on the very close reading of primary and secondary data available on the topic. Analytical, interpretative, evaluative, and comparative methodologies are used for the present research work. No fieldwork has been taken for the study. Introduction is an initial part of the thesis. It contains major points: 'Life and Works of Eric Ambler', 'Significance and Objectives of the Study', 'Review of the Relevant Literature', 'Scope and Limitations of the Study', 'Hypothesis of the Study', 'Methodology of the Study' and last 'Chapter Scheme'. Chapter first is a theoretical framework which includes- 'the Concept of Thriller', 'Popular Fiction', 'Thriller fiction', 'characteristics of thriller fiction', 'subgenres of thriller fiction', and 'A Brief Overview of the History of Thriller Fiction'. The second chapter and third chapter are the analytical parts of the thesis which discuss the two novels of Eric Ambler in the context of the Thriller Fiction. Then, the fourth chapter is a comparative perspective of the select novels. And the fifth chapter is the conclusion.

Tentative Chapter Scheme

The chapter scheme of the study as follows:

Introduction:

- a) Life and Works of Eric Ambler

- b) Significance and Objectives of the Study
- c) Review of the Relevant Literature
- d) Scope and Limitations of the Study
- e) Hypothesis of the Study
- f) Methodology of the Study
- g) Chapter Scheme

Chapter I : Thriller Fiction: A Theoretical Framework

Chapter II : *The Mask of Dimitros* (1939)

Chapter III : *Journey into Fear* (1940)

Chapter IV : A Comparative Perspective

Chapter V : Conclusion.