CHAPTER V

Rohinton Mistry’s *Such a Long Journey* and
Khushwant Singh’s *Delhi*

*Indian society has no history at all, at least no known history. What we call its history is but the history of the successive intruders who founded their empire on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging society.*

(Karl Marx, 1853)

E.A. Baker in *The History of English Novel* opines:

To present and interpret facts is the historian’s business; to summon up a past epoch, to show men and women alive in it and behaving as they must have behaved in the circumstances is the labour and joy of the life of the genuine historical novelist. (113)

Critics believe that it is essential to narrativize the history of a nation or place to present the multiple views which somewhat cumulatively constitute the identity of that nation or place. They believe:
Historiography is repressive, partial and incomplete as most of what goes in the name of history is a tale of conquest and the repression of the subaltern by the dominant perspectives. Fictionally narrativized history, on the contrary, is more humane and comprehensive as it accommodates multiple, at times even contradictory, voices within the same discourse thereby allowing subaltern perspectives the scope to surface and assert themselves. (Zaidi 37)

Very few Indian English novels have effectively used the backdrop of the post-independent Indian political context particularly of the crucial period of seventies and eighties. Writers who have indulged in writing about these periods have somehow been able to unshackle themselves of the burden of colonialism. They not only resist histories filtered through colonial perspective but also provide their own versions of historical events, usually highly personalized, thereby making the personal political. Nilufer Bharucha suggests, “What must also be noted that history is appropriated, hegemonised or misrepresented not only by the colonial or neo-colonial discourse but also by dominant forces in postcolonial societies” (qtd in Roy & Pillai 41). Writers belonging to the minority community find themselves in a doubly displaced position. The works of two such writers will be taken up for study in this chapter who even in the post-colonial space find themselves addressing the question of belonging/non-belonging because they belong to a religious and demographic minority within India. The two works are — Rohinton Mistry’s Such a Long Journey and Khushwant Singh’s Delhi: A Novel.

The title, Such a Long Journey, comes from T. S. Eliot’s poem “Journey of the Magi” and succinctly sums up the life and career of the Parsi writer Rohinton Mistry who
migrated to Canada at the age of twenty-three but constantly returns to India for themes and subject matter of his novels. *Such a Long Journey*, published in 1991, opens in the year 1971 with the description of Gustad Noble, the protagonist of the novel. A man of fifty, Gustad belongs to the low-middle class and works as an ordinary bank clerk. A God fearing and religious person, “Tall and broad-shouldered, Gustad was the envy and admiration of friends and relatives whenever health or sickness was being discussed” (1). Once the grandson of a prosperous furniture dealer and son of a reputed bookseller, he now led a life of drudgery and anonymity. An accident that occurred a few years ago left him with a slight limp. Gustad lived with his wife, Dilnawaz and three children — Sohrab, nineteen; Darius, fifteen and daughter Roshan, ten in an apartment in Khodadad Building and the sole ambition of his life rests on his son Sohrab whom he wishes to qualify the entrance examination to the IIT Gustad is very proud of the intellectual potentialities of his son. It was while saving Sohrab from getting under a speeding bus that Gustad had broken his hip and gained the limp. Gustad always prayed for the happiness of his children. He wanted his sons’ and daughter’s lives to be filled with peace and equanimity. He hummed a song to sing them to sleep when they were little children:

Bless them all, bless them all,

Bless my Sohrab and Darius and all,

Bless my Sohrab and Darius

And Roshan and….. (9)
Gustad was a fatalist. He considered himself an instrument in the hands of all powerful Destiny which, he believed, plays hide and seek with man. Gustad recalled how, several years ago, his father’s bookstore had been treacherously deposited and ruined by his father’s younger brother who had a reputation for drinking, and for visiting the race course gambling. He mortgaged all his assets at a great speed. They were bankrupt now. The strain of it all sent his mother to hospital. There was no money to pay for a private room and nurse, nor for Gustad’s second -year college fee. It all happened when Gustad was seventeen. Poverty gripped them and soiled and contaminated everything and soon afterwards, his mother died.

Gustad also recalled the year 1962, the year in which India went into a war with China. It was the same year his daughter Roshan was born. Gustad had met with accident in the same year. He had been in bed for twelve weeks with the broken hip. It was a dreadful year, 1962. There were riots, curfews, lathi -charges and the news of burning buses everywhere. India had faced a humiliating defeat at the hands of China. Everywhere people were talking of the way the Chinese had advanced, as though the Indian Army consisted of ‘tin soldiers’. The war with China caused a heart attack to Jawaharlal Nehru. He never recovered from what he thought to be “Chou -En-lai’s betrayal” (10). During the Indo -China War, the windows and ventilators of Gustad’s house were covered with blackout paper. It had not been removed so far which made his house “dark and depressing” (11).

The novel is set during the months leading to the Indo -Pakistan war of 1971 over the liberation of Bangladesh which ultimately leads to the formation of Bangladesh.
There are radio announcements that the Republic of Bangladesh has been proclaimed by the Awami League. The people said that General Yahya would allow Sheikh Majibur Rahman to form the government. From here the narrative does not proceed in chronological order, it moves backward and forward. There is the description of Major Jimmy Bilimoria, an old friend of Gustad, who had lived in Khodadad Building for a long time. Gustad always pointed him out to the children as an example, urging them to walk erect like Major Uncle. The retired Major loved to entertain Sohrab and Darius with tales from the glorious days of army and battle. An year ago, Major Bilimoria had suddenly disappeared from Khodadad Building, without a word to anyone. The Major’s abrupt departure wounded Gustad Noble. Only Dilnavaz could sense the depth of Gustad’s pain at the disappearance of his friend. Major Bilimoria was like a father to the children.

The only good thing that happens in Gustad’s life is Sohrab’s success in the entrance examination. Gustad decides to celebrate his son’s success along with Roshan’s birthday. He invites his friend and colleague, Dinshawji, to the party. Gustad tries his best to make the party a grand success with the provision of chicken, basmati rice and XXX rum, things which were difficult to afford in those days of uncertainty. There goes a pleasant gossip at the party. Dinshawji recalls how he visited Gustad when the latter was in bed with his fracture to give him the latest bank news. Among other things they talk about the recent Nationalization of Banks by Indira Gandhi and the formation of the state of Maharashtra. Mistry satirizes the humiliation of Parsis, how they were insulted and attacked by some ruffians. Some of the scoundrels broke the windows of the bank where
Gustad and other Parsees worked. They broke the thick glass of the main entrance. They were shouting, “Parsi crow-eaters, we’ll show you who is the boss” (39).

During the party Dinshawji congratulates Sohrab and describes him as IIT genius. But Sohrab who had been feeling uncomfortable about the whole IIT affair, reacts sharply and tells his father frankly, “You keep boasting to everyone about IIT. As if you were going there yourself. I am not interested in it. I have already told you.” (40) Sohrab reveals his plan of joining arts course instead of IIT along with his friends. The party ends in a fiasco. Gustad is disappointed, Dilnavaz is frustrated too. Gustad recalls the day he had saved Sohrab’s life. “In that split second between witnessing and leaping, he realized he could either land on his feet or save his son. He aimed for Sohrab with his feet and kicked him out of the path of an oncoming taxi. His left hip took the brunt of the fall” (58) and he was left with a permanent limp in his gait.

Sohrab’s refusal leaves Gustad in a state of shock. Sohrab’s admission to IIT was one of his cherished ambitions. The insolence and defiance of his son hurt him most. In this upset state, he says,

What have we been all these years if not patient? Is this how it will end? Sorrow, nothing but sorrow. Throwing away his future without reason. What have I not done for him, tell me? I even threw myself in front of a car. Kicked him aside, saved his life, and got this to suffer all my life. (52)

In an agitated state Gustad reflects over his predicament “What kind of life was Sohrab going to look forward to? No future for minorities, with all these fascist Shiv Sena
politics and Marathi language nonsense” (55). He did not know how to make Sohrab realize that his denial left him (Gustad) with nothing as he had made the success of his son’s life the purpose of his own. Sohrab had snatched away that purpose like a crutch from a cripple.

The narrative moves in retrospective flash back. The novelist describes Sohrab’s achievements of childhood. At school, Sohrab was a brilliant student. The seed of Sohrab’s troubles had germinated long ago when his parents discovered that Sohrab was always successful in whatever he did and wherever he was — at home, in school, at work or play. There seemed to be nothing Sohrab could not do, and do well. Whether it was arithmetic or arts and crafts or moral science, he bagged several prizes each year on Prize Distribution Day. He regularly won awards for elocution and debating. He also won a trophy in the inter-school drama competition for the play he had acted. Gustad and Dilnavaz had enjoyed the proudest moments of their life in Khodadad Building when Sohrab put on a homemade production of *King Lear* pressing Darius and a couple of school and Building friends as actors. The performance was held at the far end of the compound and the audience brought their own chairs. Sohrab was Lear, producer, director and costume designer. He also wrote an abridged version of the play which could make the doting parents wiser. Gustad never admired such kind of artistic activities of his son. He never made pronouncements or dreamt dreams of an artist son. He would not say that Sohrab would become a painter or an artist or a writer or a poet. He would say that Sohrab his son would be a doctor or an engineer or he will be a research scientist. The dream of IIT took shape in the mind of his parents as Sohrab entered the college after completing his school education. For them:
… the Indian Institute of Technology became the ‘promised land’. It was El Dorado and Shangri-La, it was Atlantis and Camelot, it was Xanadu and Oz. It was the home of the Holy Grail. And all things would be given and all things would be possible and all things would come to pass for he who journeyed there and emerged with the sacred chalice. (66-67)

Gustad’s hardships do not end with Sohrab’s rejection of his father’s lifelong dream. A notice from the Municipality announces a proposal to demolish the 300 feet compound wall that offers a protective shield to their building from the rest of the city. Almost simultaneously Gustad’s daughter Roshan develops chronic dysentery and the frequent visits to Dr Paymaster’s clinic in the red-light locality of the House of Cages, drills a hole in his pocket. As if this was not enough, Gustad receives a letter from his old friend, Jimmy Bilimoria who had suddenly disappeared from Khodadad Building. After his retirement from the army Major Bilimoria had been working for the government. Major Bilimoria writes from Bombay that Gustad should receive a parcel on his behalf. Gustad recalls the previous association of Bilimoria — how they had spent time together as friends. Bilimoria brought gifts for Gustad’s children — the badminton racquets, cricket bat and stumps, table-tennis set, dumb-bells. He was their “hero”, even Sohrab’s, who was so selective. Gustad decides to help his old friend. He writes a letter in reply expressing his willingness to help him. He receives a letter from the Major informing him that the Major had been away to observe the handiwork of the North-West Frontier tribesmen in Kashmir. He informs Gustad that he was working for Research and Analysis Wing — “a new breed of Pakistani butchers” (91). He requests Gustad to go to Chor Bazaar between two and four in the afternoon on any one of the next three Fridays after
receiving this letter. “Look for a pavement bookstall…. My man would give you a parcel. Please take it home and follow the instructions in the note inside…. I am sure you will recognize the man, you met him once, many years ago .” (91-92) Gustad knows that Major Jimmy is involved in something top secret about East Pakistan. On the appointed Friday, Gustad visits the Chor Bazaar. Gustad reaches the pavement Bookstall in the Chor Bazaar. The man with the parcel was already waiting for him. He was Ghulam Mohammed, the same man who had, nine years ago, helped Gustad when the latter had met with an accident. Both Major Billy (Bilimoria) and Ghulam Mohammed had joined RAW at the same time. The conversation that Gustad and Ghulam Mohammed have with each other over a cup of tea hints that Major Bilimoria and Ghulam Mohammed were acting as spies or doing something fishy and dangerous. Reaching home, Gustad discovers that the parcel contains stacks of currency notes, of hundred rupee denomination, in neat bundles. It was ten lakh rupees. The parcel of money also contains a letter from Major Billy asking Gustad to deposit the money in his bank in some fictitious account. Gustad feels helpless and trapped. He wants to get rid of the money as soon as possible. He tells everything to Dinshawji, about Major Bilimoria’s letter and the money package from Ghulam Mohammed. Dinshawji inspires Gustad to help the Major and also helps him in depositing the money at the bank. Gustad starts giving Major’s money to Dinshawji for bank deposit gradually and in instalments. He had not deposited all the money yet when suddenly he discovers a headless bandicoot (big rat) lying in the flowers of his house and a cluster of crows hovering around the carcass. After a few days, a dead cat is found behind the dark wall of his house. He finds a piece of paper with the following message: “Stole the rice of Bilimoria, we’ll take a stick and then we’ll beat ya”
In this rhyming couplet, the meaning of the two decapitated carcasses was clear. Gustad feels betrayed and crushed to nothingness. He thinks that Major Bilimoria had trapped him. He recalls the years of friendship spent with him. The idea of friendship mocked him, taunted into a gigantic canvas of lies and deceit. All friendship was feigning.

A few days later Dinshawji comes to Gustad’s residence with horrifying news published in the newspapers. The news carried the caption “Corruption Ripe in RAW” and the news said that the CBI and city police had arrested in the nation’s capital an officer of the Research and Analysis Wing, Jimmy Bilimoria, on charges of fraud and extortion. The police report states that some months ago in New Delhi, Mr. Bilimoria, impersonating the Prime Minister’s voice, telephoned the State Bank of India and identified himself as Indira Gandhi. He instructed the Chief Cashier to withdraw sixty lakh rupees from the bank’s reserves for delivery to a man who would identify himself as the Bangladeshi Babu. The next day, Mr. Bilimoria, this time in the guise of the Bangladeshi Babu, met the Chief Cashier and took delivery of the sixty lakh rupees. The news leaves Gustad very upset. He had, on Bilimoria’s instructions, deposited the former’s money (ten lakh) in the bank. Now Bilimoria had been arrested and Gustad had been asked to return the money within thirty days. Bilimoria’s representative, Ghulam Mohammed, asks Gustad to withdraw all the money from the bank immediately or “I will have to come and rob your bank…. You have thirty days to return the full package”.
The bank where Gustad works belongs to a Parsee and most of the workers there are Parsees too. Everybody in the bank is astonished with the remarkable case of Bilimoria in New Delhi. There is a lot of gossip and every one shows concern for the fact that a Parsi had committed the crime. They discuss among other things, how almost a decade ago, there was the sensational news that a naval commander had shot and killed his wife’s lover. In the bank canteen, the bank employees debate over Major Bilimoria’s dubious confessions, and the startling facts that CBI’s investigation revealed. Most of them refuse to believe that Bilimoria could have imitated the Prime Minister’s voice.

Dinshawji helps Gustad in withdrawing the amount from the bank. He expunges all traces of the fictitious account.

On the home front, things get worse. Roshan’s illness continues and poverty haunts Gustad. Unable to make both ends meet he sells his camera and his wife’s two gold bangles. It is at this critical juncture that Dinshawji collapses and is rushed to Parsi General Hospital for treatment. Mr Madon, the Bank Manager, sends a messenger to Dinshawji’s wife, and grants Gustad’s request to ride in the ambulance. Gustad pays back all the money to Ghulam Mohammed and visits the ailing Dinshawji in the hospital at least twice a week. He cheers him up and gives him up to date news about the bank and its employees.

While Dinshawji is still in the hospital, Ghulam Mohammed visits Gustad Noble and requests him to see his old friend Major Billy in prison in Delhi before he dies.
wanted to see him at Delhi for the last time to explain his conduct. Gustad accedes and on reaching Delhi and as advised by Ghulam Mohammed, he consults Mr. Kashyap. Gustad is informed that Major Bilimoria had been shifted to a hospital section due to high fever still undiagnosed. Soon Gustad and Bilimoria are face to face with each other. Bilimoria had grown so weak that he couldn’t utter Gustad’s name. Major Bilimoria tells Gustad that he had been framed by the Prime Minister’s office. Indira Gandhi who holds the direct charge of RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) uses RAW like her own private agency for spying on opposition parties and ministers. Bribes and thieveries were going on. RAW spied on her friends and enemies — where they went, who they met, what they said, what they ate, what they drank. Then after sometime, her friends become enemies and her enemies become friends. She blackmails them to keep them under control. Bilimoria also refers to Bangladesh’s struggle for freedom in which thousands were killed and Sheikh Majibur Rahman won. He confesses that Indira Gandhi had made him in-charge of training and supplying the Mukti Bahini tough fighters who were instrumental in the sabotage of factories and toppling of bridges. Bilimoria adds that in order to protect herself, Indira Gandhi trapped him. She was the one who needed money and she was the one who directed him to impersonate on her behalf and collect money from the Chief cashier. Bilimoria tells Gustad that she had all the money with her which she was disbursing to finance her son’s car factory and for election fund. “I decided — if they can profit from the sixty lakhs, why not us. You, your family, Ghulam, me. Why not? I put aside ten lakh” (279). Bilimoria had sent this money to Gustad. But Bilimoria was arrested and they wanted those ten lakh back.
Meanwhile Dilnavaz was seeking Miss Kutpitia’s (a resident of Khodadad Building and an expert at black magic) help to get back her estranged son, Sohrab, who had left the house due to misunderstanding between him and his father. Kutpitia came forward with her black magic treatment. She brought out an old shoe box out of a pile of card-board boxes and arranged a lizard for the treatment of Sohrab. And then she asked Dilnavaz to invite Tehmul, a half-wit resident of the building. Dilnavaz couldn’t understand the Tehmul-and-lizard combination. Kutpitia advised Dilnavaz to keep the lizard covered in a tin box under the bed where Sohrab used to sleep, and then bring it to Kutpitia in the morning for further magic activity in relation to Tehmul. Miss Kutpitia and Dilnavaz invite Tehmul to have fun. Kutpitia believed that the magic charm would ward off the evil spirit from Sohrab to Tehmul and in this way the prodigal son would return home. Mistry gives a detailed account of the superstitions that these people indulge in.

The narrative moves forward with the accounts of the victory of Bangladesh freedom fighters. The stories about “occupations of Bangladesh were balanced by the accounts of the Indian Army’s gallantry” (297). The citizens of India contribute money generously as a support to fighting soldiers in Bangladesh. But the Shiv Sena fascists were roaming in city streets and throwing stones at the windows that were deemed inadequately blacked out. The unlucky individuals were mistaken for enemy agents and beaten up. As the Indian forces got closer to Dacca and the liberation of Bangladesh was imminent, every person was optimistic. People had adjusted to blackouts. There appeared no gloom in the city life. As the Indian Army was drawing closer, the strains of “Jana Gana Mana” playing in the distance could be heard by the residents. The listeners
cheered spontaneously and shouted “Bharat Mata Ki Jai!” For the next few days, newspapers continue to analyse the war. There were accounts of crucial battles. It was interesting to note how Bangladeshis had cheered the arrival of the first Indian troops in Dacca. In the newspapers, there was a detailed description of the surrender ceremony and the text of surrender was published. Like everyone, Gustad had begun to feel the glow of national pride. One day he learns through newspaper that Mr. J. Bilimoria, a former officer with RAW, had died of heart attack while undergoing his four-year imprisonment in New Delhi. Gustad feels satisfied by the fact that his friend Major Jimmy Bilimoria was given a Parsi funeral and had reached the safest place beyond the reach of his tormentors.

Mistry gives description of the life of Bombay city. The people were sick of overflowing sewers, broken water-pipes, pot-holed pavements, uncollected heaps of garbage. The Municipality was not taking any action. The people’s petitions and letters of complaint were of no effect. He also describes the prostitution houses that are run in the city of Bombay. One such house is called the House of Cages where women wait restlessly for customers. The Indo-Pak War of 1971 had a bad effect on their business. The refugee relief tax imposed by the Government had forced the prostitutes to raise prices. The blackout was sending men home early. And the new stories arousing patriotic fervour and national pride had deprived men of “priming best”.

Sohrab had decided to visit home during his father’s absence. Dilnavaz greets him with joy and relief. She hugs him and requests him to talk to his father nicely who will be coming home shortly. Sohrab was perturbed at the prospect of coming face to face with
his father. There ensues a confrontation between crowd of people, who take out a morcha jointly formed by people from all walks of life ranging from doctors to prostitutes to snake charmers and paa nwallas, and Municipal workers who had come to destroy a part of Khodadad Building in order to widen the road. The area also includes the outer wall of Khodadad Building that had been converted into a holy wall with many gods and goddesses from almost all the religions of the world painted by a pavement artist at the request of Gustad. However, the residents’ request falls on deaf ears. The municipal workers, under the command of Malcolm Saldanha — Gustad’s old friend, demolish the wall. The argument between the two parties culminates in stone pelting. Tehmul is injured by a brick sailed towards him, as he was the caretaker of Khodadad Building, resulting in his death. Gustad and Sohrab meet each other after a long time. “He saw his son standing in the doorway, and each held the other’s eyes. Still he sat, gazing upon his son and Sohrab waited motionless in the doorway, till at last Gustad got to his feet slowly. Then he went up and put his arms around him” (337). Gustad welcomes his son, saying ‘Yes’ ‘Yes’ time and again. Running his bloodstained fingers through Sohrab’s hair, Gustad hugs him tightly once more. Thus, he accepts the return of his prodigal son. At this very juncture, Gustad submerges his identity and becomes one with life and death. He prays for all, cries for all, for himself, for Tehmul, for Major Jimmy Bilimoria, for Dinshawji, for his parents and grandparents, “all who had to wait for so long” (337).

In Such a Long Journey, Mistry creates a fictional world far from perfect. It is a world which is rampant with corruption, hypocrisy, communalism, hatred, ugliness, superstition, knavery, wickedness and degradation of human beings. He, at times, emerges as a social realist who presents the society as it is with all its sores yet through
his ideology he tries to project the kind of society he wants to be a part of. Despite all the misery around, the writer believes in the larger rhythm of life where misery and happiness are inter-woven and work incessantly towards the development of the central character to a climax. Thus, a truly progressive writer, Mistry “shows his allegiance to literature’s timeless values, independent of narrow commitments, whether political or regional” (Pathak 164-65).

Rohinton Mistry’s works absorb the complexities of living on the margins within the turbulence of political unrest and changing equations of power in the sub-continent. Though his writings are focused on the condition of Parsis in India and their ethnicity yet he goes beyond all this to accommodate the history of post-independence India. While recording the history of the nation, he is aware of the fragmentary and provisional nature of truth. This truth when seen through the eyes of a doubly displaced writer like Mistry acquires a new dimension which is different from the earlier records. Mistry writes about Parsis in India, his characters are Parsis but most of his characters because of a sense of alienation or displacement have developed an unquestioning tolerance — towards people of other communities, religions or ethnicity. Gustad Noble, the protagonist of *Such a Long Journey*, though proud of his religion, is equally respectful to other religions. In fact, he requests the pavement artist to transform the compound wall, which is used by people as a public toilet, into a sacred place of worship with drawings of gods and goddesses from every possible religion of the world. The artist paints pictures of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, the Moses descending with Ten Commandments, the Nataraj with his cosmic dance, Mary cradling the infant Jesus, Laxmi and Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda, Our Lady of Fatima and Zarathustra. On the whole the novel and its
ideology preaches universalism but there are very few hints which may lead us to believe that Mistry has an urge or pull towards the land of his birth. His preoccupations like his characters are limited to that of his community and fail to assimilate broader aspects of nation or nationalism.

*Delhi: A Novel* by Khushwant Singh is a delicate balance of fiction and non-fiction. It accounts the history of New Delhi from the eyes of an old Sikh guide named Mr. Singh. His passionate romance with Bhagmati, a hermaphrodite and a representation of Delhi has been beautifully paralleled by the novelist. The story progresses with chapters divided in narrations by poets, sultans, soldiers, white memsahibs, etc. Laden with every possible creative or literary technique the book deals with the world of fiction, socio-cultural studies as well as world history. The book starts early in this millennium, and with each alternate chapter proceeds through the centuries until the present time, alternating with chapters based in the present. The story is told from the viewpoints of various characters and with different style. It has as its backdrop the story of a journalist fallen on bad times (possibly an autobiographical figure) and his relationship with a *hijra* (eunuch) named Bhagmati. This vast, erotic, irreverent magnum opus on the city of Delhi starts with the narrator just returning from England after ‘having his fill of whoring in foreign lands’, a bawdy, aging reprobate who loves the city of Delhi, as much as he loves the ugly but energetic hermaphrodite whore Bhagmati, whom he literally picks up from a deserted road on a hot Delhi summer noon. Having no place to go after completing her jail sentence in the dreaded Tihar Jail (probably for selling sex), she begs to be taken under his wing. The kind sardar obliges, and thus begins a wonderful relationship of ups and downs in the narrator’s life. Bhagmati, neither male nor female but possessive of
great exotic sex appeal, vitalizes his life amidst the majestic remains of Delhi in its heyday, and even saves the narrator's life from the mad mobs of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. Since the writer’s main concern is to fill in the “gaps” or “silences” created by the absence of the voice of the marginalized or peripherals in the making of history, he tactfully uses the hermaphrodite, Bhagmati, as his mouth-piece. Bhagmati, in fact, acts as a metaphor, an allegory for colonization. She is a representation of the postcolonial subject as she has no fixed identity. She is neither Hindu nor Muslim, neither male nor female. B.N. Singh compares Bhagmati to a postcolonial subject in the following words,

Like post-colonial subject her identity is never fixed, she eludes it, problematizes it to the point that confusion gets worse confounded…. But as the narrative progresses, she emerges as a complex character, becomes identified with Delhi, the imperial centre. The image of eunuch in Bhagmati/Delhi stands as a metaphor for colonized, the mother country whose vitality — emotional, intellectual, sexual has been sapped due to several years of colonization. (qtd in Pandey 146-47)

Displaying his trademark gift of literal humour and a professional historian’s control over narration, the writer takes turn, chapter by chapter, on the history of the great city and his own sexual exploits and misadventures with vitality mems and lonely army wives whom he is supposed to ‘show Delhi’, other eccentric journalists, editors and bureaucrats, a half-mad Sikh ex-army driver, a fanatic gurudwara bhaiji, among many other colourful characters. All the while the narrator travels through times Delhi has seen, telling us in a most interesting manner, as the first person, all that Delhi has been to Nadir Shah, Taimur and Aurangzeb etc. who plundered and destroyed her, and to Meer Taqi
Meer and Bahadur Shah Zafar whom Delhi destroyed; he looks through the eyes of semi-historical characters like Musaddi Lal Kayasth, a Hindu convert working under the hostile Ghiyas ud din Balban in the fourteenth century — the dawn of the Mughal Empire, right up to Nihal Singh, a Sikh mercenary who settles his historical score with the Mughals by helping the British in crushing the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 — the sunset of the Mughal empire, Mrs. Alice Aldwell, the wife of an English civil servant who converts to Islam to escape persecution (but still gets raped), the dynamic, inventive and shrewd Punjabi entrepreneurs who won the British contracts to build Lutyens's Delhi (Sir Sobha Singh, the writer's father, was one such person), to an angry young Hindu youth whose sister was abducted and raped in Pakistan, and has been disposed off from Western Punjab during the Partition of India, looking for some work ends up signing up with Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and takes revenge by inflicting violence upon Delhi Muslims, and accidentally becoming witness to perhaps the most important and decisive event in the country’s history — the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. The novel ends with the terrorized narrator watching his Sikh neighbours mercilessly burnt alive by people angered due to the killing of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh guards.

Delhi is a historical monumental saga as it chronicles the important historic events that went into the making of the city called Delhi, spanning over several centuries of history. In the Foreword to the first paperback edition of his novel Khushwant Singh writes: “I put in it all I had in me as a writer: love, lust, sex, hate, vendetta and violence — and above all, tears.” Further in the prefatory note to the original hardcover edition the author says that he has tried to tell the story of Delhi from its earliest beginnings to the present times. Its staple is history and the primary source is the records chronicled by
eyewitnesses. Hence he adopts the first person narrative stance to tell the story. Singh writes, “History provided me with skeleton. I covered it with flesh and injected blood, and a lot of seminal fluid into it.”

The story of the novel is told from multiple view points. Out of the nine ‘historical’ chapters, seven are largely monologues of ordinary men including Musaddi Lal, a Hindu clerk under Muslim rule; Jaita Rangreta, an untouchable Sikh living in the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb; Meer Taqi Meer, an Agra born, Urdu poet, living in the reigns of later Moghuls; Alice Aldwell, a British lady, living in the turbulent times of the 1857 revolt; a Sikh soldier Nihal Singh who fought for the British; a builder, who represents the people of the early twentieth century and Ram Lakha, a refugee from Pakistan. These chapters with different view points are interspersed with Bhagmati -Sikh affair which transports the reader from the past to the present, underlining the narrative strategy of the author. About this puncturing of the continuity and linearity of available history, critics believe:

Singh refuses to accept the available history as an objective representation of facts and denies the linear teleological perspective in favour of hybrid perspective and simultaneous presence of multiple truths. This medleying of voices and choice of perspective also underlines Khushwant Singh’s undeniable sympathies with the marginalized and devoiced entities of history. (Zaidi 40)

One such marginalized voice is that of Musaddi Lal Kayastha, a resident of Mehrauli in the city of Delhi. Musaddi, a resident during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Ghiasuddin Balban, leads the life of a shameless bootlegger. His parents died
when he was fifteen. He works as a clerk in the Kotwali. Since he can unconditionally sacrifice all values for the sake of personal advancement his position was like that of a eunuch. People like Musaddi Lal who tried to be a part of both Hindus and Muslims were worse off. He says, “I was disowned by the Hindus and shunned by my own wife. I was exploited by the Muslims who disdained my company. Indeed I was like a hijda who was neither one thing nor another but could be misused by everyone” (55).

Again in a moment of frustration, he tells his wife, “They treat us as if we were hijdas” (58). Musaddi’s disowning by the Hindus was a result of his opinions about those Hindus who instead of accepting the Mughal rule always gloated about past achievements of the Hindu Rajas. He says, “The Hindus lived on the stale diet of past glory. At every gathering they talked of the great days of the Tomaras and the Chauhans” (54).

He finally took refuge under Nizamuddin Auliya, who made no distinction between Hindus and Muslims. What follows is the mixing of facts and fiction as accounts of Ghiasuddin’s reign, Nizamuddin auliya, the dervish of Ghiaspur’s spiritual achievements and the narrator’s fictional interaction with poet Ameer Khusrau are narrated. Ghiasuddin’s death leads to a lot of blood flow as there are many claimants to the throne. Finally, Jalaluddin Khilji took his seat on the throne of Delhi. The narration continues with the account of another saint, Siddi Maula, and his tragic death at the hands of the Emperor. Siddi Maula’s curse upon Jalaluddin that he will be killed by his own kinsmen comes true in the event of his murder by his own nephew and son-in-law, Alauddin Khilji who becomes the new emperor of Delhi. When Alauddin Khilji came
upon the throne of Delhi, he set about despoiling the Hindu kingdoms of the South and his general Malik Kafur extended his dominions right up to the sea.

Thus, the chapter ends with Musaddi Lal writing his own version of history. He is aware of the fact that as an ordinary man he can never be a part of history or history making process yet very cleverly he tries to fill in the gaps left by the historian. Khushwant Singh beautifully sums up the importance and varieties of silence in the following lines:

There is silence where hath been no sound,

There is silence where no sound may be,

In the cold wave — under the deep, deep sea,

Or in wide desert where no life is found,

Which hath been mute, and still must sleep profound;

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These true silence is, self-conscious and alone. (90)

The next chapter has been narrated from the viewpoint of a historical character, Taimur popularly known as Taimur-lang. Taimur, whose name in the history books is synonymous with tyranny, justifies his invasion of India by saying that it was a holy task enjoined upon him by Allah. He motivated his generals by invoking their religious zeal. He summoned his nobles and, “… told them that our object in undertaking the invasion of Hindustan was to bring infidels to the path of true religion and to purify the country
from the filth of polytheism and idolatry” (96). Taimur also realized that though the people of his land could be incited in the name of religion yet they needed a motivating and driving force to march towards Hindustan. He says, “The minds of Turks are as narrow as their eyes. In order to gain their support and to tie up their tongues, it is necessary not only to excite their zeal for Islam but also their greed for gold” (97).

Superior military tactics and the tremendous zeal of the Turks led to Taimur’s victory over Mahmud Tughlak. But the citizens of Delhi showed great courage and did not take things lying down. They refused to pay the indemnity imposed on them and killed a number of guards posted at the city gates. For this defiance Taimur ordered a brutal massacre and, “For the next ten days our men drenched their swords in blood. There was no count of the numbers killed: some said 50,000 others 5,00,000” (101). He and his men acquired untold wealth and numerous slaves.

Khushwant Singh, through the viewpoints of ordinary men and women, shows that the Emperors and Monarchs who ruled India over the centuries did nothing to alleviate the sufferings of the common man. They, instead, indulged in wine and women. Almost all of them came upon the throne after slaying their own brothers, fathers or kinsmen. One king succeeded other yet none was able to bring any respite to the common man which led to religious intolerance, poverty and inequality which in turn led to internal revolts. It is indeed strange to note that what was true then is true today as well. One politician succeeds other but the common man continues to suffer. The corrupt politicians continue to fill their coffers and the ordinary men find it difficult to make both ends meet. The next chapter, “The Untouchables”, is the story of one such ordinary man for whom it did not matter who ruled the country or who succeeded whom. Jaita Rangreta
is an untouchable and his father told him once, “What have we poor untouchables to do with kings!” He remembers his father saying, “They are all the same to us. One goes, another comes, *zulum* goes on” (123). Jaita lived in the locality of sweepers and cobblers in the Rakabganj area of Delhi. He became a Sikh in order to establish a feeling of self-worth and belongingness. He lived in the reign of Shah Jahan and describes how after the death of Jahangir, Shah Jahan became the Emperor and decided to build the Red Fort and also rechristen Delhi as Shahjahanabad. Jaita felt alienated as well as exploited by the Muslims for whom he worked. At the same time, though he is a Sikh, a devotee of the Guru, he is considered to be an untouchable by the Guru’s agent who exhorts money from him in the name of the Guru. So, while he pays he feels, “At least I am something — a Sikh of Guru Nanak. I do not know what it means but it is better than being nothing but a Rangreta untouchable” (127). Jaita continues his narration by describing the squabble between the sons of Shah Jahan for the succession to the throne. For an ordinary man like him it was difficult to imagine how one brother could slay another, a son could imprison his own father or sisters could conspire against their brothers. He says:

The king’s sons fought each other as hungry dogs fight over a bone. Dara’s son, Sulaiman Shikoh, defeated Shuja. Meanwhile Murad and Aurangzeb defeated Dara, captured Agra and made their old father prisoner. Then this fellow Aurangzeb tricked his brother Murad: he got him drunk, tied him up and threw him into a dungeon. He then finished off Shuja, Dara and Dara’s sons. This was how we had a new badshah — Aurangzeb — while the old badshah Shah Jahan was still alive. (130)
There is also a description of the jazia tax levied on non-Mussalmans, the revolt by the Marathas, and the battle between Aurangzeb and Shivaji. The assassination of the Sikh Guru, Tegh Bahadur, by Aurangzeb became the turning point in the life of Jaita Rangreta. Jaita Rangreta, the untouchable became the true son of the Guru when he carried the dead body of the Guru from the prison cell and gave him a decent funeral instead of letting him become a thing of mockery at the hands of the Muslims. On his way to Anandpur he thinks, “At last the Guru had performed the great miracle. He had given a carrier of shit and stinking carcasses the privilege of carrying his sacred head in his arms…. I was now Jaita Rangreta the true son of the Guru” (136).

While the previous chapter deals with the atrocities committed by Aurangzeb, the next chapter justifies Aurangzeb’s stance. The chapter is written from Aurangzeb’s viewpoint where he narrates his life and the years of his reign. Aurangzeb believed that since Allah had given him birth in the dynasty of kings, it was his duty to serve humanity and to spread Islam. He ordered his commanders to extend the domain of Islam to the furthestmost corners of the country. He was a fanatic Muslim who disliked his brother, Dara Shikoh’s tolerance towards Hindus. He could not accept the fact that his father Emperor Shah Jahan had a greater liking for Dara and hence tried his level best to rise in the eyes of his father. He felt ignored and overlooked by his own father and says, “The emperor put us away as if we were not his seed. To our brothers and their sons he sent presents of gold and jewellery on their birthdays; never to us or our children” (150). Unable to tolerate such partiality and in the wake of Shah Jahan’s illness, Aurangzeb decides to take over the control of the Mughal empire. He kills his brother Dara Shikoh, his sons and brother Shuja. Murad is imprisoned in another fort forever for he indulged
only in wine and women and was unfit to be the ruler of Delhi. Shah Jahan along with his
daughter Jahanara Begum is also imprisoned as they were believed to be indulging in
conspiracy against Aurangzeb. Despite all this, he justifies himself in the following
words, “Misguided historians have written many falsehoods about the way we came to
acquire sovereignty over Hindustan while our father Emperor Shah Jahan was still alive.
They have maligned our name as a scheming self-seeker and a plotter.” (151)

As soon as he took control of the empire, Aurangzeb started demolishing temples
and raised mosques upon their ruins. He forbade drinking and forced prostitutes and
dancing girls to marry or leave his empire. At the same time he refused to take anything
from the treasury. Instead, he lived on the wages earned by sewing prayer caps and
writing copies of Quran. He himself lived a pious life offering Namaz at the stipulated
time. He was disappointed with his sons and was apprehensive about the state of Mughal
Empire after his death.

The next chapter on Nadir Shah appears quite similar to that of Taimur. Nadir
Shah, too, invaded India in order to rid it of the infidels and to restore Islam. After
Aurangzeb’s death, Mughal Empire was on its last legs and sensing this he came all the
way from Isphahan and Iran to settle the matters at Delhi. He not only plundered Delhi
but also killed as many citizens as he could. While narrating his pillage, he describes,
“Gold and silver and precious stones flowed into our treasure as the waters of the Oxus
flow into the sea” (187). After amassing wealth from India, he did not bother to stay
back. He married his son to the daughter of one of the kings and left the country in the
hands of incompetent, indifferent and squabbling kings. Before leaving for Iran he did
not forget to take away with him the precious Koh-i-noor diamond from Mohammad Shah.

What follows next is the life story of the renowned poet Meer Taqi Meer. Meer was a much sought after poet both in Delhi and Agra but was consumed in the fires of perfidy committed by his beloved. The rise and fall of the poet coincides with the downfall of the Mughal Empire. Along with the narration of the love affair between the poet and his beloved the episode is also interspersed with historical facts like the Battle of Panipat fought between the forces of Ahmad Shah Abdali and the Marathas. The poet talks about Nadir Shah’s plunder of Delhi which led to a lot of blood shed and Delhi became a wasteland where gangs of Rohillas, Marathas, Jats and Sikhs preyed upon the people. Many heads were tumbled but what is important is that whatever King or Monarch ascended the throne of Delhi; it was ultimately the city and its residents who had to bear the brunt. The rulers led a life of comfort and ease and did nothing for the betterment of the people. Meer’s words say it all, “Why labour the tragic tale of the King of Cities? Delhi was never the same after the Iranians had slain its soul. Kings, noblemen and their hirelings came like flocks of vultures to peck at its corpse.” (226) In the year 1758, Nadir Shah’s successor, Ahmad Shah Abdali marched through Punjab and occupied Delhi. Once again the city saw blood shed and devastation. “Fires were started in the city; houses were looted and burnt down…. There was bloodshed and destruction everywhere” (227). Abdali who had defeated the warrior Marathas at the site of Panipat had to suffer a major defeat at the hands of the Sikhs in Punjab. The city, Delhi, was once again left to the mercy of ruffians. “After the Persians, Afghans and the Marathas came the Jats”, Meer writes, “I was still in Bharatpur when the Jat Raja Suraj Mal plundered
Agra and Delhi” (230). The poet sums up the journey of his life in the following words, “I had two loves in my life, Begum Qamarunnissa and Delhi. One destroyed me, the other was destroyed for me” (232).

The British took no time to understand that religion played an important role in the lives of Indians and it was religion who kept them divided. They were quick to exploit this to suit their own ulterior motives. The chapter “1857” is a brilliant write-up by the author where three different viewpoints present the turbulence of those times. The three narrators are once again three commoners — Alice Aldwell alias Ayesha Begum, an Anglo-Indian woman; Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal emperor who had become a common man by then and Nihal Singh, an ordinary Sikh soldier who fought for the British in the uprising of 1857. Alice Aldwell is an Anglo-Indian, half British and half Kashmiri. Due to her fair complexion she passes off as an English woman. At the age of eighteen she marries a *pucca* Englishman who is already fifty. Although half Indian, she is contemptuous of the Eurasians and Indians. She is a woman without character and indulges in numerous affairs. She loves to entertain the English at her place but not the natives and doesn’t even return courtesy calls. On Mr Metcalfe’s insistence, she goes calling on Begum Zeenat Mahal, the wife of old Bahadur Shah Zafar. Mr Metcalfe wanted, “someone to keep in touch with the *harems* of the *nawabs* to know what their *begums* were saying” (240). At the party they overhear the comments made by Prince Jawan Bakht who says, “…there are rumours afloat that the Persians are going to invade Hindustan. And like Nadir Shah a hundred years ago, they will massacre the infidels” (245). Alice passes on this piece of information to Mr Metcalfe who in turn asks her to keep in touch with the ladies of the *harem* of Mirza Abdullah, “one of the many
grandsons of the king.” During the revolt of 1857, Alice and her daughters take refuge in the house of Mirza Abdullah who has all three of them converted to Islam. Later he transports them to another house where he and his two friends rape Alice to satisfy their fascination of the white skin. Seeing her plight, one of her servant, Ali Ahmed comes to her rescue and takes them to his house but sensing danger the three move out of the place. With the help of a poor Muslim tailor who promises her that no harm will come their way, Alice and her daughters reach the fort. They are sent to the same dungeon where other Europeans are kept but are treated differently because of Alice’s conversion to Islam. Her husband Alec and rest of the Europeans are shot and she is left in the dungeon with her daughters and is released when the British forces capture the fort.

The entire uprising of 1857 is once again narrated from the viewpoint of the old king Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal king, whose only passion was poetry and who lived a life of penury as the expenses of his household were always more than his income. The old king lived under the guardianship of the East India Company. He describes his plight in the following words:

We were king only by title. We lived in a palace which was once said to be the most beautiful in the world; it was now a palace only in name. And even that was to be denied to our sons…. The firangi had given us only a drop out of the ocean of fortune that our great ancestors had bequeathed to us; we accepted that drop and called it a tribute…. But the firangi insisted it was a pension. An emperor a pensioner of his subjects!” (266)
When on 11 May 1857, the mutineers of the East India Company approached him and told him, “We have murdered the firangis in Meerut. The nasara (Christians) want to destroy our faith. We will rid the country of these vile infidels. We will make you Emperor of Hindustan!” (250), he is in a fix whether to support them or take sides with the Company. When his generals open the gates to the mutineers, he shows his reluctance, “We are a fakir prolonging our days on this wretched earth. We have no strength in our arms; our feeble voice is not heard beyond the walls of this fort” (252). The mutineers kill many European men, women and children. In return the English soldiers set fire to powder magazine killing hundreds of natives. The king still took the Europeans who approached him under his protection but his son Mirza Mughal incited the rabble of the city against these Europeans and took over the functions of a ruler. After a lot of fighting Delhi is lost to the British on 21 September and Bahadur Shah is arrested. All his sons, kinsmen and supporters are murdered and the king is pronounced guilty on various charges of treason resulting in his exile from the land of his ancestors. Thus ends the life story of the Last Mughal.

The third narrator of this chapter is Nihal Singh, a Sikh recruited in the British army. The Sikhs nurtured hatred in their heart towards the Muslims for beheading their Guru and hence, the British used the Sikhs to fight the Muslim rebels. They also enlisted Pathan, Biloces and Punjabi Muslims to fight against the Hindu rebels. The revolt of 1857 was also triggered as a result of religion, as rumours about the cartridges smeared with the fat of cows and pigs being used, were floated. This resulted in the unity of the Hindus and Muslims. At this point the British used the Sikh soldiers to crush the revolt. The slave mentality of Indians is exemplified by the way Nihal Singh looks up to Hodson
Sahib. The British officer, Nicholson Sahib is held in great esteem by the soldiers and some Sikhs go so far as to believe that he is an incarnation of one of their Gurus. Nihal Singh and other Sikh soldiers play an important role in defeating the united forces of Hindus and Muslims and offering on platter the throne of Delhi to East India Company. This kind of exploitation led to a hundred years of servility under the British rule.

The chapter, “The Builders” depicts the interesting relationship between Sujan Singh and his son Sobha Singh. This chapter also reveals the relationship between the Indians and the English. Sujan Singh teaches his son all the cunning and the various ploys required to establish a successful business. Religion also continued to remain an important pun of politics and was exploited to hilt by the English. Corruption had become an accepted part of business. The English involved themselves in a lot of building work. Along with the progress in the building of the new capital of India, the author has also given an account of the rise of nationalism. Gandhi and other Congress men demanded self-rule. They also called for a boycott of the Prince of Wales. In 1923 Congress won the elections and Motilal Nehru became the main spokesman in the Central Assembly. Nationalism was at its peak. People wanted to be rid of the British rule either through negotiations or by force. Khushwant Singh in this chapter gives a detailed account of the building of the city of Delhi and the narrator describes how he and his father greased the palms of the CPWD clerks and presented generous gifts to the English officials for attaining the contracts of the buildings. There are passing references to World War I as also to other historical events like the Round Table Conference, Lord Irwin’s taking over as the Viceroy of India, the bombing of the Assembly by Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukh Dev, etc.
The final episode on history, “The Dispossessed” depicts the complete fragmentation of the relationship between the Hindus and the Muslims that culminates in the division of the country and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. This part of the novel traces the growth of the militant Hindu organization, the RSS, which exploited young boys like Ram Rakha. People who had suffered in some manner during the holocaust were programmed by the RSS and were motivated to indulge in terrorist activities. Ram Rakha, a young boy of sixteen had been displaced from his native village Hadali in Pakistan in the wake of partition. Displaced and dispossessed, he along with his parents reached Delhi after losing his only sister to the Muslim ruffians. With a seething hatred towards the Muslims in his heart he visits the Birla House where Mahatma Gandhi has organized a prayer meeting. Chaos breaks out at this prayer meeting as some of the zealous Hindus refuse to tolerate Muslims in India. Ram Rakha is taken in by these fellows who urge him to join the Sangha and avenge the insults heaped upon them by the Muslims. The Sangha chief deputes him at the Birla House for the latest update on Mahatma Gandhi and in the entire process Ram Rakha becomes a witness to the assassination of Gandhi. Though he disapproved of Gandhi’s talk on ahimsa and satyagraha, averse to his idea of religious tolerance, he somehow becomes inconsolable at the death of Gandhi. He suddenly realizes the futility of violence and says:

There is a lot of confusion. I jostle my way out of the crowd and run away. I start crying — running and crying, crying and running. I sit down on the pavement and slap my forehead with my hands and yell hai, hai, hai. A crowd of people gather round me. They ask me very kindly: “Son, why are you crying?” I look up at them through my tears and reply: “My bapu is dead.” They make clucking sounds of
sympathy. One says, “You must be brave. You must stand by your mother. You must carry on whatever work your bapu was doing.” Then he becomes more serious and asks, “How did your bapu die? Was he very ill?”

“No, he wasn’t ill at all, I killed him with my own hands, I killed him.”

Then I slap my forehead and yell, “Hai, hai, I murdered my bapu.” (374)

The novel ends on a sad note with the last chapter depicting the height of religious intolerance that has come to stay in India and has led to the collapse of mutual relationships. This hatred and indifference between the Hindus and the Sikhs culminates in the assassination of Indira Gandhi in turn leading to the mass killing of Sikhs in Delhi. The Sikh narrator himself narrowly escapes the fanatic mob with the help of Bhagmati, the eunuch but his watchman Budh Singh is not as lucky as him. The hooligans kill Budh Singh by putting a burning tyre round his neck. People, like impotents, watch their neighbours being pulled out into the streets and killed. Mutual human relationships always take a back seat whenever the question of religion, caste, community or sect arises in India. They no longer regard themselves as humans or Indians.

Khushwant Singh’s novel Delhi like his previous novels is about India and Indians. A lot of hard work and research has gone into the making of this novel. Singh took 25 years to complete this work and ends up providing us the face of contemporary India where on one hand the government is desperately busy changing names of roads and sites to erase the signs of colonial rule and on the other hand the slogans and actions used during struggle for independence like “Jai Hind” and hunger strike are being misused and abused by the people against each other in the post-independence India.
Linguistic experiment is another unique feature of this novel. An abundance of Persian and Arabic words in chapters dealing with Mughal history and Hindustani words and conventional phrases lend ingenuity to the language and reveal the new found confidence of the Indo-Anglian writers. If Raja Rao writes *Kanthapura* in the Indian narrative style and makes use of the Sanskritic tradition, Singh makes use of Persio-Arabic narrative tradition which is again a form of the Indian narrative style. Thus, unlike earlier Indian writers writing in English, Singh performs a dual task through his works, not only of proving his Indianness to the colonial masters by subverting history but also to the readers all over the world who are anxious to hear the ‘voices’ that were unheard till now.
Works cited:


