INTRODUCTION

Indian English literature, like many of its counterparts in other continents, has been thriving consistently as a distinct literature. Foremost in this vast area, poetry and novel have attracted the attention of creative writers and scholars for further writing and research. Since English has proved to be indispensable as a link language and established itself as the library language, it becomes obligatory on our part to nourish and nurture this indigenous genre in all its manifestations.

When we think of Indian English novels the names of R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao come to our mind instantly, because these writers have immensely contributed to this genre through their original writings. They have always been the spokesman of their times; the mouth-piece of the society in which they have lived and survived. Moreover, these three great novelists have also been widely discussed in critical quarters and research dissertations.

The next generation has been glorified by the advent of two great novelists, namely, Shabani Shattcharya and Manohar Malgonkar in the Indo-English literary scene. They have lived through the trauma and tragedy of independence and partition. Both of them have witnessed the agony of India under the foreign dominion. They have lived during the period of slavedom and have felt deeply the pangs of the birth
of a new nation. Their works are but a true reflection of the socioeconomic, political, religious and cultural history of India inasmuch as they have always depicted the social realities of India in the Pre and Post Independence period.

In this project attempt has been made to analyse the social consciousness in the major works of Bhabani Bhattacharya and Manohar Malgonkar. Since social changes are the logical outcome of the process of political, economic, religious and cultural developments in a given society in a specific period, an attempt has been made to depict the major political and economic changes that took place prior to independence. Under this rapid changing scenario a good number of creative writers, poets, philosophers, novelists and political activists have emerged and contributed richly to the Indian English novels in particular and literature in general. The dissertation also makes a close probe in order to project the major Western influences on these artists.

An analysis of social consciousness naturally leads us to show how far the artists have been successful in depicting the social crises, its diseases and maladies leading to such changes. In other words, this dissertation makes an attempt to analyse each of the major works so far as
social elements are concerned. Considerable emphasis has been laid on the social problems with all their multifaceted forms which have been projected through real life, characters and situations in the novels of these two artists.

Besides, the dissertation also makes an attempt to study the various similarities and differences between these two artists. Every great artist makes a consistent attempt to reveal and identify the prevailing ethos of his time through his own consciousness of the society in which he lives. While delineating the major differences that exist between the two novelists, the thesis finally proceeds to locate the solutions they offer. As research projects now-a-days are viewed more in their relation to the interest of the society and the nation, the dissertation, by establishing the two novelists chiefly as the conscious centre of their age, aims primarily at creating fresh avenues for further research studies in the field of Indian fiction.