Conclusion

In this part of the thesis an effort has been made to analyze how Basavaraj Naikar is a regional writer and how Naikar has presented many aspects of his north Karnataka in his novels and short stories. The landscape of north Karnataka with its nature and inhabitants has repeatedly become the subject of his novels and stories, not to speak of his non-fictional writings.

Now is quite pertinent and interesting to see whether this matter has matched with Naikar’s style of writing or has influenced it either. It is more important to note, how far these regional writings have succeeded as literary creations as such writings constitute considerable size and number, their artistic features deserve an elaborate and a separate study.

Basavaraj Naikar has dealt with various elements of the life of Navalgund, Naragund, Kittur, Dharwad and other localities - its different groups of people, their past traditions with present changes, socio-political and cultural activities. No doubt, it is a difficult task to give an artful shape to these vast and diverse materials in the limited scope of the novel. It leads to study, at the very outset, the different patterns of plot adopted by the writer in the novels under discussion. In some of his novels the story develops with a central character like Bhaskararao Bhave, Rani Channamma, Sangolli Rayanna, Mallamma, Basavanti, Verangouda, Malla, Timmappa and Jakkanna. But, remarkably, the plot is not controlled. When we study The Sun Behind the Cloud or Light in the House we feel that socio-political life takes its own ontological being and becoming. It appears that, a man, being a part of the flow of life in The Thief of Nagarahalli and Other Stories assesses the variegated human life and gathers different experiences, but very little part of incidents are shaped by him. But in most of these novels and stories even the principal character with his emotions and activities does not overshadow all other things.
The king Bhaskararao Bhave, and Raja Mallasarja are the leading characters in Naikar’s novels. They are from royal families. So is Rani Chennamma. Chinnappagouda, Veerangouda, Shivaraj, Girija, Pratiba and others are a little more prominent and active than others around them, but this is not the case of Govindabhatta or Sharif in the village society. They are not so important and operative as Shetty or Mallamma.

One may gather varieties of experiences throughout one's life span. It is possible to develop a story with those materials, keeping in mind the coherence of idea and theme. But this certainly calls for a careful and artistic selection of actions. Characterization too is done with meticulous care. For ex, Rani Chennamma is presented lively as Jhansirani Laxmibai would have been presented to us later.

Naikar’s socio-political account of the changing rural society is very realistic. At the same time it is clear from the conversations of different characters and authorial comments that these changes are not isolated incidents, rather in some way connected with the main socio-political waves of India.

According to Naikar, the main theme of the fiction is an ordinary account of romantic nationalism and a mere touch of sub-stories of socio-political services. These two motives have been personified in the central characters – Bhaskararao Bave and Rani Chennamma, but have not at all attained artistic credibility. But if we view it from other standpoints, we can find that the novelist has perceptibly presented, the new trends of a society.

In Naikar’s novels and stories no single character assumes the importance of protagonist. Here life is not seen through one’s own experience. The novelist directly presents incidents involving many characters as a collective. Bhaskararao Bhave and Sharif Saheb are such phenomena. These two characters have their importance with the community. About Arnold Bennett’s novel *The Old Wives’ Tale*, Walter Allen says ‘the novel is the history of a community as
well as the two old women.’ This remark is equally applicable to The Queen of Kittur.

But in the study of craftsmanship we cannot do justice to the novelist only by grouping his novels on the basis of plots and characterization. Every literary composition is unique with its traits. Every carefully written novel presents its own separate problem in method and technique, narrative devices, style, arrangement, some trick of contrast or comparison. So Naikar had his different problems of presentation. Chapter 1 of the thesis provides a theoretical framework for the thesis.

Naikar’s historical novel The Sun behind the Cloud is a commendable attempt to carve such a niche in the country’s history for one such Indian nationalist hero, namely, Bhaskararao Bhave of Naragund, popularly known as Babasaheb. A Naikar’s critic by the name S. John Peter Joseph observes:

*The Sun Behind the Cloud* may not be as great as Leo Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*, which deals with Napoleon’s invasion of Russia or Boris Pasternak’s *Dr. Zhivago*, which describes the failure of the Russian Revolution of 1917 or Charles Dickens’ *A Tale of Two Cities* which portrays what happened in Paris and London during the French Revolution or Maragaret Mitchell’s *Gone With the Wind* which depicts American Civil War in the 19th century or Sir Walter Scott’s *Ivanhae*, a medieval historical romance but it is in no way inferior to any authentic historical novel for it has a universal appeal as found in classics and in its own unique way it brings the past back to the present and makes it live before the readers. (Joseph 38)

Chapter 2 of the thesis is an in-depth study of *The Sun Behind the Cloud*.

Basavaraj Naikar’s second novel *Light in the House* is a perfect hagiography. The Deccan Plateau produced so many religious leaders in modern times (British reign) such as Ramanashri, Raghavendraswami of Mantralaya,
Sharif Saheb of Shisunala – the character in Naikar’s *Light in the House* acts as if a light in human mind. Sharif Sahib is considered as a saint-poet. He is our veritable Kabir of Karnataka.

Chapter 3 of the thesis is an in-depth study of *Light in the House*.

*The Queen of Kittur*, as an artistic creation, has reached a rarity of brilliance that has endowed it a prominence in the whole reign of Karnataka novels. The writer has presented a living picture of Rani Channamma with the help of superb story telling. The description of Kittur reminds us of Hardy with his pen on the portraiture of Egdon Heath in *The Return of the Native* and Victor Hugo in *Toilers of the Sea*. But in his description of nature in *The Queen of Kittur* the writer’s self-enjoyment cannot fail our appreciation. In this novel, while one moves from these stories of our earth to those of the world, one is filled not with a suspicion but with a willing suspension of disbelief. The whole history of Kittur forms the genesis.

While writing on the life of the people of the lower strata Naikar has never imposed the sophisticated ideals and sentiments. This fact shows his conscious mind as a novelist. The myths and beliefs, concepts and conventions of the Kannadigas have been narrated in the tone of their faith. Considering its superb artistic appeal Dr N. S. Gundur remarks *The Queen of Kittur* is “a unique and
original piece of literature. The story has an easy flow but at the same time the characters in it are with their individual specialties.” (Gundur 35)

Chapter 4 of the thesis is an in-depth study of *The Queen of Kittur.*

Naikar has written four novellas and two books of short stories.

The novella on Jakkanna is too much poetic in its arrangement of plot, theme and narratives. The plot and character are so complicated as is expected in a novel. Its over-simplification can be felt if we compare it to *Tamas Tapasya* of Tarashankar, though full of too many actions, some of which are of similar nature, is still a very compact writing.

We must not lose sight of 'beautiful inchoateness and aesthetic awareness' shown in Rayanna, *the Patriot and Other Novellas* and other later novels of Naikar. S. G. Vaidya has rightly pointed out the artistic success of the novella *Rayanna, the Patriot* in the following lines.

The nature and society have appeared in *Rayanna, the Patriot and Other Novellas* in their totality and the murmuring of time flow of time has been grasped in the characters of Kanakadasa and Mallasarja. These qualities certainly establish the literary beauty of his novellas. (Vaidya 42)

Naikar’s two more novellas on Raja Mallasarja and Kanakadas are otherwise analysed in *The Queen of Kittur* and elsewhere.

Eminent critic Christopher Rollson in his article “The Tale as Useful Artefact” adds a new dimension to Naikar criticism. The specifically Indian typicality of Naikar’s writing has been finely brought out in an essay published in 2002 by Asha Choubey, “*The Thief of Nagarhalli and Other Stories: Essentially Indian Stories.*” Taking an authenticist approach, Choubey argues that Naikar’s ten stories may be interpreted in terms of a psychological model. This is not that of Freud or Lacan, but the eminently Indian model of the nine rasas (emotions or states of spirit), as first adumbrated in the classical Sanskrit treatise on the theatre, the *Natyasastra* of Bharata.
Naikar’s second book *The Rebellious Rani of Belavadi and Other Stories* is as vivid as the first. This collection aims at portraying the Dharwad region. Bhagabat Nayak observes:

Through his thematic apperception it seems that Naikar is both directly and indirectly influenced by the Bloomsbury Group of the Mysore Generation consisting of T.S. Satyan, the photographer; R.K. Narayan, the distinguished Indian English novelist; R.K. Laxman, one of the greatest cartoonists of the world; C.D. Narsimhaiah, the most celebrated English teacher and critic of his generation; Doreswamy Iyengar, the finest Veena player of his generation; B.S, Kesavan, pioneering librarian and historian of publishing; A.K. Ramanujan the great poet, folklorist and translator. Naikar is very sensitive to history and culture and specific in his narrative techniques. With a sound historical sense embedded in historical perspective some of his stories look like historical biographies in his fictive world. (Nayak 33)

S.G. Vaidya divides these stories as historical and contemporary. Of the twelve stories three stories may be listed under the first category, namely, “The Rebellious Rani of Belavadi,” “Blood Bath” and “The Golden Servant.” The rest of them deal with contemporary issues.

Different critics have commented on Naikar’s novellas and short stories. A situation which startles a middle class Karnataka family, hackneyed life may be very common and ordinary to a European. The conduct of an uncivilized tribal people is unexpected from a man of the civilized society.

Dramatic conflict between interests appears in Naikar's novels in many ways. One time it is among the feudal families, sometime between the zamindars and industrialists (*Blood Bath*) which is sometimes reflected even in the attitude of husband and wife (*Blood for Blood*). Again, it is between traditional values and practices and ideals and trends (*The Thief of Nagarahalli*)
and Other Stories), somewhere between physical urge and conscience. Possibly for the fact that the life of north Karnataka during his days was full of such conflicts. Naikar included them in his writings. As a result, sometime Naikar is not so careful in bringing out the far-reaching implications of life in a very impressive way as in producing dramatic parts quite effectively.

Chapter 5 is an in-depth study of Naikar’s novellas and two books of short stories.

In regional literature, the locale is conceived of as a subject of interest in itself and much attention is devoted to its description. The classic cases are Hardy’s Egdon Heath, R. K. Narayan’s Malgudi and Raja Rao’s Kanthapura. Naikar has presented a landscape of North Karnataka through descriptions of its geographical and other natural features in different parts of The Sun Behind the Cloud, Light in the House, The Queen of Kittur, Rayanna, the Patriot and Other Novellas etc

In Naikar’s short stories we come across certain descriptions that reflect regional topography. Here we take two more examples to mark Naikar’s power of drawing pen-picture including fine imageries. The description about Nagarahalli scattered in the stories of that book are an example. The Belavadi kingdom had three hundred and sixty villages in its possession. Out of these five villages like Lingadalli, Bisanalli, Hulikatti, Gudikatti and Nadagondikoppa were granted to the temple of Lord Virabhadra of Belavadi city, to cover the expenses on upkeep, regular puja and fairs of the temple. Like a relief map, Naikar’s novels and stories are drawn with clear and prominent lines. He has no leanings towards suggestiveness or for the picture that absorbs the spectator in thinking and imagination with its light shades and outlines. He does not present a hazy twilight but makes everything vivid. For this reason the reader of Channamma novel and many other writings of Naikar need not prepare himself as he is reading intensely drawn attention. No Indian English regional novel elaborately describes the history of Zamindar families, intricate legal matters,
agricultural processes and various terminologies, information about fairs and festivals, usual daily activities of different groups of tribes and castes etc.

The conclusion part of the thesis sums up the arguments of all the chapters. There is a select bibliography too.

**Language and Style:**

Basavaraj Naikar's earlier novels are written in spoken and simple language. In *Rayanna, the Patriot and Other Novellas* and in later novels he has depended, mainly, on standard spoken language. But the lucidity of and expertise in language commanded by the urban-minded writers of Shashi Deshpande, Amiav Ghosh and others following the rut of the style of Birbal, is absent in Naikar's writing. It is Naikar who provided the male and female characters with their own words according to their differences. The songs of Sharif Saheb and Kanakadas have greatly enriched the atmosphere of the story.

Regionality in some of Naikar’s novels is closely related to this pattern of fairy tale. The life of Virabhadranaayaka, Sharif’s parents, Bangarshetty, Prema, Manjula, etc., with their superstitions and strange practices appear to be of a different world. They remind us of fairy tale by their activities inspired by unrestrained jealousy and anger, love and hatred, crookedness and cruelty. Naikar's heroes Bhaskarrao Bhave, Malla, and Ganga possess a wholesome personality. Actually, some of Naikar’s novels have nearly attacked the height of history in their literary appeal. An authentic history with its number of sub-plots, varieties of incidents and characters present a panorama of life.

After an analysis of Naikar’s literary methods and style in this part, we have realised that he had to find out his own techniques and form appropriate to the vast canvas of the living and society of North Karnataka. Here the story is not set into usual stereotyped plot and structure. In most novels the characters
are almost of equal importance, even the minor characters have a definite notable contribution.

But Naikar's concern in retreating into the rural landscape must be viewed in terms of his association with his life at Naragund and at Dharwad later. His portrayal of Navalgund is imbued with a strong sense of personal attachment.

In his writings there is an attempt to present what is declining in a world presently characterized by conflicting interests. Perhaps the predominant strain in the regional novel is engaged with preserving the organic unity of the past. We find writers expressing anxiety over the fact of disintegration of the region as manifested in the Indian regional novels.
References:


