CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The process of history-writing is becoming more and more controversial as days go by. The boundary between history and fiction is no longer water-tight or fixed. Hence several novelists from the west and third world nations have written novels with history as their background, because of their dissatisfaction with the efforts of the historians in presenting the facts before the readers. During the ascendancy of scientific and objective historiography it was believed that there was a clear demarcation between history and fiction. It is also proposed that, history is based on the facts, it is linear and objective and it deals with materials different from fiction. In these circumstances, an historian, in order to describe an historical event, always includes, orders and arranges with the help of certain narrative strategies, and this helps him in fulfilling his intentions. As Hayden White observes:

It was possible to believe that whereas writers of fiction invented everything in their narratives – characters, events, plots, motifs, themes, atmosphere and so on – historian invented nothing but certain rhetorical flourishes (1987: X)

Thus, it can be established that, there cannot be a single authentic history. Also, in the recent years, a great amount of power politics has encroached into the writing of histories. This has
encouraged many novelists, to write their versions of history through fiction. For example, the history of the colonised people, written by the colonial historians, aimed at satisfying the interest of the imperial masters. These novelists have attempted to provide an alternative picture of the past and also have questioned the provisional nature of these representations.

Using of history in fiction is not a new concept in India. Making a study of the growth and development of the Indian novel, Meenakshi Mukherjee observes that, in almost all the languages of India [Including English], the novel first established itself as the historical novel, and it was Raja Rao’s Kanthapura (1938), the seminal novel which attempted to subvert, the coloniser’s view of India. Further she is also of the view that, since 1920 novelists in India have used history in fiction as “narratives of resistance” to the experience of colonialism (1992:6). As “narratives of resistance”, the historical past was aroused in the 1920s and 30s, to stimulate the national consciousness among Indians on the evils of the British colonialism. The Independence Movement was not only a political movement, but an emotional experience for all Indians. This emotional experience, according to Meenakshi Mukherjee, has been reflected by the fictional writers not only in those decades but also in the present century, as “this was an experience that was national in nature” (1971:34). Many novelists have evoked the history of India again in the 80’s for various reasons. Since Independence there was a big discrepancy between the
pre-independence dreams and their subsequent practice. Various economic and social pressures led to the end of the Nehruvite Era. The fate of the children of the midnight hour of Independence has been a pressing one throughout India of late. The national unity was threatened, by various regional and religious organisations. With these political and economic problems, there was corruption, black money, unethical practice in public life, politics, administration and business. Finally, when the Emergency was imposed (1975-77), every Indian saw it as the return of the repressive 'colonial' rule and opposed it fiercely. The novelists turned to history in order to raise the public consciousness as they had done in the 1920s and 30s, and also to expose the government for its ideology of power and authoritarianism against its own people. History writing was seen as ideologically based, and the official history began to serve those in power. Hence these novelists, in order to rearticulate their experiences, have positioned the 'official version' of history and have also offered multiple versions, to oppose the official version, in order to claim that the earlier version is unreliable.

With the publication of *Midnight's Children*, many novelists have shown their renewed interest in history. These novelists have not only captured the changing realities in their narrative, but have also de-centred the given version of history by offering their own interpretations of the events. Unlike the historian, the novelist is not bound to deal with history, by producing realistic narratives.
He achieves this through the dense cover of comedy, allegory and satire either singly or in varied mixtures and techniques.

Indian historians have always depended on the Western historiographers for their writing of history. Since the time of British, who stimulated historical consciousness in the country, history-writing has become problematic. The British have not only distorted and disfigured the historical past to their advantage, but have also attempted to obliterate the civilisation and culture from the memory of the colonised.

Since Independence, (in India) the historians and their histories are identified as imperialist, Marxist, nationalist, Muslim communalist and the Hindu communalist. Hence the process of history-writing has attained a greater complexity and controversy in India than ever before. These controversies have paved the way for a more serious and purposeful engagement of the novelist with history to represent the unrepresented. These novelists have tried to create a space for the marginalised groups, communities and other underprivileged sections of the society to provide alternative ways to understand the past which the professional historians have neglected, due to their ideologies.

The present study has focussed upon the (re)-writing/(re)visioning of History in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* and Gita Mehta's *Raj*. It is evident from the study that, they picture the contemporary socio-political situation in the pre and post-Independent India as part of their post-modern and post-colonial discourse.
The three writers have expressed their angst about the nation and this is reflected through the main characters. These novelists have revealed their social concerns with a difference. Through their explicit kind of realism like parody, allegory, satire and traditional narrative techniques, they have presented a slice of life. A deeper understanding of these novels has proved how, by different modes of presentation these novelists have ploughed back history into fiction and in the process they have problematised the entire historical discourse.

Historical discourse, in the conventional sense, usually presents a chronology of events and happenings of a period. On many occasions the historical accounts recorded and documented in archives, describe the royal riches and the regal splendours of kings and emperors. History usually presents an exaggerated account of the wars waged and epic battles fought. In more recent times, it is understood to engage itself with constitutional changes and the power politics behind them. On many occasions, history is silent about the marginalised, and in order to fill this vacuum, these novelists have taken up the responsibility of re-visioning and re-writing history. The reality they seek to present is the product of social and cultural significations. They are the representation of the real, rendered into an imaginary object. Their realism meditates the post-modern political resistance and revolution. These novelists seek to propound a kind of revolution and resistance by evoking academic interest.
These novels are meta-fictional in nature, in that their protagonists are self-conscious that they are writing fiction. Memory is used as a device to re-collect and organise history. They believe that words are capable of falsification. Well-established notions of history, tradition, family and patriarchy are deconstructed for their ideological underpinnings. These novels have not only questioned the colonial version of history, but have also offered multiple versions. Hence, these novels fall under the broad category of Post-Modern and Post-Colonial writings.

The earlier chapters taken up for study substantiate the view that, these writers are not happy with the administrators before and after Independence. By (re)-writing and (re)-visioning history, these novels have attempted to provide a voice to the marginalised and subaltern. By focussing on the social and cultural issues, these novelists believe that their writings would kindle the imagination of the people and thereby the seeds of social and political reforms will be sown.

Subjecting the pre- and post-Independence history to critical scrutiny, the present study proves that the same oppression experienced before independence is also experienced after independence. These novels further demonstrate that, the foreign colonial forces, have been replaced by native colonial forces in the form of politicians, officials, linguistic and regional organisations, poverty, corruption and unemployment.
The novels taken up for study deal with the colonial and post-colonial Indian history. The narrators/protagonists in these novels weave together the history of his/her family and in the process, they (re)-write and (re)-vision the history of the nation. The protagonist, being at the centre, draws correspondence between national events and his/her personal life through various literary techniques. The novels have endeavoured to make visible and audible what has been pushed to the margins and forcibly silenced. They have (de)constructed the contradiction between fiction and history and in the process have made available what has been suppressed, in order to expose the official interests at stake in this suppression.

The past makes sense only when we understand that the past is indispensable to our sense of the present. Hence History is seen as the key to our personal and collective identity. If societies do not have memories of the past from which they can draw upon, they are rendered clueless. The process of history-writing has attained a greater degree of complexity in India, than it did in the west.

The novelists taken for study have chosen to use history in a new style. They do not identify themselves with any group of historians or their ideologies. Instead, by using the resources of history and fiction, they have presented their visions of the past. By (re)-visioning and (re)-writing history, these novelists have restored the history of groups and classes marginalised in established histories. The aim of these writers is to show to the younger
generation, what the past was like, “You can’t know, you with your ration cards and your black markets and cynical materialism of your generation, what it was like in those days (...)” (GIN:52).

By portraying the inner forms of human experiences, these novelists hold the conviction that any change in the present in a desired direction could be possible only through an effective intervention into the very tide of history. Their objective is to retrieve and retain the past, in order to use it for the future. As T.N. Dhar observes:

> We have been told by the historians themselves that existing histories have ignored large areas of social and cultural experience. But the novel, because of its traditional connection with society and its history, could incorporate a good deal of this history as well. This would be the additional gain of studying the novelists’ intervention into the domain of history. (1999: 72).

Salman Rushdie has problematised history, while Shashi Tharoor, (re)-visions and (re)-writes history by a fictional recasting of events and characters and Gita Mehta has attempted a woman’s perspective of history. These three novelists have used the resources of fiction in order to provide their vision and version of the past, by using realistic mode or by the mixtures of realism and fantasy.

An important aspect found in the three novels is that they are ‘contestatory’ in nature. They aim at initiating a debate in order to
evolve an oppositional or alternative ideology. That is why, they show an irreverence to national leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and Mrs. Gandhi, (which is chosen and wilful). While Salman Rushdie and Shashi Tharoor make the historical personalities a laughing stock, Gita Mehta, on the other hand, is serious in her portrayal of historical personalities. The three novelists aim at debunking the myth of the euphoria of Independence. They expose the erosion of the sanctity attached to it, because of the slipshod methods adopted by the post-Independence rulers.

The protagonist of Midnight's Children Saleem Sinai, the narrator Ved Vyas of The Great Indian Novel and Jaya Devi in Raj have emerged as rebel heroes and heroines in the flux and flow of time. They embody the spirit of the, “ultra historical modern man” (Mukherjee, 1971: 26) whose individuality and personal life are shaped by the factors of history. Thus these novelists call into question the existing power structure which has failed to cultivate the finer feelings of man as a citizen in the pre and post-Independence India. Instead these power structures have cultivated and encouraged the beast in man and encouraged him to kill each other in the name of religion and region.

A very important historical event of our age was the partition of the sub-continent. The political and religious differences between Muslims and Hindus culminated in a widespread destruction to human life. The massacres which preceded the partition, continued
for several months, in which at least one million Hindus and Muslims lost their lives. Thousands were massacred; women were raped in front of their children, husbands and parents; children flung on spears and property looted on a large scale. There was also large scale migration of people. The three novelists have responded with a sense of horror and revulsion at the deliberate human slaughter. They have given a graphic description of the destructions and the plight of the refugees. Having faithfully recorded the reign of violence, they have also provided a sad telling commentary on the breakdown of human values. A strain of despair and disillusionment is predominant in these novels.

All the three novels were written some four decades after partition and the authors were just born or not born when the partition holocaust took place. By distancing themselves in time and emotion, these novelists have (re)-written and (re)-visioned history. All the three novels have substantiated the view that, the origin of the communal tension was due to the British policy of divide and rule, and the ambitions of the politicians. Further these novelists hold the view that, the new administrators in their thirst for power, failed to anticipate the holocaust that was to take place. Hence these novelists have questioned the legitimacy of the governments, and the role of the leaders which led to the bloodshed, in the Indian sub continent. These novelists have documented that, if not for the power hungry politicians, the Hindus and Muslims could have lived together as they had done for a century and a half under the British rule.
Though it is true that, the three writers differ widely in their fictional modes – while Rushdie opts for post-modern irony, Tharoor, post-colonial allegory and Mehta, the traditional narrative technique, - their writings offer a resistance and challenge to the official histories or the Euro-centred histories. By way of (re)-writing and (re)-visioning history, these writers have questioned certain fundamental assumptions regarding the nature of truth. For example, while narrating the Jallianwallah Bagh Massacre, Tharoor and Mehta, have pointed out the treatment given to General Dyer, which not only challenges the official British version, but also unmasks the British for celebrating the Massacre committed by Dyer. Also Mehta brings within the folds of literature the experiences of the rulers of India who have been marginalised by the Indian Historians and their genuine histories swept under the carpet. Rushdie has voiced the perspectives of the marginalised and has recorded as many voices as possible. Tharoor is of the view that, even after fifty years of independence, we are unable to eliminate the colonial influence.

The main objective of Salman Rushdie in the novel Midnight's Children is to highlight, how after Independence, the subsequent governments had failed to fulfil their promises, made to the children born after Independence. As Jon Mee observes:

the literal cracking up of Saleem represents the end of one cycle of the national imaginary, the fracturing of Nehru's
promise 'to build the noble mansion of free India where all
her children may dwell'. (2000:38).

The novelist also blames the leaders of the nation for failing to understand the needs of the people of India.

By re-writing and re-visioning history, the novelist has confirmed his passionate involvement with a country, which had all the promise of developing into an ideal one. The novel proves that, Rushdie is disappointed to find that the people who gained control of India have failed to realise the aspirations of the people, because they are unimaginative and corrupt. That is why, the choice of the period is of great significance; in 1947 the long colonial period came to an end and every Indian was dreaming of a bright and happy future, and in 1977, the hard won freedom was put to test by Mrs. Gandhi's Emergency.

The novelist gives an encyclopaedic sweep of the nation's history, and covers all major problems confronting the nation with a social concern. He concludes that after independence, we failed to turn our nation into a land of promise and new dreams, because our leaders were short-sighted. Narrating the Partition between India and Pakistan, the novelist not only unmasks the double standards of the British, but also exposes the fundamentalist groups who exploited the religious feelings of the people. Like Tharoor and Mehta, Rushdie also concludes that, if the political and administrative leaders had been sincere in their efforts, partition could have been avoided.
Re-writing the Chinese Aggression, the author denounces the blunder committed by the then Defence Minister, who failed to ascertain the military capabilities of the Indian army. For Rushdie, the Chinese Aggression not only exposed India at the international level, but was the cause for Nehru's death. Rushdie is also not happy with Nehru and his daughter for having projected themselves as the only leaders capable of leading India, "These Nehrus will not be happy until they have made themselves hereditary kings." (MC:275).

Through the novel, Rushdie comes down heavily on the bifurcation of the Indian States on the basis of language. He condemns the regional hatred that this division unleashed. Problematising the Indo-Pak war of 1965, Rushdie is unable to ascertain the exact cause for the war. By placing a few questions, he leaves it to the readers to decide, as to who attacked first; was it India or Pakistan? Did General Ayub Khan want to divert the attention of the people of Pakistan?

Narrating the Bangladesh War, the novelist appreciates the then Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi, for having taken a bold step. Rushdie has also documented the atrocities of the Pakistani Army in Bangladesh, which were denied by the authorities officially. Re-writing the Emergency history, the novelist has given a graphic description of the atrocities committed by Mrs. Indira Gandhi's Government and her son Sanjay Gandhi. Rushdie strongly criticises Emergency, because, individuals' liberty and freedom were at stake.
Thus Rushdie blends fact with fiction to re-create the history of the Indian subcontinent. Having placed before the readers the multiple versions, the novelist has not only challenged the historians, but has also problematised history. Having problematised history, Rushdie/Saleem has attempted to 'chutnify history'. Chutnification is a process, in which many ingredients are put together, processed and preserved. The preserved material transforms to give a new meaning/taste. Rushdie establishes the fact that his chutnified, pickled history will offer new perspectives and understanding, when opened and tasted at a later date. As Saleem claims all 'versions' are nothing but 'distortions'. Ultimately we have to live, “with the shadows of imperfection” (MC:459).

Shashi Tharoor, in his The Great Indian Novel, has also chosen to narrate the pre and post Independence Indian history like Salman Rushdie, but with a difference. In order to reject the colonial and post-colonial version of history, the novelist has used the mythical story of The Mahabharata. It is clear from the study that the novelist seeks to highlight the ancient principle of Dharma. He not only condemns and attacks the corrupt and confused colonial and post-colonial situation, but also pleads with the younger generation to uphold the concept of Dharma. Tharoor, who is concerned with the existing political system in India, concludes and hopes that a viable democratic alternative will emerge. He also attacks the successive governments for adopting and following the colonial policies even after fifty years of Independence.
Dealing with the Partition, the author concludes that, if the Congress Party and Nehru had been more accommodative, Jinnah would not have quit Congress, and Partition could have been avoided. The novelist criticises Gandhi for slackening his grip over the Congress Party, when the question of Partition arose. Tharoor also reveals that, if not for the World War II, the British might have postponed freedom to India indefinitely. Jinnah who understood that the British have become politically weak, after World War II, became vociferous in his demand for a separate State. Hence the novelist concludes that, it was the indecent haste of a few politicians that led to partition. Thus the novel exposes and documents the shortcomings of the British, Congress, Gandhi and Nehru.

Nehru’s educational, economic and foreign policies after Independence are attacked by the novelist. By following the colonial system of education, Nehru’s government failed to teach the children to learn Gandhi’s teachings and his life, and relate them to their day to day lives. Nehru’s handling of the Pakistan issue, by taking it to the UN is criticised. In spite of Nehru being criticised for his wrong policies, he is also credited for not being guilty of meanness or villainy like his daughter Mrs. Gandhi. Tharoor is also of the opinion that, too much importance has been given, on the role of Nehru, in Indian politics before and after Independence.

The novelist is critical of Mrs. Gandhi’s abolition of the privy purses to the former rulers and the nationalisation of banks.
Tharoor concludes that, it was Mrs. Gandhi who was the cause for the decline in the political culture and the institutional structure. Mrs. Gandhi is also criticised for encouraging slogan shouting in politics and prompting her party followers to call her, “Mother Goddess”. The novelist criticises the political parties and the bureaucracy for not promoting any meaningful change after Independence.

Tharoor’s attitude towards Emergency is in sharp contrast to the point of view taken by other novelists. Tharoor tries to understand the imposition of the Emergency from its immediate context when it was declared by Mrs. Gandhi. He concludes that, it was the opposition parties led by Jayaprakash Narayan, who pushed Mrs. Gandhi to take this extreme step. In the same vein, the novelist disapproves of the flattering estimates of Jayaprakash Narayan’s abilities and his role during the Emergency. He is also critical of Mrs. Gandhi, and concedes that the imposition of censorship on press and other repressive measures were “primarily cynical and self-serving”. Concluding his narrative on Emergency, the novelist speculates that, the social and political reality in India can spawn dictators even within a democratic structure.

In the concluding chapters of the novel, Tharoor is disappointed, and concludes that even after the dark days of Emergency, the Janata Government failed to provide suitable alternative and the people of India had to look back to Mrs. Gandhi as the only alternative. Tharoor is also worried about the attempts made
to reduce the unique secular complexity of India through narrow religious principles and fundamentalism. Tharoor, through his writing, pleads for the reinterpretation and rediscovery of India on the basis of dharma - the dharma based on the fact that India is a land of pluralistic truth and experiences, where there is no absolute truth. Thus by (re)-writing (re)-visioning history, The Great Indian Novel is able to speak for an India of multiple reality and has placed before us multiple interpretation to this Indian reality.

The fourth chapter, which deals with Gita Mehta’s Raj has brought within the folds of literature, the experiences of the rulers who have been marginalised by the Indian historians. Mehta has not only dismissed the negative portrayal of the rulers as drunkards and womanisers, but has documented their role in the nation building and freedom movement. The novelist has established the exploitative character of the British and the demoralising effect it had on the psyche of the rulers. Mehta concludes that, it was the British who shaped the thinking and attitudes of the royals by introducing them to the western culture and education. It is proved by the novelist that by introducing the rulers to the luxuries and pleasures, the British adopted the strategy of blackmail and threatening, to have a better control over the rulers.

The novel has established that, during the earlier days, many rulers like Maharajah Jai Singh disliked the British. Having been independent for centuries, these rulers resisted the interference of the
British in their internal affairs. Subsequently, rulers like Maharajah Victor and Pratap were fascinated by the British. They associated the British with material products, which made their life comfortable and enjoyable. The fact was that, the British Queens and Kings became God Mothers and God Fathers.

At the same time, the novelist has also made it clear that rulers like Tiny Dungra and Maharani Jaya Devi were really interested in the welfare of their people. In fact, the nationalist feeling is infused into Jaya Devi, by her tutor Mrs. Roy, the royal responsibilities by the Raj Guru and the art of warfare by Major Vir Singh. The objective of the novelist is to retrieve the history of the rulers, in order to prove and substantiate that they were not irresponsible and pleasure seekers as they were portrayed by the British and Indian historians. Mehta wants to demonstrate to the people of India and the world, the heinous effect the British system and institution had on their individual lives. In this novel she has attempted to break the stereotyped image of the rulers that has been built by the British authorities. She has proved this by portraying rulers like Maharajah Jai Singh, who sells his personal jewel, in order to save his people from starvation. Likewise Maharani Jaya Devi sells her shares to help her people.

Many events narrated in the novel have been either ignored or denied by the British authorities. The role of the royal armies during the World War I, in support of the British, has not been recorded and acknowledged by historians. The fact was that, thousands of soldiers
and a few Maharajahs and Princes died defending the British. Also while narrating the Jallianwallah Bagh Massacre, the novelist has thrown light on those events the British authorities denied and attempted to sweep under the carpet. Narrating the effect of World War II on India, the novelist claims that, two to three million people died of starvation in India. The author concludes that it was the British who caused the starvation, by purchasing all the food grains from the market, thereby causing an artificial food crisis.

Further, while narrating the violence that shook the nation, after the Direct Action call given by Jinnah, Mehta blames the British. The novelist concludes that in spite of the administration knowing in advance of the violence, they failed to provide adequate security and thousands of precious lives were lost. Writing on the partition riots, the novelist differs from other writers, by presenting a woman’s perspective. She establishes that it was the women and children who were the worst affected in the partition violence.

Thus by portraying a woman’s perspective of history, the novelist, not only challenges the official version, but has also attempted for a space in the male-dominated world of historians and fictional writers. Having successfully (re)shaped and (re)written facts (History) into fiction, the novel becomes a rich storehouse of fictionalised historiography.

In today’s world of post-modern urgency, with the artificial intelligence, modern society is out and out to create wealth through
digital economy. This has caused man to move away from history. If societies do not have memories of the past that they can draw upon, they are rendered clueless. The past makes sense only when we recollect that the past is indispensable to our sense of the present. We cannot really know what is happening and why it is happening unless we know what went before it. On many occasions it is proved that, historians have failed to provide the real historical facts. Hence these novelists have taken up the task of re-writing histories, with the hope that young Indians would better understand the complex and multifarious problems facing India and the various ways by which these are met/solved.

The main aim of Rushdie, Tharoor and Mehta is not only to help the Indians to know their past, but to subvert the western notion of ‘History’ and to challenge the imperialistic records of Indian history.

Besides the use of allegory, parody and magic realism as literary devices, they have also used newspaper reports, personal letters, gossips, diaries and memoirs, in order to undermine and disrupt the imperial history. In the works of Rushdie and Tharoor, memory is used as an important device in recording the past. History recalled from memory and narrated through fiction, paradoxically sounds more authentic and reliable.

The present study establishes the fact that these novelists who have used history in fiction wilfully and self-consciously have dealt with the colonial and post-colonial Indian History and in all these novels, the
protagonists in their attempt to write their family history, are forced to rewrite the whole of Indian history experimentally. The study also reveals that the protagonist being at the centre draws correspondence between the national events and his/her personal life through innumerable literary techniques. These novels have made visible/audible what has been pushed to the margins and forcibly silenced, and they seek to rewrite and make available what has been suppressed. These re-visioned histories which subvert the official view also offer a critique of the authority, and the professional historians with ideological base. By (re)-writing and (re)-visioning history, these novelists have demonstrated the shortcomings of the historians, and have also made an attempt to occupy the space of the historians.

The study proves that these novelists wanted to evolve a new political paradigm of oppositional writing/discourse along with an alternative value system in tune with the changing socio-political atmosphere of post-Independence India. That is why Gita Mehta stresses on Rajnithi and Tharoor on Dharma.

A study of the three novels points out that, the family history which becomes the starting point, gradually encompasses the community, region, religion and nation within the fold of their narratives. Rushdie, Tharoor and Mehta have resorted to the past in terms of personal histories and ancestries. In all the three novels, the family history spans for more than one generation. The history of the family
incorporates within itself the history of the nation and these novels attempt to substantiate the possibilities of histories within history.

The different versions presented by the concerned authors might not be acceptable or reliable. However, the study proves that, many of the events narrated in these novels carry a certain degree of authenticity and reliability that shows there is one more possibility of looking at the same event.

The aim of the historian and a novelist probing the past, is to unearth its truth. While the historian follows the technique of looking at events from a chronological perspective, the novelist would re/think, re/call from memory, re/vision or re/interpret; ultimately both look for the same facts and events, in spite of the fact that, “the study of novel and history may sound paradoxical on the surface, yet the truth is that all these works contain in them, are traces of history” (Shah 2003:161). Hence, the study of these novels confirms the view that historian or historiography cannot claim authenticity, because the past events can be interpreted in more than one way and there is always the possibility of a reinterpretation of the perceived truth. In a pluralistic society like India, an event of the past always has different connotations, based on their religion and region. Hence it is impossible to provide a single version capable of convincing people of different religion and region. As Vyas/Tharoor confesses, the true history of India can never be suitably recovered; all that is available are biases and distortions.
Every tale I have told you, every perception I have conveyed, there are a hundred equally valid alternatives I have omitted and of which you are unaware. I make no apologies for this. This is my story of the India I know, with its biases, selections, omissions, distortions, all mine (...) Every Indian must for ever carry with him, in his head and heart, his own history of India. (GIN:373).

Hence the (re)writing and (re)visioning of history through fiction, will always provide alternatives, which can help us to probe deeper into the past.

Thus, the study concludes that, all history is provisional and plural, and a close relationship exists between fiction and history. A historian and a fictional writer are at liberty to invade each other's territory. Further, it can always be demonstrated and proved that, the fictionalised version of Rushdie, Tharoor and Mehta can always be challenged, contested, and objected by an historian or a novelist. Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children, Shashi Tharoor's The Great Indian Novel and Gita Mehta's Raj are nothing but an alternative representation of the past. By representing the repressed voices of the past, these novels have demonstrated the fluid nature of any historical discourse, which is always open for a different version at any point of time.