CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
Literature is not created in a vacuum. It is the expression of the most intimate social awareness of the society in which it is born and evolves. Literature fundamentally, is an artistic expression of the intricate web of circumstances of human existence. "Life, of course", observes Elizabeth Drew, "is the basic raw material of art, but no artist is so close to his raw material as the novelist. It's all round him, all the time: people, incidents, scenes, sense, impressions, curiosity, his excitement, his compulsion to transmit it into language and then relieve his own feelings and communicate them to others" and of all the literary forms novel comes closest to social, political, cultural and economical aspects of human life. Right since its inception more than two and a half centuries ago, novel has essentially been a chronicle, howsoever, well disguised, of the milieu where in it is set.

Literature, especially novel as a literary form is inextricably linked up with the environment in which it is written. It is social activity. So novel has its foundations in economic, political, social philosophic and religious patterns of time. The whole environment as such has a vital role to play in the making of literature especially novel:
The soil which nurtures artistic talent is the culture of the people, the tastes, spiritual demands and life of the artist's contemporaries. In other words, the artist is only the co-author of a magnificent creation known as the culture of the people.\(^2\)

The intimate relationship between art and society is very clearly evident in literature as the literary works not only record the social reality of their time, but in several ways transcend it to project the realm of future possibilities. A writer's creative imagination endeavours to express the inner reality by creating a world of aesthetic and human values. His sensibility reacts sharply to the contradictions and complexities in the socio-political and personal lives and expresses itself eloquently and artistically in the literary works he creates. Hence literature might be seen as an individual's perspective of the social, the political, the economic and the cultural patterns of the times and of all the literary forms, fiction is more concerned with social political conditions and values, of the people and in fiction these are represented in the best precipitated forms, as in this regard Hudson says:

Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in the life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those
aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is thus fundamentally an expression of life through the medium of language."

Novel obviously has a more consciously articulated social relevance especially in the third world country. Novelists assume the role of visionaries as they consciously come to grip with issues agitating the minds of their readers. Novel, with the broad canvas has represented brilliantly to accommodate the socio-political consciousness of the writer. Lawrence regards, novel a very visual form of creative art, as it is the "only form of art or science" which focuses on the living man in his "entirety". Religion, sociology, philosophy and the politics contribute primarily to the conceptual content of literature. The novelist is supposed to embody and reflect the true picture of society of what he is a keen observer. Caudwell in his essay "On Romance and Realism," brilliantly points out the socio-political roots of literary arts:

The traditions of art are not language traditions, but social traditions. Literary art therefore, has an essential feature - the use of associations gathered in shops, market places, friendly conversations, political speeches and quarrels. It is not surprising therefore, as literary art is conditioned at every step by social relations, because it is using the product of social relation, fabricated by the necessity of human co-operation."
Henry Fielding incorporated in English novel a significant streak of socio-political concern. This streak of socio-political concern, has since then, struck deep roots and produced many great works of genius. Daniel Defoe and Fielding wrote realistic novels which earned merit and struck roots. Gradually novel found acceptance as an adequate medium of expression to withstand the demands of the time; where the majority of problems raised in bristling multitude by contemporary social and political developments could be discussed, analysed and interpreted. The novelists of the time also devoted much space in their works to the representation of the currents and cross-currents of the contemporary socio-economic and political reawakening. Literature like Dickens, Disraeli, Kingsley and Gaskell kept themselves abreast of the social and political development of the period, they were primarily concerned with description and analysis of the condition of England. But on the other side, there were writers like Kipling, Chesterton and Orwell which portray graphically the socio-political ferment of the era. Writers of the coming generation followed the same mode of projection in their writings and Indo Anglian Fiction is an out product of this particular type of genre.
The present thesis takes up a study of novel as history in general and the works of Bhabani Bhattarcharya and Manohar Malgonkar in particular. The term 'history' has been associated with novel from 18th century itself. Fielding used it to give respectability to the new form. Later critics used the term to suggest a particular kind of novel which tells the story of imaginary characters as well as the story of the society they live in. This mode of novel popular in periods when novelists take on the role of social visionaries and leaders. For this purpose it has become necessary to analyse and examine the growth of Indian English fiction in this particular reference. During the last quarter of the 19th century, the growth of Indian English fiction in India was marked with the tremendous upheaval in the socio-political and economic scenario and was complemented by the eventful encounter with English education, ideas, ideals and culture, led to the genesis of the Indian English Literature. Indian novels revealed the Indian character and Indian life from the very beginning of it.

The first Indian novel in English, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's wife*, appeared in 1864 which was a romantic story of domestic life set in
Bengal village, advocating the virtue of renunciation over self love for the attainment of freedom from slavery. The other Bengalis who took lead in the matter and did the spade work for the origin and growth of Indian fiction in English in the late nineteenth century were Kaylash Chander Dutt and Sochee Chander Dutt for their works: *A Journal of Forty Eight Hours of the years 1945* (1885) and *The Young Zamindar* (1883) respectively. The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed a gradual growth of the fictional form. In the beginning came the historical romances under the impact of Sir Walter Scott who was very popular in India during the formative years of Indo-Anglian fiction i.e. 1864-1920. Some of the important writers in the beginning of 20th century were K.K. Sinha, T. Rama Krishna and Jogender Singh etc. who wrote *Sonjoqita* (1903) and *Nur Jahan* (1909) respectively, which reflect a nostalgia for the feudal past. At the same time novels such as S.K. Ghosi’s *The Prince of Destiny* (1909) offered a starry-eyed view of social reform. Gradually, however, with the rise of social awareness, the writers became bold enough to voice their views openly.
Indo-Anglian fiction is generally taken to be a byproduct of the nineteen twenties and thirties, as Naik observes: "...there was no Indian who could claim sustained and considerable achievement in fiction originally written in English".6

Gobind Prasad Sharma also asserts:

It is in the sense that Indo-Anglian fiction blossomed with all the splendour around that time even though it can well trace its origin to the first half of the Nineteenth century. As is shown conclusively in some studies of Indian fiction in English.7

The socio-political ferment, along with the Gandhian influence, gave a new impetus to the growth of Indian English novel. Therefore, literature written in India in the first half of the twentieth century bears an unmistakable impact of Gandhi. In Indian English literature, Gandhiji is more an idea, an ideological theme, an influence than a character. M.K. Naik in his study of the evolution and growth of Indo-Anglian fiction notices:

..Then came a sudden flowering, and it is significant that it came in the 1930's - a period during which the glory that was Gandhi's attained perhaps its brightest splendour. The Indian freedom struggle was already more than a
generation old, yet with the advent of Mahatma Gandhi it was so thoroughly democratized that freedom consciousness percolated for the first time to the very grass-roots of the Indian society and revitalized it. It is possible to see a connection between this development and the rise of the Indian novel in English; for fiction, of all literary forms is most vitally concerned with social conditions and values.

In this period, Indo-Anglian fictions were an offshoot of nationalism, an expression of a newly awakened pride in India's past. Fictions were used as a means of arousing and fostering national pride. S. Venkataramani's Kandan the Patriot (1932) and A Novel of New India in Making (1932) and A.S.P. Ayyar's Three Men of Destiny (1939) were the first significant attempt to lionize the patriot who organised the masses at the cost of his life against landlordism, the curse of liquor and foreign domination. Kandan the Patriot and A Novel of New India in Making are not only a political novel but domestic and personal problems are fused with political problems of the people of India. Especially Murugan The Tiller (1927) and Kandan The Patriot (1932) by S.K. Venkataramani are "novels full of Gandhian politics, exploring and applauding the ideals of Satyagraha and overtly calling on the Indians to work for freedom and regeneration of a nation". This obviously marks a further maturing of socio-political consciousness of the
writer to reshape the present and bring forth a desired future. Murugon the protagonist is "an exponent of Gandhian economics", for he is an advocate of Gandhian call for going 'back to the village'.

Similarly K. Nagarajan's *Athavar House* (1937) belongs to same category and paves the way for the emergence of the later realistic novels portraying the socio-political milieu.

The Indo-Anglian fiction came to its own in the Nineteen thirties and took up themes of immediate relevance viz, the colonial exploitation, the Indian freedom struggle, the second world war (1939-45), Japanese air-raid, the August Revolution of 1942, the holocaust of communal riots, partition of India and other burning socio-political issues. Even the clash of cultures, Eastern and Western had been quite a pronounced theme in the novels of the thirties and the forties. The great blooming of the Indian novel in English came with the appearance of the "major trio", Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao. They revealed, each in his own characteristic way, the various possibilities of Indian English fiction. It was the period which witnessed political, social and human causes as the genuine impluses for the novels.
Among the novelists in English in India, it is clearly discernible that no writer who had witnessed the tumultuous decades of thirties and forties and had attempted to record the new responses of the people, could escape Gandhian influence. But apart from Gandhi, the other great influence on the minds of the creative writers, in the development of Indian English fiction was that of R.N. Tagore. Writers could not escape "Tagore's Magic spell" all through their literary career. Writers of this particular period were deeply influenced by Tagore's philosophy of the integration of the eastern inwardness and the western genius for social organisation. Tagore asserts that "socio-political consciousness in India precipitated and got moulded as nationalism under the direct impact of and as a reaction to English rule".

Fiction got a definite form and shape in the hands of these three novelists: Anand, Narayan and Raja Rao and what is important is the fact that history is used in their novels, are not merely the chronological interaction of facts but a graphic chronicle of a whole community in the political, social and spiritual spheres at a particular juncture of history. With the emergence of the trio-Mulk Raj, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao, Indian
fiction comes of its own. Mulk Raj Anand (1905....), numerous realistic novels form a fictional chronicle in which his electric humanitarianism and his humanitarian compassion for the under dog are persistent theme.

Anand seems to be labouring hard under the burden of commitment which he hardly ever lays down. In his works Anand is an ardent believer in the doctrine of social revolution and socialistic pattern of society. His conviction in salvation through socialistic doctrine is undisguised in all of his novels. Anand's main intention is to get his message across. He is too much of a 'leftist angry young man' to concern himself with the subtleties of technique in his novels:

The alleviation of pain and its expiation are the only values given to our intelligentsia at the present time.

In almost all his novels, M.R. Anand brings out the pathos and poignancy of the feeling and thoughts of his heroes and heroines, who are the poor, socially, economically and politically exploited, illiterate, ignorant and superstition-ridden people of the lowest rung of Indian-society. Thus the problems, economic, social and political have directly and overwhelmingly influenced the art of M.R. Anand. In the most direct,
open and obtrusive manner, he has dealt with these problems in his various novels. His major novels Untouchable (1935), Coolie (1936), Two Leaves and a Bud (1937), The Village (1939), Across the Black Waters (1941), The Sword and the Sickle (1942), The Big Heart (1950), The Old Woman and The Cow (1960), The Road (1963), Morning Face (1970) and Confession of a Lover (1976), reflect a vast range of ruthless realism, indignant socio-political criticism and strong benevolent affinity for the human race.

Thus Anand has given the Indian fiction in English a chronicle format which portrays the typical Indian atmosphere which gives the picture of real Indian villages which are passing through a period of struggle, strain and stress of economical, political, social and religious pressures.

R.K. Narayan, as contrast with Mulk Raj Anand, has kept away from addressing himself directly, openly and centrally in his novels to any political, social or economic problem of age. He chooses to portray the lower middle class of India with a delicate blend of gentle irony, humour and sympathy, quiet realism and fantasy in his novels as Swami and Friends (1935), The
Bachelor of Arts (1937), The Dark Room (1938), The English Teacher (1964), Waiting for the Mahatma (1955), The Man Eater of Malgudi (1962), The Painter of Signs (1976) and the Vender of Sweets (1967). Each novel of Narayan is a cameo, pattern seen through a Kaleidoscope. His novels at the same time depicts waifs and vagabonds, astrologers and monks, Indian Romeos and Juliets, Cads and their victims, committed satyagrahis and half hearted Gandhities of the freedom movement, financers and speculators, adventures, eccentrics, cranks, film stars, visionaries and artists.

The third fictionist who has followed the ‘same trend’ in his writings is Raja Rao. Almost all the novels of Raja Rao portray the spiritual image of India. He invests his novels with complex metaphysical and spiritual dimensions and “puranic traditions” and a rich array of symbols. All of his novels convey a vision of India. As S. Nagarajan observes:

Raja Rao’s India is not the peninsula marked on the map, but an idea, a metaphysics, ‘Philousia’ as another student of East-West contrasts calls it distinguishing it from philosophy. Several writers of this period have introduced the freedom movement for national independence in their novels. Raja Rao’s novel, Kanthapura (1938), embodies an earnest record of freedom struggle and the essential Gandhi who led the Indian people. Mahatama’s presence is felt every
where and Raja Rao projects him through the hero, 'Moorthy', the leading figure of the novel and 'Gandhi' of his village folk.\textsuperscript{17}

These three stalwarts in the field of Indian English fiction set a trend which is to be followed by a host of writers. Their mode of projection may differ in writing of their works but the subject matter of their writings remains same. They presented the Indian people and their lives of past as well as present:

If past history was romanticized by the previous generation of writers, the history of the present was romanticized by some of these novelists, and most readers lapped it up as realism and politics.\textsuperscript{18}

In the light of the above discussed 'trend' in the development of Indo-Anglian fiction, an attempt is made, in this study, to explore the works of Bhabani Bhattacharya (1906-89) and Manohar Malgonkar (1913---) in the context of the use of Novel as History. It has become quite evident from the study of Indo-Anglian fiction and its growth, that history has been used by the previous writers in their writings. History in the form of socio-political facts, has played a vital role in their writings. B. Bhattacharya and M. Malgonkar have followed the same 'trend' and set their stories
against a recognizable historical background. Moreover, they gave the Indo-Anglian fiction a new range and power in presenting the Indian characters and themes in their works. In the hands of these two writers Indo-Anglian fiction becomes a powerful tool to convey our cultural and spiritual heritage. Regarding the growth of Indo-Anglian fiction C.D. Narasimhaiah in his essay on Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura* asserts:

Indian fiction in English can make headway by continuing the Raja Rao line.17

History in their writings is not merely the chronological interaction of facts but a graphic chronicle of a whole community in the political, social and spiritual spheres at a particular juncture of history. In the light of this concept of ‘history’ an attempt is made in this thesis to analyse the works of B. Bhattacharya and M. Malgonkar whose novels can be studied an embodiment of history. The novels of both the novelists are rooted in socio-political ethos. The exposure of social evils like poverty, social inequalities, injustice, capitalist or imperialist exploitations, the revolutionary-nationalist struggle for independence, the catastrophe of Hindu-Muslim discord and the tragedy of partition and the emergence
of new India. The political atmosphere in the pre as well as post independence era is reflected in their works. They gave a socio-political canvas and they deal with these national experiences either directly as central theme or indirectly as back drop.

Bhattacharya is as other Indo-Anglian novelists have set their narratives in the recent political and historical milieu, weaving significant socio-political happening therein. A novelist opts for a factual background only with a view to find an order in the seeming welter of history. The very act of weaving a narrative in such a background is an act imbued with socio-political consciousness. About the suitability of transmuting contemporary social events in to art Bhattacharya says:

I suggest that our own history of today is fit material for a novelist. That history need not wait for fifty years before it is declared suitable for fictional projection. Here is a history not of political development but of a people’s dream to attain a better life and of the struggle to fulfill the dream. In economic terms it would imply mean better living standards. But the creative artist sees other values which are inherent in living standards at every level. To put it briefly, it will be appropriate for a novelist of today to make the spiritual values of our five year plans the basis of his theme. Those spiritual values expressed through living images. Creatures of flesh and blood and feeling may well give a new direction to our creative endeavour.
Bhattacharya has the historian’s keen insight and the creative writer’s rich imagination with these he presents social reality in a wider historical perspective. He picks up for fictional projection only such incidents and events as serve his purpose in showing the under currents of Indian history and their relevance to the progress of the history of mankind. As a same enlightened Indian and as a devout scholar of Indian history, he takes a balanced view of these historical events in his works and highlights the human aspect. He has selected a variety of the significant themes of his time, including the themes of political independence, social problems and tradition modernity conflict. Bhattacharya himself favours that a writer should not treat a contemporary social or historical event because he lacks the necessary perspective to understand and evolute its implications. On the other hand he firmly believes:

The creative writer has a well developed sensitivity, though this does not mean that he understands or shares all emotions. The things he witnesses, the things he experiences, are likely to move him more intensely than what may be called recollection at second hand. Even the historical novel relies as much on the writer’s personal experience as on imaginative evocation.
So it is found in Bhattacharya's writings that it is a contemporary historical event which acted as a catalyst to launch him on his writing career. Once he started writing he became more and more involved in the current problems of political, economic and social oppression in our nation life. A critic remarks:

He, with the physician's intentions, X-rays society only to find the canker of exploitation eating away its vital parts.\(^2\)

Bhattacharya's works not only record the social reality of their time, but in several ways transcend it to project the realm of future possibilities, as Harish Raizada observes "In all his novels Bhattacharya is concerned with the future of India, its social, religious, economic and political regeneration, so that it may make rapid progress and come to occupy its pride of place in the comity of world's highly developed nations."\(^3\)

The other important factor which is reflected in almost all his novels is the impact of Tagore on his mind and art. Tagore had the stronger and most abiding influence on Bhattacharya which he, himself acknowledges in an interview:
I think my real intellectual awaking came when I was a fresh man at the university for the first time I discovered Tagore...

Moreover during a chat with Sudhakar Joshi, the novelist admitted that "Tagore appealed to me from my school days and my writer’s career also began from those days. It was, therefore, quite unlikely that I would miss the impact of Gurudev’s all-pervading personality."

So Bhattacharya’s earlier writings have a close resemblance to Tagore’s as far as the choice of themes is concerned, though their treatment is different. Both have dealt with the deep rooted evil of caste system in Indian society. Also Bhattacharya derived the idea of synthesis as well as the idea of fullness of life from Tagore’s writings. He has developed these ideas in all his novels but in two of them, particularly *Music for Mohini* (1952) and *Shadow From Ladakh* (1967), this idea has found fullest expression. Both of them portray clearly and vividly the idea of interculturation in aesthetic terms, as well as the necessity of joy and fullness in the life of the heroes and the heroines for a balanced development of their character.
The other great influence on Bhattacharya's writings is that of Mahatma Gandhi. All the novels written between pre as well as post independence period invariably touch upon the national movement for political independence because the long years of struggle and sacrifice have shaped and coloured every experience of modern India. In this scenario, Mahatma Gandhi and his ideology can never be lost sight of. It was amazing to see how a whole nation was awakened by Gandhi to realize that Indians were no longer passive slaves and therefore must struggle for freedom and dignity which is their birthright. He taught them to fight without bitterness and animosity. S. Iyengar describes the impact of Gandhi as:

Life could not be the same as before and every segment of our national life—politics, economics, education, religion, social life, language and literature acquired a more or less pronounced Gandhian hue. Thus it was that Gandhi exercised a potent influence on our language and literature.26

Bhattacharya analyses in detail in most of his novels the nature of the influence which Gandhi exercised on creative writers. Gandhi "inspired creativity on a scale surpassed by none,"27 Bhattacharya declares. Describing the catalytic role of Gandhi in this regard he is of the
view that Indian literature "gained in depth and dimension by his depth". In some of the Indian novels in English like R.K. Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma* and Mulk Raj Anand's *The Sword and the Sickle*, Gandhi does appear as a character. But in most other novels, even if he does not appear directly, "the more important fact is that the main characters have their volition against the backdrop of Mahatma's activities".

Meenakshi Mukherjee sums up the variety of the Gandhian theme in Indian English fiction thus: "He has been treated variously as an Idea, a myth, a symbol, a tangible reality and a benevolent human being. In a few novels he appears in person, in most others he is an invisible presence." Bhattacharya too, creates in his novels a number of characters who take after Gandhi's philosophy, ideas and activities. Such characters include Devesh Basu in *So Many Hungers*, the Minstrel in *A Goddess named Gold* and Satyajit in *Shadow from Ladakh*.

The other recurring theme in Bhattacharya's novels is the theme of East-West encounter not only at the level of people but also the level of ideas. Meenakshi Mukherjee remarks: "The impact of the West has created certain cultural problems and crises in values in all part of India." Out of his six novels this
theme is given by him in his latest novel *A Dream in Hawaii* (1978). Rest of the five novels are deeply rooted in the life of society around him. It has been these five novels that deal with the Indian society in its different aspects at different times. From these novels, we can have an understanding of the undercurrents of the social life of India spanning from Indian freedom struggle to the Chinese attack on India in 1962.

Bhattacharya in his works has used Indian history as one of the important ingredients. He has derived his themes from the most crucial phase of Indian history which he himself witnessed from very close quarters as he says:

> My creative writing has its true genesis in the hunger hit streets of Calcutta where the great famine raged. I had an intense need of release from the agony of traumatic experience.

He further asserts:

> A novelist does not have to write on socio-economic problems. I choose to write on them because they fascinated me.

Bhattacharya has used all the elements discussed earlier in this chapter in his writings and
he also follows the 'trend' set up by the several writers of Indo-Anglian fiction from its beginning. Writers like Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao have given the novel a chronicle format and Bhattacharya and Malgonkar has continued the same tradition in their writings. Bhattacharya's first novel *So Many Hungers* (1947) is a deeply moving and impressive work of art. This novel is set against the background of Quit India movement (1942) and the course of the freedom struggle at that time. It is also set in the background of Bengal famine (1942-43) and second world war. So Bhattacharya has taken help of these elements in writing of this novel. Balarama Gupta asserts, regarding the use of historical facts in this novel, that *So many Hungers* is "a worthy illustration of how contemporary history can be transformed by a socially conscious artist into fiction of permanent relevance to mankind." Thus, this novel deals with Indian history of immediate post-independence period.

Bhattacharya's second novel, *Music for Mohini* was published in 1952. This novel deals with the socio-political economic, cultural and ethical realities of Indian history in the fifties in the wake of newly attained Independence. *Music For Mohini* records the socio-cultural problems of India in a deep perceptive
manner. It is a study of the tensions and conflicts between the newly achieved freedom and the age long history of slavery of the Indians. There is also a growing concern about the shape of things to come, the problems which India were to face for her economic development and the steps to be taken in order to ensure the country's stability and greatness. Thus *Music for Mohini* deals with the theme of the social rejuvenation of India. This novel also records the confrontation between old and new values of life. Bhattacharya feels more concern about the future of India in this novel.

The next novel in this study is *He Who Rides a Tiger* (1955). It explores the fate of the lower castes of society, such as the blacksmiths. This novel also focuses on the darkest chapter in the history of Bengal - "A plague took the land in its grip, the plague of hunger, in the wake of war". It is essentially the story of crusade to challenge the very organization of society. Set in the early forties when the British policy of reservation of seats in the legislature for different communal and social groups was in the air, the novel records the inter-class struggle within the Hindu community. The novel vividly portrays how the rich people are callously indifferent to the hungry millions.
and are greatly responsible for their unspeakable miseries. Bhattacharya has revolted against it in the form of the protagonist, Kalo in this novel. He is a leader of his community and his fight is against discriminatory social values. Personal humiliation and misery merely act as a catalyst. "His battle was with .... the centuries old tradition from which had come the inner climate of his being". His fight is against social-religious and economic exploitation, inherent in the very foundations of Hindu society of that particular time.

**A Goddess Named Gold** (1960) delineates the multi-dimensional philosophy of freedom. The people of India are awakened to free India from political social, economic and cultural exploitation. This novel is a repetition of much of what already has been said in the previous novels, but with a new emphasis. The concept of 'freedom to be free' as discussed in previous novels acquires a new dimensions in this novel. This novel also deals with the necessity of Indian people to eradicate the evils for a healthy growth of social life.

The next novel in this study is **Shadow from Ladakh** (1966) in which Bhattacharya has treated the
Indo-Chinese war of 1962 as the backdrop of the story and dealt with the social, political, economic and ethical dimensions in the context of the post independence India. Bhattacharya's *Shadow from Ladakh* (1966) deals with people's concern to preserve the country's hard won independence at all costs. This also records the denial of Gandhian's ideology of non-violence as the efforts to rouse the "united conscience of all people" fails and declares that a country's freedom cannot be preserved by Gandhian non-violent means but with the help of steel and weapons. Thus this novel deals with the conflict between Gandhian social and political ethics and the modern forces of science and technology.

The last novel of Bhattacharya, taken up here is *A Dream in Hawaii* (1978). This novel deals with an altogether different subject i.e. east and west encounter. In this novel, the novelist projects the view that there must be a blending of the old and the new values, the spiritualism of the East and the materialism of the West, in order to attain fulfillment in life.

Manohar Malgonkar (1913– ) is another Indo-Anglian novelist whose works have also been
analysed and examined critically in this study. His novels too, like Bhattacharya’s, are framed in the Indian historical, political and social milieu. Malgonkar has felt that history and fiction have many elements in common and he asserts that “history forms the basis of his works.” Malgankar’s dealing with themes and issues of contemporary concern is dictated by the need for authenticity:

I keep writing of India... because I feel no author should write outside his own, living circumstances. If he does, it is phoney.

In this regard, Malgonkar says that his novels are “close enough to the ground to pass off for straight history.” He also writes:

I take great pains to be absolutely accurate. If I write that something happened on a Saturday or on a moonless night, you can be sure it was on a Saturday or on a moonless night.

Malgonkar has a number of things in common in writing of Indo-Anglian fiction, with the writers of past as well as his contemporaries who have written novels in Indian English. In this reference the first Indo-Anglian fiction writer is R.K. Narayan. Both the writers are extremely good 'story tellers' and they
never lose their sense of detachment and perspective which is so vital for a good piece of artistic creation. Their backgrounds may differ, as Narayan is democratic and the prominent component of Narayan credo is compassion for the common man, Malgonkar is aristocratic and committed to traditional and conservative values. The ideological implications of Malgonkar’s works are elitist. Narayan is primarily concerned with the human predicament and his setting are limited to the microcosm of Malgudi while Malgonkar’s canvas is vast and it extends all over the Indian sub continent.

Like Raja Rao, Malgonkar, too is rooted in the Indian tradition and loves to work on large canvases, but his approach to novel is radically different from Raja Rao. For Raja Rao, the Indian English novel can only be epic in form and metaphysical in nature. Malgonkar on the other hand, considers himself as an entertainer, a story teller and keeps away from metaphysics.

Malgonkar is different from Mulk Raj Anand in delineating the themes of his novels. Though the subject matter of these novelists is same, i.e. Indian history and Indian life, like the other’s writers of
Indo-Anglian fiction, but the treatment of the subject matter is different. In case of Mulk Raj Anand whose main concern is always the redemption of the poor and the oppressed classes. He is pre-occupied with mainly three problems of Indian society— the problems of the oppression and exploitation of the lowest classes by the upper ones, the tyranny and torture by the higher castes to the lower castes of the Hindu society; and the ignorance and superstition of the people caused by illiteracy and orthodoxy that stand in the way of India’s recognition. But Malgonkar is quite contrary to these facts. He is an upholder of aristocracy. He presents entertaining and still valid portraits of sophisticated men and women and they suggest some basic and still valid criticism of Indian life. In all his novels Malgonkar has shown a tendency to uphold conservative values in spite of the fact that he takes meticulous care to paint the unpalatable aspects of both the aristocrats and the middle classes in equal proportions, without an attempt to gloss over the dark aspects of the upper class. This is one of the most interesting aspects in Malgonkar’s works. Malgonkar in this regard may be different from other writers but he follows broadly the same 'trend' of using novel as
Malgonkar is a prominent Indo-Anglian novelist. He has made a distinct contribution to Indian writing as "a down to earth teller of tells." He has earned a niche for himself in Indo-English fiction by his compelling "story telling" technique and the probing insight into life. He is one of those few writers who gain the stamp of unmistakable authenticity by transmuting felt experience in to art. His own diverse experiences in the fields of big game hunting, civil service, army, business and politics have played a significant role in helping him catch the "color of life" especially of the upper strata.

Malgonkar's novels reveal a sound historical sense. History as the theme of creative fiction seems indeed to exercise a special fascination for him. Malgonkar is very often described as "the John Masters of the Indo the Indo English fiction" because of his affinity in matters of historic authenticity and gripping drama. John Master's *Bhowani Junction*, for example, portrays quite dexterously, the predicament of an Anglo-Indian's searching for roots in the rapidly crumbling British India.
Malgonkar ideas on the race of history in fiction agree with Henry James too. He appears to share with James that "as the picture is reality, so the novel is history." Henry James refutes the belief that the novelist is less occupied in looking for the truth than the historian. He believes that:

The subject matter of fiction is stored up likewise in documents and records and if it will not give itself away, as they say in California, it must speak with assurance, with the tone of the historian.

Like James, Malgonkar believes in the authentic historic value that a creative work carries with it. Malgonkar's attempt in his historical novels like The Princes and The Devil's Wind is evidently to "make even history certainly readable."

Malgonkar has used Indian themes, scenes, lives and events from the past and contemporary Indian history to write all his novels. The novels taken up for the purpose of this study by Malgonkar, are Distant Drum (1961), Combat of Shadows (1962) The Princes (1963), A Bend in the Ganges (1964), The Devil's Wind (1972), Bandicoot Run (1982) and The Garland Keepers (1986). The works of Malgonkar, which are excluded from this study are Shalimar (1968) and Spy in Amber (1971) for the
former is a fictionalized screen play\textsuperscript{49} while the latter
is the form given to Malgonkar's screen play by his
daughter, Sunita Malgonkar.\textsuperscript{50} Also excluded is \textit{Open
Season} (1978) for, to quote Malgonakr, "\textit{Open Season} was
not written as a novel, and it is being offered in that
garb only because the film was never made".\textsuperscript{51} Malgonkar
gives the descriptions of the princely life and its pomp
and glory and final its disintegration in \textit{The Princes} of
the army life and war scenes in \textit{Distant Drum} of the dark
interiors of the Indian jungles and Wild life hunting in
\textit{Combat of Shadows} of the partition of India and the
consequent Hindu-Muslim riots in \textit{A Bend in the Ganges};
of Nana's involvement in the process of history in \textit{The
Devil's Wind}, projection of a more intense psychological
perception and insight into evil in \textit{Bandicoot Run} of
indictment of infringement of human rights and gross
abuse of power in Emergency in \textit{The Garland Keepers} - all
reveal a deep concern for authenticity informed by a
verve of personal knowledge.

A quick glance can easily mark the
authenticity of historical events, used in various
novels by Malgonkar. For example in \textit{Distant Drum} (1960)
Malgonkar attempts to present various facets of army
life in India during the period of transition from the
last years of the British regime to the beginning years of Congress rule. The action of the novel covers the period from 1938 to 1950. In this novel, Malgonkar explores the relationship between the Indians and the Britishers.

Malgonkar's major novels reveal that the creative world is a world of violence, vengeance, passion, hatred and intrigue. Recurrent evil and violence is the dominant theme of Malgonkar's second novel *Combat of Shadows* (1962). The backdrop of the novel is the life and deteriorating conditions of the labourers, in the tea-estate of Assam. In this regard Malgonkar himself specifies the period and the locale before the story gets underway:

The action of this story takes place in the North-Eastern Assam, India. The Time: September 1938 to March 1940.

In the next novel *The Princes* (1963) Malgonkar has dealt the political crisis that came with the merger of the princely states in India, after independence. The Princes depicts the phase of Indian national policy after independence regarding the Indian Princely states. A critic asserts: "The novel deals with an exclusive phase of recent Indian History not so commonly dealt
within Indo-Anglian fiction and no where taken up with such a sure touch as in Malgonkar. A Bend in the Ganges (1964) is considered by many to be the greatest work of Malgonkar. Khuswant Singh considers Malgonkar's this novel a successful novel due to the number of great national events depicted by the author. It is a sensational novel about the struggle for independence, the agony of the partition and the bathos of post independence fumbling. The eclipse of partition touched the Indian writers. This novel also depicts the Gandhian era i.e. 1920-1947, but this time he concentrated his attention on the role of terrorists as well, besides the followers of Mahatma Gandhi. The next novel The Devil's Wind (1972) deals with the story of Nana Saheb, the controversial figure of the historic Sepoy Revolt of 1857. In this, Malgonkar, in his endeavour to set the history in correct perspective, undertakes to absolve Nana of the false charges. In an interview Malgonkar says:

All history of India is written from the British view. Nand Saheb the leading figure of Mutiny has historically been treated as a villain. In my book... I treat him as a human being. I write of him as neither a patriot nor a villain but as a rather mixed-up human being, like most of us are.
This novel is a record of Nana Saheb's personal life and his role in the Sepoy Revolt and his last days. In this regard the author assures, the novel "take no liberties with verifiable facts or even with probabilities". Bandicoot Run (1982) too, as its predecessors has a significant base, a true verifiable historical substratum. This novel projects a more intense psychological perception and insight into evil. The novel is divided into two parts, the first entitled "The Sahib who stayed behind the Sun" and the second part is "The Gilchrist Story". The first part of the novel begins with Prolongue Thursday, 7th March, 1961 which gives the authenticity to the historic events. This is again a novel which deals with army life and national loyalty. In this novel, Malgunkar not only invokes admirably the historical milieu wherein all his novels are set, he also throws in frequently actual historical personages in the background to lend credence to the picture. K.M. or Krishna Manikam, is an example of a historical character being given a fictional garb, rather transparent though. The blurb on the orient paperback edition of the novel displays the observation prominently:

Bandicool Run is a savage and merciless attack on the late Mr. V.K. Krishna Menon and one of his favoured Generals who was promoted out of turn.
The Garland Keepers, covers the emergency period 1975-77 and all those callous activities happened in that time i.e. Press censorship, MISA, indiscriminate implementation of Family Planning and extra-constitutional authority of a caucus of sycophants etc. Although Malgonkar asserts in Author's Note to the novel, that the novel is not based on the emergency of 1975-77, but a "fictional one, supposedly imposed some years later" but it is evident that it draws inspiration from these events and is intended to drive home subtly the lesson of emergency. The passing resemblance is ascribed to the fact that "all fits of national epilepsy must show some common outward symptoms."

It is not that critical attention has been bestowed on Bhabani Bhattacharya and Malgonkar for the very first time. They have been taken up for critical analysis in a number of works. Full length individual studies of the works of these novelists by critics like K.R. Chandrashekharan and G.S. Amur do cover most of the obvious facets of the achievements of these novelists. But the insights of a comparative perspective elude such works. In other broad-ranging studies of Indian English fiction, viz., Meenkashi Mukherjee's Twice Born Fiction,
P.P. Mehta's *Indo-Anglian Fiction: An Assessment*, Uma Parameshwaran's *A study of Representative Indo-Anglian Novelists*, K.R. Srinivasa Iyenger's *Indian Writing in English* etc. the use of novel as history has not been given the in-depth coverage that it deserves. It is against this background that the present study seeks to fill this gap in criticism. In the following chapters it is proposed to analyse in detail the diverse dimensions of the use of political history as well as social and cultural history in the novels of these two writers.


28. Ibid


31. Ibid, p. 27.

33. Ibid, p. 228.


47. Ibid.


