Chapter I
Introduction
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Political novel – sub genre – prominent place in the Indian novels in English Definitions of various experts – political novel deals with political ideology, political setting – real or fictional political character – Ideological and non-ideological political novels – large and wide scope of political novels in Indian English literature – In Indian political context – pre-independence – Gandhism – partition and post-independence politics.
Chapter -I

Introduction

Indian English literature has become an integral part of English literature reflecting and echoing events of significance in the history of India. The history of Indian writing in English is not very old. Indian writers have tried their hands in all four genres of literature—poetry, drama, fiction and criticism. But they could not make any noteworthy foot print on its own in the field of drama and criticism. We do find richness in poetry and novels. Indian poetry written in English is huge and rich in variety, taste and colour. It is considerable in quality and quantity, and compared to poetry and drama, fiction had a delayed start like delayed aspirin in the Indian English literature. Though development of novel in Indian English literature was late, but achieved much hight, due to its imaginative art, which gives artistic expression to the relationship of man and society. Novel as an art form came to India with British. Not only in Indian English but in regional languages too, novel has been written by leaps and bounds. It achieved a
fame of prominent genre in Indian English literature. It is the novel that has fetched the greatest number of awards, royalties, global relationship and acceptability. The development of Indian novel in English follows gradual progression from the imitative stage to the realistic to the psychological and then to the experimental stage.

Like English novel, Indian English novel too remains true to the aspects of novel writing through its concerned with society, realism and interest in man. Nearly all great novelists from Bakim Chandra, the father of Indian English novel to Arun Joshi, Salman Rushdie and Arundhati Roy all are concerned with social realities and written for social purpose.

The year 1857 is significant in the history of India. The Indian army under the British rule staged a mutiny, which created a favourable atmosphere for the British Queen to focus her attention on the problems of India. Since East India Company needless to the problems of India, enraged discontent among the civilians. It resulted in mutiny of 1857. Due to the attention by Queen, there was
brought a number of administrative and educational reforms between 1857 to 1900. A number of schools were established and taught in schools, which created a favourable atmosphere so that number of people took to the English education. It led political awakening among the educated experts resulting that into the spirit of nationalism. It began to take roots in the 19th century due to the notions of democracy, freedom, equality, which was creeping into the Indian consciousness.

The Indian English novel begins with Bakim Chandra Chatterjee's work 'Rajmohan's wife' in the year 1864. It was a significant start for the Indian English novel. 'Rajmohan's wife' had the touch of historical, social and philosophical ideas and a serious realistic melodramatic story of Hindu wife. Bakim Chandra paved the way to the future to the Indian English novel, and came to be known as 'Father of Indian English novel'.

At the end of the 19th century, there were four women novelists, who played a major role for breathing and leading to this genre. They are Raj Laxmi Debi (The Hindu wife,
1876), Toru Datt (Binaca 1878), kruplani Satthianandan (Kamla: A story of Hindu wife, 1895) and Shevantibai M. Nikambe (Ratnabai: A sketch of Bombay High Caste Hindu young wife 1895).

Then next important figure on the literary scene was Rabindranath Tagore. He exhorted a tremendous influence on the minds of the people with the choices of themes. Later on appeared so many novelists, but I do like to mention only few prominent novelists viz. S.C. Dutt’s 'The young Zamindar' (1853), Jogendranath Chattopadhyaya’s 'The Girl and Her Tutor' (1891). We do find Gandian impact on some novelistis, like K.S. Venkataramani’s 'Murugan, The Tiller' (1927), Then there are 'foundling fathers' Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan. Bhabani Bhattacharya, Khushwant Singh, Chaman Nahal, Manohar Malgaonkar, Nayantara Sahgal etc. who enriched the Indian English novel and brought it on a fully matured stage.

During the mid-twentieth century, there are Arun Joshi, Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth and some well known
women novelists like Kamala Markandaya, Ruth P. Zhabvala, Attia Hussan, Anita Desai, Nayantara Sahgal, Kamala Das too played major roles for pouring richness in the novel.

Indian English novel is a part of truly Indian novel and not only simple extension of English fiction. The critical analysis of the works of major novelists clearly shows that the majority of writers since the beginning of genre dealt with social realities, revolving around the political matters.

Indian novelists in English cover a wide range of themes—social, political, historical, romantic, rural, psychological having the touch of freedom movement and politics of the country. The Indian English novels seem influenced by the great thinkers and by their thoughts on contemporary politics and society. During the time of Independence, Common people were cherishing the values of great personnels like, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Ambedkar and Jinha. Dr. Ambedkar, prominent political leader fought against the ill-treatment of Hinduism, to get prominence to the depressed class in the national matters. The call of
British Government to Dr. Ambedkar to attend the Round Table conference in 1930 as the delegate of the untouchables has much importance in the politics. The attainment of independence is the greatest event in modern Indian history. The period preceding this event was packed with political struggle, suffering and hope. The period that followed was full of unexpected trials and turmoils. In the midst of these stresses and strains efforts have been made to create new order. During the Independence and Post-independence period, nearly all the novels concerned with social and political problems.

In Indian English fiction, political motif has been very prominent from the beginning of the genre. Politics flows in the very life blood of Indian English fiction. India suffered under the yoke of foreign powers and hence "nationalism becomes a preoccupation of the writers. They are important not just for their art but also as teachers, helping the nation to an awareness of itself, its aspirations, its troubles". ¹

Political novel in Indian English too occurred due to the reaction to the English rule. The spread of political
concern was the consequence rather than the cause of the political struggle for freedom.

Infact, the Indian novel in English was born before independence and naturally, the politics of the freedom struggle plays an important part in it. And it is the national and political expression in art which distinguishes the literature of one nation from that another. Hence we have South-African literature, a Canadian literature, Indian literature, though all written in English language but different from each other. We can find, an intimate connection between the growth of the freedom movement and the rise of the Indian novel in English.

**Definition and Interpretation of Political Novels in Indian English.**

Art is always a social activity in reality. It's foundations always are rooted in economic, political, social, philosophic and religious background. It depicts multi-dimensional aspects of a society. In this age of inter-related and multi-dimensional, no branch of human experience and expression can be fully autonomous. "A totality we called
society".² which includes politics. It means art is an organic part of the total cultural complex in which it take its origin.

'Politics meant the science and art of Government' and little more a political novel is a novel concerned with depicting political demonstration or enactment of this arcane and coveted science or art. Western literary critics have concisely defined the various sub-categories and varieties of the novel: the historical, picaresque novel, the psychological novel, the novel of manners, science fiction and mystery novels, but political novel has been remained less fortunate in studies. This sub-genre 'political novel' has remained somewhat vague and amorphous even in the studies by Irving Howe, Joseph L. Blotner and H.A.L. Fisher.

Although some critics have tried to define the term 'political novel' as a novel dealing with political ideology or at any rate, the novel in which political events are acting as a backdrop against which literary characters are developed. Political novel may be interpreted as to include all works of fiction encompassing political ideology, lives of political leaders, political movements, satires on contemporary
politics, lives of common men and women as they are affected by politics, political allegories. Yet the problem of defining the term has not been dealt with any definitive way as in the case of other sub-genres of prose fiction.

However, literary critic, Morris E. Speare described it as

"a work of fiction which leans rather to 'ideas' than to 'emotions' where the main purpose of the writer is party-propaganda, public reform or exposition of the lives of personages who maintain Government or of the forces which constitute Government".³

The professional emphasis on 'ideas' or 'theory' is effectively negated by the ruling out at any concern with the merits of any given place of legislation.

H.A.L. Fisher has defined broadly: -

"The political novel concerns itself with men and women engaged in contemporary political life and discussing contemporary political ideas."⁴

To Joseph L. Blotners,
"a political novel is a book which directly describes, interprets or analysis political phenomena. And Irving Howe remarks that, "by a political novel I mean a novel in which political ideas play a dominant role or in which the political milieu is the dominant setting."6

Here Irving Howe intends to focus on political ideas playing dominant role with political milieu is the setting of novels. Howe, thus, established the important principle that political novel did not come prepackaged and neatly labelled to the reader as a political novel, but had to be discerned and recognised by the reader as such or not on the basis of his own discrimination of its organic emphasis. Further he says, "A political novel is one which is an attempt, is made to incorporate ideology into the novel's stream of sensuous impression." 7 Howe instead of theorizing about the political novel, say "In treating 20th century writers I have found myself placing a great stress upon the politics and ideology as such."8 In the best of such works "ideas are made home a kind of independent motion... So
that they themselves ..... seem to become active character in the political novel."\textsuperscript{9}

Further, Stendhal comments,

"politics in a work of literature is like a pistol shot in the middle of concert, something loud and vulgar and yet a thing to which it is not possible to refuse one's attention."\textsuperscript{10} Here he was intended to say that political novel must contain the usual representation of human behaviour and feelings, in which there should be modern ideology in abstract form.

One of the basic problems in considering the term 'political novel' seems to be whether it should deal with ideology or whether the political events should merely act as a backdrop against which literary characters are to be developed. That's why Carlo Coppola feels that "the very nature of this particular category of novel its proper subject matter, its scope, its form, remain open to question."\textsuperscript{11}

While M.K. Naik had made conclusion that the term 'political novel' may denote either "a piece of fiction devoted to a presentation of political ideas or a species of fiction in
which action, character and setting are all firmly grounded in politics.”

Keeping in view the above definitions by the eminent authorities, we may conclude that the term, 'political novel' signifies a novel, which directly or indirectly expresses and indicates certain ideological preferences or describes and analyses existing political conditions.

Mahadev Apte strongly pleads that a political novel is quite different form. According to him any novel containing descriptions of political actions, events, ideologies or whatever, is not necessarily a political novel. According to him the essential ingredients of political novel include (1) the plot be based upon political events (2) principal characters should be directly involved with political activities, or should be played some political roles and political activity should directly affect the lives of principal characters. For instance in ‘Waiting for the Mahatma’ the protagonist enshrouded by the Gandhian philosophy of dispassionate service to the society (3) the action of various characters should be the result of personalities of various political ideologies (4) political events only used for the
background, either for support or contrast the actions. In short, "the characters, the interaction between them, the events, all should be interwoven in a political milieu; political phenomena should be directly described, interpreted or analysed and yet should be an integral part of the novel."\(^{13}\)

In modern times the political novel has become a fascinating and popular form of novel, fitting admirably the Aristotelian concept of 'man as a political animal,' Numerous masterpieces of political novels in various languages have been written. Disraeli's *Sybil or two Nations*, George Orwell's *1984* belong to this genre of novel.

From above definitions and established theories about 'political novel' of various critics and experts shows that political novel should at least deal with political ideology or should have political setting against which fictional characters are seen to develop. And it is clear as far as India is concern, in which different linguistic, cultural and ethnic groups maintain autonomous status, and novels
sketching their inter-relations shall be considered as political novels.

Fiction of all literary forms is mostly concerned with the social condition and values. Turning our attention to the political novel in India, we are more concerned with the unique Indian problems. In Indian English Fiction the political motif has been very prominent from the beginning. M.K. Naik feels that, "the Indian novel in English was born before Independence and naturally the politics of the freedom struggle plays an important part in it."14 There was close affinity between the growth of the freedom movement and the rise of the Indian English novel. Literature is the mirror of society and contemporary age, but the political novel is a special kind of mirror that reflects not merely the external features of age but also its inner face, its nervous system, coursing of its blood and the unconscious promptings and conflicts which sway it. Freedom struggle was the grassroot of all the novels, and all problems-social, cultural, economic, religious had considered in relation to the single question i.e. attainment of freedom.
Political novels may be divided into two types (1) Ideological (2) Non-ideological. The first category, ideological political novels has certain specific political ideas for using in political propaganda. And the non-ideological political novels concerned with the depiction of political conditions and do not aim to propagate any political values. It has objectivity.

By and large it is rather difficult to differentiate between political novel and historical novel. We can find nearly the same aspects between these two sub-genres. But historical novel can be designated as 'political' when it is specifically and directly deals with political history. In comparison to historical novel, a political novel is narrower in one sense and broader in another. It is narrower since it is constricted to political aspects of history, whereas a historical novel extends beyond the political terrain, to social, cultural, moral, economic aspects of history. The political novel attains broader dimensions than historical novel, as it moves beyond history and addresses itself to living political problems, ideas and ideologies. E.M. Forster too remarks, "fiction is truer than history because it goes
beyond the evidence, and each of us knows from his/her own experience that there is something beyond the evidence." In political novels, historical and social elements, and political matters are the parts of history. But the political novelist's interpretation is predictive, while historical novelists seem retrospective. The most vital of all recent developments in understanding of a political novel, it has served to expand its thematic range dramatically, relating to a remarkable conceptual modification of the word 'politics' itself. George Orwell remarkably said that 'no book is genuinely free from political bias. The opinion that art should have nothing to do with politics is itself a political attitude'.

As far as Indian political novels in English is concern, we face the questions of its definitions like the west, but with uniquely Indian problems as well. Indian English political novels sharply divide into two periods, the dividing line being the achievement of independence in 1947. Much of the pre-independence novel was devoted to the portrayal of the aspiration for freedom, political movements, political ideology, political turmoil and the imaginary or real
individual involved in them. The post-independence political English novel was initially hopeful, but later on beset with frustration, disillusionment, political corruption, Indo-Pak and Bangladesh wars, ideologically baseless political parties, selfish political leaders, exploitation of common men.

The rise of nationalism in mid-nineteenth century, which was fostered by British social and economic exploitation and resulted in the 1857 Rebellion and the subsequent assumption of rule by the British monarchy reflects in the novel considerably. Censorship imposed by the British resulted that the writers turned to political themes directly. With the rise of nationalist activities in India during the independence period, the writers were influenced by politics, political issues and polemics. Pre-Independence fall into two broad categories having the same one basic theme: Indian aspiration for freedom and independence from Britain. The difference between these two was about their attitude about the British and the manner in which the achievement of goal-to achieve freedom. One group prefers non-violence and peaceful
expulsion of the British from India, and being the follower of Gandhi and his ideology, while second group was violent in their attitude about the British and desired expulsion of British by any means.

While the post-independence political novel in English portrayed failure of democratic values, effect of partition crisis, Pakistan and Bangladesh at war with India, Kashmir Issue, politics amoral, corrupt political leaders, terrorism, naxalites, conflicts between two religions for the sake of politics.

The evolution of Indian English novel and socio-political consciousness was simultaneous and interlocked. George Orwell rightly remark, 'No book is genuinely free from political bias'. And its true to the Indian Novel in English. The word 'politics' has been entered in the kitchen, bedroom nowadays. It has astonishing variety and new meaning and pervaded each and every area of human activity.

**Scope of political novel in Indian English Literature:**
Political writing is very wide and large in Indian English novel. It covers all the political problems in the history of Indian society, because in history, political change is the most important change to which other changes becomes subordinate. It is very difficult to distinguish between social and political problems because each and every social problem acquires a political dimension.

Before 1930, there was no any considerable achievement in Indian novel in English, but after 1930, there came a sudden flowering. The Indian freedom struggle was already more than a generation old, but with the advent of Mahatma Gandhi and spread of education started by British in their English schools, awareness of freedom spread to the very grass roots of Indian society. Education started by British school exposed the Indians the outward concept led to realize English constitution, Liberal British institutions, the idea of freedom, and other liberal political ideologies due to which Indian educated people started aspiring for freedom and new ideology. Politics, political issues and polemics become the pre-occupation of the Indian novelists with the increase in nationalists
activities during the thirties and forties. India's hope for freedom and independence from British rule conceived two types of novels. The former belonged to the works of those novelists, who favored non-violence and the latter consisted of Marxist ideology and the militant like Netaji Subhashchandra Bose, who wanted to expel British by means of force.

Thematically Indian English political novels divided into pre-independence political novel, Gandhian political novels, novels on partition and post-independence political frustration.

**Pre-Independence political novels:**

In the Pre-independence period, we find many nationalists movements in India. There exited many associations of Indians before the rising in 1857. British India Association (1843), In 1848 Madras Native Association and Literary and Scientific society were established to bring Parsi, Gujratis, Marathas together. In 1852 Bombay Association was formed having political motive. In 1858, Surendranath Banerjee founded Indian Association to
represent the views of educated middle class and to inspire them to take interest in public affairs. This Association launched a national movement against the reduction of age limit for I.C.S. Then Bombay presidency Association was formed in 1888. In Poona Sarvajanik Sabha was established in 1867, and in 1884 Mahajan Sabha was established in Madras. Later on Bakim Chandra’s patriotic song 'Vande Mataram.' In Maharashtra Tilak started 'Ganpati Festival' and 'Shivaji Festival' to lend the garb of religion to politics. Through out country youth was inspired by the idea of service and sacrifice at the alter of freedom for the motherland. The Maharashtrian, Bengalis and Punjabis had revolted against the British Empire on many issues. But British was not ready to relax its hold over India. It put down all attempts of revolt ruthlessly. Indians continued to challenge the British Empire without fearing their torture and suppression. Indians wanted British to quit and leave India alone to her destiny. The mutiny of 1857 was a warning to the British Empire of Indians national consciousness and their will of self-government.
National congress party played a major role for promoting and making conscious to the Indians. Congress launched political and economic programme with a view to unifying the Indian people to become conscious of the nationality. R.C. Dutt propounded 'the drain theory' to present India's poverty as the result of colonial exploitation by the English.

The new message become a powerful strategy to arouse the Indians politically. In this, the idea of 'Swadeshi' was used by leaders like Tilak, to put economic pressure on British. Swadeshi was a weapon of political agitation against imperialism and to arouse and involve the people politically for the attainment of 'Swaraj'. 'Swadeshi' brought new classes of people without distinction of caste and creed in the politics. This concept infused a new sense of confidence, independence, fearlessness and sacrifice. But the early political leaders failed to gain any worth from the rulers. And cause of that new leadership came into politics with its faith in a militant form of nationalism. Leaders like B.P. Pal, Aurobindo Gosh, Tilak and Lajpat Rai aroused the spirit of sacrifice and courage in the people, which would enable
them to wrest freedom from the rulers-rather than having to beg for it. They had faith in the strength of the masses. There was the rise and growth of revolutionary terrorism. Many secret societies were set up in Maharashtra, Bengal and Punjab. The Lucknow pact (1916) brought the Hindus and Muslims together to protest the agitation against imperialism. But it also remained failure.

Then the arrival of Gandhi on the national scene in the 1920's galvanized the nation into activity. Gandhi's inspiring leadership turned the independence movement from political struggle into emotional struggle. The coming of Gandhi set the political scene alight and it influenced the literary scene for tremendous activity.

There are many political events which marked remarkably for the awakening the masses- Simon Commission, Civil Disobedience movement, the Khilafat and non-violent Non-cooperation movement of 1920-21, salt satyagraha. All these movements propelled by Gandhian philosophy of truth and non-violence found expression in the works of contemporary Indian novelists.
At the time of freedom struggle and after independence also, so many novelists had portrayed the pre-independence political struggle. The prominent works of fiction on the theme of pre-independence struggle are S.K. Gosh's 'The prince of Destiny' (1909), J.N. Mitra's 'Towards the Dawn: A contemporary political novel' (1922), Dhan Gopal Mukerjee's 'My Brother's face' (1925) 'Muluk Raj Anand's 'Coolie', Two leaves and a Bud', Raja Rao's 'Kanthapura' 1938) Ahmed Ali's 'Twilight in Delhi' (1940), Khwaja Ahmed Abbas's 'Tomorrow is ours', Aamir Ali's 'Conflict' and Bhabani Bhattacharya's 'So Many Hungers' (1947).

The political upsurge of the first two decades of the 20th century is portrayed in S.K. Ghosh's 'The prince of Destiny' (1909) and J.N. Mitra's 'Towards the Dawn: A contemporary political Novel' (1922). These novels not only reveal the widening gulf between Indians and their callously wily British rulers but also highlight the political unrest in the country leading to revolutionary activities in various province.
K.C. Dutt's *A journal of forty eight Hours of the year 1945* (1835) and S.C. Dutt's *Republic of Orissa: Annals from the pages of the twentieth century* (1845) is presented on the theme of armed rebellion by nationalists. *'A Journal of forty eight hours of the years 1945'* depicts on imaginary successful uprising and revolt of the middle and upper-class English educated people against the British rule. This novel is the beginning of Indian fiction in the political genre with the theme of national struggle against the foreign rule. And S.C. Dutt's novel *Republic of Orissa* *'Annals from the pages of the twentieth century'* depicts an imaginary British defeat leading to the establishment of a democratic republic in Orissa. Second novel by S.C. Dutt *'The young Zamindar'* (1885) is too dealt with the theme of armed rebellion, and reflects the sporadic armed revolts of the Indian Muslims and Hindus against the British authority and their suppression of the revolt in Orissa. The same author's other novel *'Shunkar: A tale of Indian Mutiny of 1857'* reflecting the Indian Mutiny of 1857 in the manner of mingling history with fiction. Deprivation of the Indian upper class of their power and position, the cruelty
of the British officials towards Indians are given as the cause of the outbreak of the mutiny.

S.K. Ghosh's *The prince of Destiny: The New Krishna* (1904) reflects the colonial struggle of the time in the context of political formation of Indian League in 1857, Indian Association in 1876 and Indian National Congress in 1885. In this novel many contemporary social and political problems depicted and presented India's destiny in the background of colonialism.

S.M. Mitra's *Hindupore* too based on Indian insurgency and armed rebellion. The novel deals with the right to political opinion and it parodies British rulers and communal leaders. The novel begins with the friendly relations between Indians and British, but later on to the end, due to British arrogance and brutality, insurgency provoked by Indians. The brutality, arrogance and ill-treatment by British is the cause and responsible shown for the Indian insurgency and agitation.

'Tomorrow is ours' (1942) and 'Inquilab' (1955) by K. A. Abbas deals with the early decades of the twentieth
century political period. 'Tomorrow is ours' describes the launching of the non-cooperation movement by Gandhi and also the communist struggle in China and Russia, which fired the imagination of Indian people. 'Inquilab' too represents the political and religious events in the year 1933. Abbas goes very deep into the various issues involved in the Gandhian revolution. The protagonist is Anwar to have a clear picture of what happens around him. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre shakes him out of his complacency.

Anwar's meeting with Gandhi and Nehru are turning point in his life. Almost all the important political movements of the period had mentioned. He helps his friend Ratan to get a pass, which Ratan gives to Bhagat Singh to enter the Secretariat and throw the Bomb. Bhagat Singh's trial and Subhash Bose's advent on the scene with the battle cry also picturised in the novel. There are references of Dandi March, brutal police suppression, Hindu and Christian communalists, princely states etc.
Raja Rao's 'Kanthapura' depicts the national struggle of the Gandhian era. The whole community of Kanthapura is shaken by the Gandhian revolution, which based upon non-violence and non-cooperation. The story depicts the various aspects of the freedom struggle. In it, we find the political events like Gandhi's 'Dandi March' to inaugurate the Civil Disobedience movement in 1930. The villagers too launches Satyagraha as a response to the Gandhi's movement. With this there are social programmes of the congress like the abolition of untouchability, propagandistic demonstration against drinking, attention on spinning, and fast by Gandhi's followers.

K.S. Nagarjan's 'Athawar House' is a novel depicting the events of fifteen years from 1919 to 1935. The novel is divided into three divisions of freedom struggle. In the first part there is passing of the Rowlatt Bill in 1919 and all India 'Hartal' with mass arrest. And in second part congress session at Kanpur and acceptance of the constitution drafted by the Nehru convention by the Calcutta Congress Session in 1928. And the third part deals with the terrorists throwing bomb at the Delhi Assembly, the
Viceroy’s declaration of India’s dominion status and the declaration of Lahore Congress session’s about the complete independence as its goal.

The novel is full of emotional integrity of the people of various regions of the country. The novelist brings the idea of national integration and this leads to the political awakening of the people for the freedom of the nation.

R.K. Narayan too has portrayed 'Quit India movement' in his *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955). Here the novelist captures the views of Gandhi and projected the strategy 'Quit India movement', which only wield the nation together for achieving freedom.

Aamir Ali's *Conflict* (1947) depicts independence movement. The youths from various religions come together to attain the freedom. In this novel, the novelist attempted to show political consciousness and he examined how the Gandhian revolution affected the lives of the villagers. The village is Koregaon and the villagers are not different from the people of Kanthapura. Gandhi's appeal to the students to boycott their classes finds massive support among the
students of Bombay. They breath fresh air and convinced that India could be saved only by making the Gandhian revolution a success. Shankar, the representative of students become a freedom fighter having the belief of non-violence. He organised the villagers and teaches them to face the British regime with the weapons of non-violence. There are many events like police suppression and raping to women by policemen.

Mulk Raj Anand's *Morning Face* (1968) is set in the early years of the 20th century with Gandhi having just entered the Indian stage, and cast a spell with his political utopia 'Hind Swaraj', Anand seeks to capture the political scenario in its entity. Casting his net wide, he brings in other significant political developments of the period such as the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the Simon commission and the Indians resentment.

His next novel *untouchable* (1935) is also deals with its setting in the 1930's, in which we find communal Award, Gandhi's fast, to seek the integration of Harijans into Hindu fold and the Poona pact. The novel succeeds eminently in
capturing the popular image of Gandhi- an avatar capable of performing all sorts of miracles and expelling the British. Anand's other novel *Sword and the Sickle* (1942) does capture the pull of the communist ideology in 1920's under the repressive political and economic condition of the time.

Rabindranath Tagore's *The Home and the World* is also a political novel, which is set against the revolutionary background of 1905. Bengal state was influenced by the concept of 'Swadeshi' and 'Bande Mataram'. The novel attempts to sketch the Gandhism and terrorist politics.

Second novel by Rabindranath Tagore, *Gora* too is a political novel having the theme of patriotism and aspiration of resurgent India. The novel reflects the patriotic zeal of Gora, the central character. The novel arises the political questions and ideals as aspiration of East and West. Though Rabindranath Tagore has written in Bengali language at first and later on translated in English, but it has much importance in Indian English novel.
IV Political novels based on Gandhian ideology:

The arrival of Gandhi on national scene during 1920's was the opening of new chapter of political movement and consciousness. Indians started to fight against the British Empire on the moral plane. It was the modern war, the weapons of which were the teaching of Buddhism i.e. Truth, non-violence, peace within himself and offered for the political movements in new dimensional meaning. Gandhi's appeal to rise in revolt was not directed to the urban society but to the peasants, who lived in India's 7,00,000 villages. He aimed at a happy marriage between politics and ethics.

During the pre-independence period, Gandhi was the prominent moving spirit. This period was the period of heroic struggle for the people in the noble cause for freedom. The whole India underwent the transmutational experience under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. As Nehru remarks, Gandhi came "like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breathes; like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes; like a whirlwind that
upset many things, but most of all the working of people's minds."\textsuperscript{16} He woke the whole nation from its "suspended animation and the people felt the blood streams of a new life coursing through their veins."\textsuperscript{17} Whole nation was looking hopefully towards Gandhi for the guidance to get freedom, "Every segment of national life acquired a pronounced Gandhian hue." \textsuperscript{18} People began to consider him as a man with divine force, who could free them from all kinds of slavery.

Gandhi gave his thoughts to the Indians. It is classified into objectives, principles, means and policies. The Gandhian objectives are 'Swaraj' and 'Sarvodaya'. And the principles of him was non-violence, adherence to truth and dignity of labour. Gandhian means to achieve the objectives are Satyagraha, land offering gift (bhoodan) and basic education. He offered the policies like, prohibition, removal of untouchability, programme for social and political decentralization.

To him' Satyagraha' is the positive quality, a rare combination of noble indignation and strong determination
to achieve goal peacefully. It leads heroism, comradeship and sense of duty; which made someone true fighter for a moral cause. According to him a true Satyagrahi was well versed in the art of using physical force if necessary. A timid fellow could not be practioner of Satyagraha. Satyagraha as conceived by Gandhi is a science in the making. Gandhi often used to say that the object of Satyagraha is to change the heart of the opponent by means of self-suffering. Non-cooperation and swadeshi movement of 1921, salt March of 1930, Quit India movement of 1942, are the best examples where Gandhi showed the strength of Satyagraha.

Gandhian ideas and ideals had left a marked stamp on the Indian novelists either directly or indirectly. Only Gandhi had brought the whole nation into political movement. Gandhi was a sunrise and hope to the Indians for the freedom struggle. Gandhian ideals of simple life, truth and vegetarianism, non-violence, non-cooperation, Satyagraha influenced the common-people. The influence of Gandhi in Indian English novel is well remarked by Krishna Kriplani as "Gandhi's impact on Indian writers was direct
and widespread. Apart from its political repercussions, it was both moral and intellectual and at once inhibitive and liberating. Gandhi stripped urban life and elegance of their pretensions and culture without conscience were worthless. He transfigured the image of India and turned national idealism from its futile adulation of the past to face the reality of India as she was poor, starving and helpless, but with an untapped potential of unlimited possibilities."19

The impact of Gandhiji during the independence period and after was so powerful that Indian writers started to write realistically rather than romantic. Dr. Minakshi Mukherji rightly remarked Gandhi's influence on Indian English novel as:-

"No Discussion of Indo-Anglian fiction dealing with the independence movement would be complete without an assessment of the function of Mahatma Gandhi in these novels. The most potent force behind the whole movement, the Mahatma is a recurring presence in their novels and he is used in different ways to suit the design of each writer. He has been treated variously as an idea, a myth, a symbol,"
tangible reality and a benevolent human being. In a few novel he appears in person, in most others is an invisible presence."²⁰

Different people responded to Gandhi in different ways and had different images of him. Commenting on the Gandhian movement, the historian Sumit Sarkat writes:

"...Varied section of Indian people seem to have fashioned their own images of Gandhi, particularly in the early days when he was still to the most people a distant, vaguely-glimpsed or heard of tale of a holy man with miracle working powers.... Peasants were giving vague rumours about Gandhi a radical, anti-zamindar twist."²¹

Gandhi's influence on the Indians has been so profound that we may find Gandhi and his ideology in Indian English novel as presenting Gandhi as a character, as in R.K. Narayan's 'Waiting for the Mahatma', representing Gandhi by idealized characters like in Raja Rao's 'Kanthapura', presenting Gandhi's follower like in Nayantra Sahgal's 'A time to be Happy' and presenting
Gandhian ideals, like in Bhabani Bhattacharya’s *Shadow from Ladhak*.


V.S. Venkatramani has depicted nationalistic revolution and freedom movement under the leadership of Gandhi in his novels, *Murugan, The Tiller* and *Kandan, the patriot*. ‘Murugan, The Tiller’ deals with the Gandhian ideal of rural construction as a step for winning freedom. In it the novelist has attempted to sketch Gandhian Satyagraha. The central character, Ramu plays the role of an ideal man, having the aim of reconstructing Indian Village. The second novel *Kandan, the patriot*, deals with the freedom movement under the Gandhian politics. Gandhi is represented by idealized character, Kandan, who leads the village people ‘Drunk with wine of freedom.’ Kandan
becomes to the peasants of Akkur a "reforming Saint"\textsuperscript{22} endowed with a "glow of kindness in his face". \textsuperscript{23} He envisages a new order: "The whole system must be smashed and a new waved be built for all, where freedom and equality shall be the base of life". \textsuperscript{24}

Next novel '\textbf{My Brother's Face}' by Gopal Mukerjee is a novel dealing with the violent freedom struggle, and the Gandhian value and idea of non-violence and non-Cooperation, the real ways to fight with the British to get independence.

Anand's '\textbf{Untouchable}' deals indirectly with an aspect of Gandhian struggle for freedom in the thirties. It reflects Gandhi's tireless efforts for Harijan upliftment and his view against attitude of the British Government with their 'divide and rule policy'. The novel focused on the untouchability, against which Gandhi was performing to abolish. Prof G. P. Sarma remarks,

"The novel thus deals with the Hindu social problem of untouchability against the political background of the time, depicting the same time
people’s faith in Gandhi as their leader in the national movement and his magnetic influence on the people.”

The novel ends with three possibilities for the redemption – conversion to Christianity, abolition of untouchability and introduction of flush latrines. Anand’s ‘The sword and the sickle’ too concern with Gandhi’s non-violence. The illiterate peasants and downtrodden, who are influenced by the non-violence and have faith on Gandhi. There is also reference of freedom struggle.

K.S. Nagarajan’s ‘Atwar House’ is too reveals the influence of the national movement under Gandhi on the town. The novelist attempted to bring the national integration of various regions for the political awakening of people for the freedom of the nation.

Raja Rao’s ‘Kanthapura’ (1938) depicts the national struggle of the Gandhian era. It is a picture of the impact of the Gandhian ideology of the non-violence, non-cooperation of an obscure village, in south India during the 1930’s. The small community of Kanthapura is shaken by the whirlwind of the Gandhian revolution. The character, Moorthy knows
the Indian rustic mind is religious, and hence convinced ideology of Gandhi like an ‘avatar’ in the Hindu tradition and makes them plunge into the freedom struggle. The novel depicts political events like, Gandhi’s Dandi march, fast and Satyagraha by the villagers and their non-cooperation by not paying taxes. Formation of village congress community, the second Round Table conference, social programmes of the congress like, the abolition of untouchability, demonstration against drinking wine are remarkable in the novel. Almost the whole society in Kanthapura comes under the spell of Gandhian ideology. Dr. M.K. Naik remarks, “Kanthapura is thus, a highly successful attempt to probe the depths to which the nationalistic uprising penetrated, the new patriotic upsurge fusing completely with the traditional religious faith and in the process rediscovering the Indian soul.”26

Mulk Raj Anand’s *Morning Face* (1968) is set in the early years of the 20th century with Gandhi having just entered the Indian stage, and cast a spell with his political utopia, ‘Hind Swaraj’. Anand seeks to capture the political scenario in its entity. Casting his net wide, he brings in
other significant political developments of the period such as the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, the Simon Commission and the Indian resentment.

R.K. Narayan’s ‘Waiting For the Mahatma’ too depicts Indian freedom struggle with Mahatma Gandhi. In this novel Gandhi is introduced as a character, who addresses political meetings in Malgudi. “We, the citizens of this country, are all soldiers of a non-violent army.... but we have a system of our own to follow; that is Ram Dhun, spinning on the charkha, and the practice of absolute truth and non-violence.”27

The second novel by R.K. Narayan ‘Vendor of Sweets’ too depicts the follower of Gandhi. In this novel Jagan is shown as a true disciple of Gandhi. He has high regard for Gandhi as his master. Though he earns a thousand rupees a day, he leads a simple life.

K.A. Abbas’s ‘Defeat For Death’ may be called a nationalistic novel for its theme. The old man of seventy undergoing a fast can easily be identified with Gandhi in his fast in 1942 in Jail. Through the month of the nurse of the
wounded Negro boy Abbas declares "those who fight for freedom can never be suffer defeat." The novelist does not name the old man but all that he does and says can be related to Gandhi

Manohar Malgonkar's 'A Bend in the Ganges' is crowded with events from modern history, beginning with the Civil Disobedience Movement of the early thirties and ending in the post partition riots in Punjab. Between these two major events are packed all the exciting events of two decades: the boycott of foreign goods, the secret activities of terrorist groups, the outbreak of the second world war, the Japanese occupation of the Andamans, the British retreat from Rangoon, the long march of evacuees from Burma, the Bombay dock explosion, the dismemberment of India. In the novel Debi Dayal, a dedicated purposeful young man of high principles is juxtaposed with Gian Talwar essentially a self-seeker and an opportunist. Debi Dayal's belief is in violence while Gain has faith in non-violence.
"But we are new kinds of soldier. Our weapons are truth and non-violence. Our war shall be fought only by peaceful means."  

'In Transit' by Venu Chitale is another Gandhian novel in which personal and political histories are artistically blended in its narrative. The novel is history of modern times packed with living events-social, political, economic and psychological.

C.N. Zutsi's 'Motherland: An Expository Novel of modern India' revolves around the major character Mahatma Vikrama, who is a great national leader to symbolize mahatma Gandhi. Vikrama discusses with Lord Addington, Viceroy of India on Indian problems. With this he continues his struggle for the independence. The novelist says in his preface about novel 'an attempt to portray a picture of certain aspects of actual life in modern India, and has been written with the definite purpose of awakening my own countrymen to this political plight under the foreign yoke' which clearly shows the novelist's intention.
Arundhati Roy’s ‘The God of small things’ too deals with the idea of Gandhi. The novel is a strong vehicle of her opinion, like that of Mahatma Gandhi, that even a dalit can become an engineer or a doctor or a lawyer or a professor. Velutha, a character is a true Gandhian, an apostle of non-violence. Impact of Gandhi is visible throughout the novel.

**Political novels based on partition:**

Freedom did not come to India as Gandhi and others had wished. On the eve of independence India was partitioned in India and Pakistan, causing a great upheaval in the whole continent. Partition is the most evil incident in the history of India. India suffered lot due to the partition, the darkest time of the history of the modern India. There was brotherhood among the people of India, though they belonged to different religion. There was social and emotional integrity; but after the partition of Union India into India and Pakistan, this integration degraded, and hatred, bloodshed aroused. In those days, trains were arriving in Lahore station packed with butchered passengers with message scribbled on the sides of the
carriage ‘A present from India’. This made the Muslims react heroically in sending back trainloads Hindus and Sikhs with the message ‘A present from Pakistan’. Due to hatred between two religions tragic incidents, like killings, raping took place. Leonard Mosley in his ‘Last Days of British Raj’ has given a brutally frank picture of the partition riots.

"Between fourteen and sixteen million Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims were forced to leave their homes and flee to safety from blood crazed mobs. In that same period over 6,00,000 of them killed. But no, not just killed. If they were children, they were picked up by their feet and their heads smashed against the walls. If they were female children, they were raped and then their breasts were chopped off. And if they were pregnant, they were disembowelled."^30

This tragic incident of partition influenced and affected remarkably to the Indian English novelists. These novels based on the insane butcheries committed in the name of religion after or at the time of partition. There are only few novelists, who depicted the realistic picture of partition. In it we may find, kushwant Singh’s ‘Train To Pakistan, Raj
Gill's 'The Rape', Manohar Malgonkar's 'A Bend in the Ganges', and Chaman Nahal's 'Azadi', and some references in B. Rajan and Bhabani Bhattacharya's writing.

Kushwant Singh, a Sikh Journalist depicted the border village, Mano Majra in his novel 'Train To Pakistan'. The novel is reflecting the picture of horror acted on the Indo Pakistan border region during the terror haunted days of partition. Two types of people of different religion – Sikhs and Muslims sketched at the beginning of the story. There is a happy communal harmony between these two religions. They were fairly known about the political struggle and political leaders. When the Sikh community realizes about partition and loaded trains of Hindus from Pakistan were coming, they took meeting evacuating Muslims and decided to send Muslims to Pakistan. They also planned to kill Muslims, when the train will be on the bridge. And the peaceful life of the village is disturbed.

This political novel conveys a hint of the grossness, ghastliness and total insanity of the two-nation theory and partition tragedy with its pity and terror. Vasant Sahane
remarks, "the predominant quality of 'Train To Pakistan' is its stark realism, its absolute fidelity to the truth of life, its trenchant exposition of one of the most moving events of contemporary Indian history; the partition."31

In the novel 'A Bend in the Ganges', Manohar Malgonkar narrates the same tale of horrible violence in the wake of partition. In the prefatory note, he says, "only the violence in this story happens to be true; it came in the wake of freedom, to become a part of India's history. What was achieved through non-violence, brought with it one of the bloodiest upheavals of history; twelve million people had to flee, leaving their homes; nearly half a million were killed; over a hundred thousand women, young and old were abducted, raped, mutilated."32

The novelist adopted the method of parallelism for character delineation and for unfolding the main action in the novel. The central characters are Debi Dayal, Gian Talwar and Debi's sister Sundari. The novel moves at two levels - one centred on Gian Talwar and another on Debi Dayal. These two, strangely enough, belong to two different
social and cultural backgrounds. Debi is a member of the upper class, and Gian comes from the rural depths of the Punjab. In the novel, we find Gandhian non-violent movement and the terrorist movement.

In the novel incidents ranges from domestic bloodshed to national tragedy. Malgonkar has given us a vivid account of the theme of partition. In a chapter 'The Anatomy of partition' the novelist described Tekchand, an old man standing at the window of his bedroom and reflecting the great human tragedy: "Every citizen was caught up in the holocaust. No one could remain aloof...was caught up in the blaze of hatred. Ten millions of people had to flee, leaving everything behind; Muslims from India, Hindus and Sikhs from the land that was soon to become Pakistan."33

Another partition novel is *The Dark Dancer* by B. Rajan, in which we find two tragedies – the tragedy of Krishna's marriage and tragedy of Pakistan. The novelist has excellently merged the personal and national experience. The sudden holocaust and storm of horrors of partition and sudden arrival of Cynthia are the changing of
peace to horror in both level, personal and national as well. The storm inside is matched with the storm of outside.

Cynthia remarkably says to Krishnan, when they were discussing about the British role in stirring up all the troubles to the modern period, "In all our three hundred years of occupation we haven’t done what you’ve done in three weeks of your freedom."^

Nayantara Sahgal’s ‘A storm in Chandigarh’ too projects the scenes of horror and inhuman violence at the time of partition. The novel is set in the exotic city of Chandigarh, which is the Indian part of the partitioned Punjab. Harpal, the C.M. of Haryana has experienced the trauma and horror of the partition. There were arrivals of buses loaded with Hindus. The Muslims and Hindus were maddened by their fury for revenge. With such critical events, there are some isolated events of kindship also described in the novel.

‘The Suitable boy’ by Vikram Seth too narrates the ghastly event of separation. He conjures the images of the uprooted ‘marginal man’ fleeing across the borders. Justice
Chatterjee is shocked by learning the reason of separating India into India and Pakistan. Kedarnath and Veena have to flee from the place and to settle in their own land. There are detail picture of blood-mad mobs on the streets of Lahore.

Then Raj Gill's 'The Rape' set against the background of partition, depicting two lovers of a Sikh village called Lyallpur. The love story is interwoven with the effects of partition. Two heroines become the victim of partition.

Then the most important novel on partition is Chaman Nahal's 'Azadi'.

Political novels based on Post Independence Issues:

The independence having been achieved, the common man started cherishing the values of long awaited freedom. But they realised their frustration and fear within some period. Increase of population, the inhuman political threats and corrupt politicians, who had forgotten the idealism and self-sacrifice inherited from their great predecessors, created fear and hopelessness in the mind of Indians.
There are many events like, liberation of Goa, the Indo-Chinese war of 1962, Indo-Pakistan war of 1965, the Indo-Bangladesh war of 1971, death of Nehru, the split of congress in 1969, emergence called Naxalites, communal riots, differences between political parties of the country and the rise of parochial tendencies disturbed the nation time to time. The Kashmir issue and corrupt politics and politicians had shaken the whole republic country. The concept of 'Ramrajya' of Gandhi has been totally failed. While depicting the upheavals during the post-independence period, Mohan Rakesh clearly states, "my contention is that partition killed perhaps a few hundred thousand while the post-partition developments in this country have killed millions and in one sense killed many more of us somewhere within ourselves."35

A large number of Indian English novels written in the post-independence period have in them the treatment of various post-independence political issues. For instance, the Chinese aggression has been treated by Bhabani Bhattacharya in his novel 'shadow from Ladakh'; the disputes between India and Pakistan have been created by
Salman Rushdie in *Midnight Children*; the fight between the political parties of the country leading to the declaration of Emergency has been treated in Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* and Arun Joshi's *The city and the River*; and in Nayantara Sahgal's *storm in Chandigarh*, we find the rise of parochial tendencies.

The independence of the country won after a long struggle at a tremendous cost both in human and political terms. The Britishers had not only created Pakistan but had also left a legacy about six hundred princely states of various sizes and importance. These states created challenge to Indian statesmanship. Sardar Vallabhb Patel made the states to merge into Indian union. Nearly all the states merged into Indian union except some, which remained threat to national security. Integration of princely states was a major chapter of the independent India, followed to the evil of partition. Many Indian English novelists portrayed the picture of princely states and their merging into Indian union. In which we find, Mulk Raj Anand's well-known novel *The private life of Indian prince*, which represents state Shampur and peoples
clamouring for democratic government. Vicky, the prince attempts to challenge the Indian union by raising handful of men to fight the Indian army. But later on he signs the instrument of Accession.

Well-known work on the theme of princely states is Manohar Malgonkar’s *The Princes*. It covers a vast range of political events spanning two generations and culminating in independence. The events on the political scene of India covering the independence movement to the partition and princely states. All the political activities are fused with lives of the characters. The untouchable boy, Kanak becomes the Chief Minister of state, after the states accession to the Indian union, and takes revenge of the Maharaja.

Kamala Markandaya’s *The Golden Honey Comb* deals with princely states, where common man works hard and the prince takes away all the honey.

With the merger of princely states into Indian union, and the victory over Pakistan, the India did progress at
some degree. It focuses on the implementation of Five year plans, the impressive industrial and technological progress and the existence of democratic institutions, hence Indians started to keep faith on democratic values. But nowadays-total erosion of moral values in politics and false ideals parties and corrupt political leaders has been trying to demolish the values of democracy. Political parties has been spreading hatred between religions for their selfish aim – to have political power. The politicians are the causes of modern despair, frustration and terrorism.

Many Indian novelists have sketched the realistic picture of modern political condition in their works. For example Nayantara Sahgal’s ‘A time to be happy’ and ‘This time of morning’ gives the expression of disillusionment, despair and depodency. The novel creates the political scene as a complex feeling – confidence that the nation did progress but also despair that large measure of gains appropriated by politicians. In her next novel ‘Storm in Chandigarh’ she depicts the rise of violence and regionalism in the Indian political life in the post – Nehru
era. In all novels Sahgal depicted the theme of corruption at the national level.

'Midnight Children' by Salman Rushdie is a political novel dealing with the political history of India from the time of Jallianwala Bagh incident to the end of emergency in 1977. The novel narrated many events during the period.

In 'Delhi' Kushwant Singh takes up the Hindu-Sikh riots of 1984 for treatment though he ignores the incidents, which took place under the leadership of Bhindranwala. Kushwant Singh traces the history of the city of Delhi and comes to its then existing human geography. He has full sympathies with the victims of the riots.

Arun Joshi’s ‘The city and the River' presents the malpractices which people does by using political power. The novel gives the realistic picture of politicians, who used political power for their selfish purpose. He raises questions about existing political system, and exposed the misuse of democratic system, like dictator ship.
In ‘The Financial Expert’, R.K. Narayan too depicts the miserable conditions of roads, streets and gutters ‘wide as a channel’. The novel describes the Government’s apathy towards public works and sanitary conditions of the towns. He writes:

“Once in a while, especially before the elections, the Municipal officials came down and walked along the edge peering into its dark current.”36

The major political upheavals of the pre-independence as well as post-independence India have been used as either main theme or background in Indian English novel. The revolt of 1857, exploitation by British, World wars, political struggle raised by Congress, various Associations, Gandhi’s freedom struggle, partition, Pakistan war, merger of princely states, existing baseless political parties are the major topics in the Indian English novel.

In the present study the novels of Bhabani Bhattacharya and Chaman Nahal, both the winners of Sahitya Akademi Award, will be studied THEMATICALLY. It
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