Abstract

This thesis studies the ideology of Gandhi and its impact on the major Indo-Anglian writers such as Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan.

The hypotheses that form the basis for the study are (1) The novels of Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan are based on the Gandhian Ideology. (2) The novels can be read as social documents of the Gandhian thought.

Scholars all over the world have done research on Gandhi and his ideology or principles. Seminars or symposia at state, national or international level are held every now and then. Gandhi’s was such a personality which has been appraised as well as criticised severely. I have heard people abusing Gandhi for his efforts for Hindu-Muslim unity or his views or efforts for the upliftment of the untouchables. So long as a study is not conducted how can one understand the real Gandhi? I did not know how people could abuse or criticise Gandhi whom people all over the world revere. Such criticism of Gandhi motivated me to take up the subject for research. Rama Jha, Sudarshan Sharma, Subha Rayudu, Patil, Venkateswarlu have studied Gandhian impact on Indo-Anglian literature in general. I found that nobody has comprehensively studied Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan with reference to the Gandhian ideology. So I took up this subject. I hope this study would add something to the vast sea of knowledge and be helpful to students and researchers in understanding Gandhi and his ideology as well as its impact on the ‘big trio’ of Indian fiction in English who lived during Gandhi’s time and were his contemporaries.
The area of research covered in this thesis deals primarily with Gandhian ideology and its impact on the ‘Big Trio’. The purpose of the research is to highlight the influence of Gandhian ideology on the novels of Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan. To explore the Gandhian ideology in the novels, the research will firstly include some fundamental issues pertaining to Gandhian principles as delineated in them. Secondly, it studies to what extent Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan were influenced by Gandhi and his ideology. Thirdly, it studies the relevance of Gandhian ideology in present context.

Objectives:

1. To evaluate critically Gandhian Ideology
2. To study the ideological aspect(s) of the novels Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan.
3. To examine the portrayal of Gandhian principles in the novels
4. To comment on the relevance of Gandhian Ideology
5. To analyze the impact of Gandhian Ideology on the novelists.

The introductory chapter of the research work deals with Gandhian ideology. The chapter is divided into four parts: the first to understand Gandhi’s life and works, the second about the influences on Gandhi, the third to understand Gandhian ideology and the fourth about influence of Gandhian ideology on Indian fiction in English in general. This way this chapter discusses the basic principles of Gandhi.

The second chapter deals with the life and works of Raja Rao and studies to what extent he was influenced by Gandhi and his ideology. *Kanthapura* is the novel that deals with the various aspects of Gandhian ideology.
The third chapter deals with the impact of Gandhian ideology on the novels of Mulk Raj Anand. *Untouchable* and *The Sword and the Sickle* are the major novels that are based on Gandhian ideology. Anand’s other novels also reflect Gandhian ideology to some extent.

The fourth chapter deals with the impact of Gandhian ideology on the novels of R K Narayan. Narayan upholds Gandhian principles in his novels which include moral uprightness and truthfulness and other issues that cover man’s life in all areas—social, educational, political and economic. Gandhian ideology provides a frame of reference to his novels. *Waiting for the Mahatma* is a major novel of R K Narayan that deals with the impact of the Gandhian ideology on average Indian. It shows how Gandhi and his ideology influenced people throughout India.

The fifth chapter studies Gandhian ideology and its relevance in present times. Truth, non-violence, simplicity, dignity of labour, his views on trusteeship, village handicrafts or machinery everything is relevant in present times. The thrust of my thesis is to examine whether Gandhism provides a panacea to all the problems that are ailing our society.

The final chapter of the research work is an attempt to summarize Gandhian ideology or principles in the major novels of Raja Rao, R K Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand. They were novelists who were directly or indirectly influenced by Gandhi and his ideology and they dealt with Gandhian principles in their novels in varying measures, wholly or spasmodically making their writing a mirror to Gandhi-led society.