CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

An abundant output of Indian English literature and the elevated status it has achieved by winning many prestigious literary awards towards the end of the twentieth century is indicative of the widespread national and international recognition it has achieved over the period of time. The Indian English Novel, moreover, has now been widely acclaimed all over the world, as it has been successful in carving its own niche not only in the world of commonwealth literature but also in the ‘World literature’. Though the origin of Indian English literature as a whole is necessarily the English education and the introduction of British literature, the Indian English Novel emerged as a necessary outcome of its own story telling tradition and the tradition of English novel. As Prof. M. K. Naik in his Dimensions of Indian English Literature rightly points out,

One of the most notable gifts of English education to India is prose fiction for though India was probably a fountain head of story-telling, the novel as we know today was an importation from the West. (Naik 99)

Indian readers were well acquainted with the form of short stories in the form of the didactic stories like “Hitopdesh”, “Jatakkathas” and “Panchatantra” and the narratives like “Dashkumar-Charita” and “Kadambari” long before their introduction to western novels of Hugo, Scott and Dickens. However the primary motive of these stories was to interpret life by values and to make the readers perceive the same. The expression of historical sense or of social
relationships of man which has been the characteristic feature of the Western novel has never been found in Indian short stories.

The novel, in the modern sense came to India only after its contact with the British during the colonial rule. As in the West the rise of the novel was associated with the growth of the middle class, in India too, a new class of intellectuals, in consequence of the British contact rose to share its awareness of time and place through novels. However the attitudes of these intellectuals took time to make their thoughts and feelings purposive. Novel being the most powerful and popular form of literature was chosen as the most suitable medium for the exploration of experiences and ideas in their own context.

H.M. Williams in his book Indo-Anglian literature: 1800 to 1900 says, “It is undoubtedly the most popular vehicle for the transmission of Indian ideas to the wider English speaking world.”(Williams 109). As a result of the significant contribution made by Indian English novelists, even the critics all over have appreciated and awarded the due recognition to the Indian English Novel.

Like other forms of literature, in the early phase i.e. 1864 to 1930 Indian novels in English were largely imitative and immature. They idealized the past of India by way of presenting incredibly capable heroes. Though their achievement in this phase is meager, it is not totally insignificant. The first Indian novel in English Rajmohan’s Wife was written by Bankimchandra Chatterjee in 1864. Due to the strong hold of history and tradition on Indian minds, most of the novels in the early phase were historical romances. Moreover most of the early novelists were not conscious of the arrival of a new genre in Indian Literature.
Though the first Indian novel in English was published in 1864, the Indo-Anglian novel made its first significant start in the nineteen thirties. Since the thirties, it has successfully established itself in the Indian soil. It has also acquired a status of meaningful independent existence in the main stream of the Indian literature. The second phase of Indo-Anglian novel includes the novels written between 1930 and 1970. This phase comprises both the pre-independent and post-independent periods in Indian social and literary scenario.

After the First World War Indian English novel turned more realistic and less idealized. The old idealistic attitudes towards tradition started changing. Some of the attitudes were arbitrarily rejected. This consciousness of the change became the base of Indo-Anglian fiction. It started reflecting the contemporary social reality and changing national traditions.

Instead of Gods and Goddesses the novelists started writing about the humble and the poor and in place of symmetrical uniformity they started appreciating the strength and freedom of the individual in the society. Historical romances were replaced by the realistic novels. And then only the novel in its true sense was born.

In the 1930s Indian novel became a mirror to reflect the contemporary society. The study of the Indian novels in English from 1930 to 1950 reveals that writers of this period discovered a whole new world in Indo-English fiction. They examined minutely the Indian sensibility and exposed the foibles of the Indian way of life. Since the primary aim of the writers of the second phase (which includes the writers selected for the present research) was the portrayal of the contemporary society, it would be more convincing to take a comprehensive view of the social background against which these novels were written.
Literature of every country is bound to reflect the social and political conditions in the past and in the present. In the context of Indian English Literature, the struggle for independence was such a significant event, that it was bound to influence the ideology of every socially conscious writer. Especially the Gandhian era made the common man plunge into the freedom struggle with all his might, forgetting his poverty and misery. During this period, there ran a parallel struggle of freedom against the social evils such as the caste system, superstitions, untouchability, poverty, hunger and exploitation.

India was by and large an agricultural country. But most of the peasants were living in the condition of poverty and were at the mercy of the landlords and the money lenders. The laws of the land were in favour of the landlords and money lenders. The condition of the landless people in the village was miserable. Many of the farm labourers migrated to cities to work as coolies, domestic servants, railway porters, rikshaw pullers or factory workers and were exploited wherever they went. The plight of the coolies on tea-estates and coffee plantation was even worse as the plantation farms resembled jails. The wives of the workers were entirely at the mercy of the white managers. Indian soldiers in the British Army, as a rule, were the first victims of enemy’s artillery.

The society was divided into different religions, castes and subcastes. In the course of time the caste system had become rigid and even the untouchables were divided into subcastes. Sweepers formed the lowest caste in the hierarchy. Untouchables were neither allowed to draw water from public wells nor were they allowed to go to the temples. They had to eat the remnants from the kitchens of the higher class. Brahmins were at the top in this hierarchy with the priest class
at its pinnacle. The village Mahant, considered to be the custodian of religion, had the power to excommunicate the so-called offenders from the social and religious fold.

Sadhus, sanyasis and fakirs were respected by the common man; however some scoundrels among the sadhus used to exploit the rural folks. The priests were believed to possess supernatural powers by which they could cure the diseases of their devotees. The religious conventions and social traditions were so strict that it was immoral to break them. Social taboos were to be strictly observed and various kinds of superstitions and beliefs were blindly believed in. The condition of the women was pitiable and the worst. There were child marriages, denial of basic human rights, freedom and education to women. Different kinds of acts of cruelty and atrocities were the common fate of women.

The period from the 1930s to the 1950s is hailed as the period of the Indian renaissance. Indian struggle for political freedom running parallel to the struggle for social freedom inspired the Indian writers. No Indian writer writing in that period could fail to reflect this social and political upsurge. Indian writers in English had the additional advantage of western liberal education compared to the regional writers. They now realized that they should stop entertaining their colonial masters and seek strength of their own cultural sensibility through socio-economic experience.

In the 1930s the novel stuck deep roots in Indian soil. With the new social and cultural awareness the novelists started exploring and interpreting the Indian sensibility by choosing the contemporary themes. They began to understand the relationship between man and his surrounding in a new and realistic manner. They started portraying the Indian peasants and toiling masses. They shifted their focus to the
underprivileged, the economically exploited, and the socially oppressed and politically subjugated classes.

There came a sudden flowering of Indian fiction in English in the 1930s. It was the period during which Gandhi became the foremost leader not only of the political but also of the social movement. Because of Gandhi the Indian struggle for independence percolated to the grassroots of Indian society. There was a synthesis of the East and the West in the Gandhian thought. This synthesis made a deep impact on the Indian English writers as all of them were aware of the western thoughts and literary traditions. They found in Gandhism the framework for their creative writings.

Gandhism is not a closed system or dogma like Communism. Vinoba Bhave believes that, if communism is a solid and imposing structure of granite, Gandhism is an ever changing amoeba. For Gandhi, national realizations included the end of the political exploitation. He wanted to remove social inequalities and abuses like untouchability and caste discrimination. He wanted to eradicate poverty from the society. He was also of the opinion that the large scale industry was the root cause of the exploitation of people. He warned the people against the evils of modernization. He proposed the art of simple living benefiting all and exploiting none. Though he believed in religion at heart, he was primarily a humanist. Hence when he fought against the British, there was not any kind of hatred in his heart for them. Gandhian thought presented man not as a member of a particular religion or a caste but as a member of the entire human community, sharing the sufferings and predicament in the modern society. It compelled the writers to shift their attention from romanticism to realism. They had to take a serious note of the changing picture of India stirred by Gandhian thoughts. Gandhi
influenced Indian writers directly through his writings and indirectly through his political and social movements.

As a result, the Indian English writers wrote their own experiences of the crisis and the tensions of the class struggle, social discrimination, communal frenzy and corruption in the bureaucracy. They made common man their protagonists and made him stand against their oppressors. In a number of novels we find farmers raising their voice against zamindars, labourers against landlords, factory workers against factory owner and a virtuous woman against a ruthless, hard-hearted man. There has been a conscious and deliberate shift from the urban to the rural life. There is an implied contrast between the urban luxury and sophistication on one hand and the rural modes and manners on the other.

Indian novelists in general and women novelists in particular began to treat women as legitimate subjects for their social novels. They made them join their counterparts in their struggle against ignorance, superstitions and backwardness. Women novelists made them struggle to break through the set pattern of sexuality and sensuality to rediscover their identity. Earlier woman was not supposed to have any role of her own in the society. Women novelists portrayed her as a human being capable of playing positive role in the society.

In the earlier phase of Indian English Literature Indian woman is presented as an embodiment of endurance, understanding and sacrifice, a silent sufferer, as a custodian of Indian culture. Her virtue is more valued than her beauty. But the generation next novelists i.e. from 1950 to 1970 pictured her as a victim of barbarous cruelty of men. They made her rise against the male domination and portrayed her as a free thinking woman claiming her life to be her own.
Some of the writers shifted their focus from external social issues to the exploration of the individual’s internal world. The post independent novelists began their quest for individual identity. Male and female psyche became the subject of analysis for the novelists. The tradition of explaining the interior world of an individual was started in the later part of the second phase but was developed in the third phase of Indian English novels.

In the third phase that begins after 1970, an individual’s quest for a personal meaning in life became the major theme. Their forte was the exploration of the limitless depths of mind and the hidden contours of the human psyche. They renounced the larger world in favour of the inner man. To seek and assert his identity is the greatest challenge before these writers. The dispossessed person’s search for his identity is the major theme of their novels. While seeking his identity a writer forges his national identity. Their search for identity takes two main directions - philosophical and sociological. The loss of identity often results in alienation. As a result alienation in its comprehensive sense has become a recurrent theme in Indo- Anglian novels.

Modern novelists show a radical departure from what was written by their predecessors. Due to their experiments in technique and language we find spectacular novelty and variety in modern themes. There is history, mythology, family relationship, bureaucracy, politics, sex, feminism, horror, suspense, racism, fantasy and what not. This variety has attracted not only the Indian but also the global audience. They have tried to portray the convincing picture of human existence. They also attempt to grip the Indian sensibility in the new pressures, new challenges and new aspects of life.
After the brief survey of the social scenario in the second phase and a glance at the themes handled by the novelists in the third stage (after 1970), it is necessary for the present research to review the major novels and their major themes in the second phase i.e. 1930 to 1970. Though the novelists selected for the present research continued writing even after 1970, the present study is restricted to the novels that belong only to the second phase. As the present research aims at an enquiry into the three major themes of Poverty, Hunger and Exploitation in the novels of only three novelists, a bird’s eye view to all other contemporary novelists and the themes explored by them would present a more elaborate picture of the thematic make up of the Indian English Novels.

The famous Indian trio Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R. K. Narayan made a significant contribution to the early Indo-English fiction. Their emergence in the English fiction ushered in a new era as they gave a new dimension to it.

Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004) is the first writer who found sympathy for the Indian ‘underdogs’. The protagonists of his novels are all anguished, hungry but human. The sweeper, the peasant, the plantation labourer, the city worker, the sepoy all spring up alive in his novels. Anand’s fictional output is massive. Till the last day of his life he protested against all kinds of oppression and exploitation.

R. K. Narayan, (1935-1999) a south Indian writer started his career as a writer with Mulk Raj Anand. He created his own world of Malgudi, an imaginary fictional South Indian village. His characters, though the inhabitants of Malgudi do not represent local or Indian sensibility only but also a human sensibility. He does not involve himself much into political, social or economical problems of the day. Narayan’s first novel Swami and Friends (1935), in fact a novella, can
be called a novel of character that depicts the life of Swami, almost like a myth.

*The Dark Room* (1931) is a study of domestic disharmony due to extra-marital relationship of a husband and his wife’s revolt against him and her surrender to the situation later.

In *Bachelor of Arts* (1936) a disappointed lover turned sadhu’s returning home followed by his marriage and the subsequent death of his wife which leaves him desperate. *The English Teacher* (1945) is the continuation of the story of the hero in *Bachelor of Arts*. The first half deals with the death of his wife and the second with her resurrection and her reunion with him forever. *Mr. Sampath* (1949) tries to justify his longing for the second marriage without feeling apologetic, by referring to the religious provisions for polygamy.


Raja Rao, the third of the great trio, has a limited output to his credit, such as *Kanthapura* (1936), *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960)
The Cat and Shakespeare, Comrade Kirilov (1976) and The chessmaster and his Moves (1988). Kanthapura revolve around the theme of the impact of Gandhism on an Indian village in the Gandhian era. The Serpent and the Rope is a quest for self knowledge and self fulfillment. The Cat and Shakespeare is a sequel to The Serpent and the Rope. It is not a mere fantasy but Raja Rao’s spiritual experience. Comrade Kirilov (1987) is a political novel and a critique of the life and mission of the Indian communism. The Chessmaster and his Moves (1988) is one more philosophical novel, written in the last phase of his career.

After 1950 Indian writers’ interest moved from public to private sphere. They began to search for the self in individuals. They tried to discover the real inner self. This tradition initiated by Anita Desai was carried forward by Arun Joshi and Nayantara Sehgal and enriched by Salman Rushdie and his contemporaries. But it does not necessarily undermine the social issues which were found in the writings of Manohar Malgonkar, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Khushwant Singh, Bhabani Bhattacharya and Kamala Markandaya who consolidated the tradition of the Great Trio.

Manohar Malgonkar’s first novel Distant Drum (1960) depicts the clash between the military and the civil life, as well as between the army and the political life. His Combat of Shadows (1962) set in tea estate in Assam is a story of a love triangle of an estate manager, a hockey player and an Anglo-Indian girl. Princes (1963) exposes both the strength and weaknesses in Indian feudalism. A Bend in the Ganges (1964) represents a generation lost in the forties. Spy in Amber (1971) is a thriller and The Devil’s Wind (1978) is a historical novel.
Ruth Prawer Jhabvala shows how the selfish people violate all norms of social values to earn money and wealth. She has written ten novels. Among her ten novels, *To Whom She Will* (1955), presents a pathetic picture of the plight of the refugees in New Delhi after the partition. *The Nature of Passion* (1956) her second novel projects a horrifying picture of the rich people in Delhi. *Esmond in India* (1958) and *A Backward Place* (1965) deal with, the East-West encounter. *The Householder* (1960) is a domestic comedy based on a conflict between the tradition and the modernity. *Get Ready for Battle* (1962) is a war against post independent class of the rich amongst the vast ocean of the poor. *A New Dominion* (1972), a tragicomic novel again deals with the East-West encounter. *Heat and Dust* (1975) won her Booker award and throws light on the lack of any qualitative improvement in human existence in this country.

Khushwant Singh (1915), a versatile writer, is remembered always for his first novel *Train to Pakistan* (1956), which is his masterpiece. It is a realistic novel based on the horrors of the Indo-Pak partition. It is the picture of hard and harsh facts of inhuman brutalities. *I shall Not Hear the Nightingale* (1959) deals with the fortunes of a Sikh family, their life and customs. *Delhi* (1990) is a vivid picture of Hindu Sikh riot in Delhi after Indira Gandhi’s assassination. *The Company of Women* (1999) depicts the life of the rich reflecting deteriorating social conditions.

The partition of India was one of the major themes of the post independence period. We find the pangs of partition in B. Rajan’s *The Dark Dancer* (1959) Balwant Singh Anand’s *Cruel Interlude*, Raj Gill’s *The Rape*, Bhisham Sahani’s *Tamas* and Chaman Nahal’s *Azadi* (1975). What Dr. D. R. More says about the partition novels in his *The Novels on the Indian Partition* is noteworthy. He says,
The partition novels are political novels, a species of the historical novels, grounded in political realism of the recent past...The partition, a historical event of magnitude, has been grappled with by the Indian novelists writing in English and other regional languages. (More 259)

Exploitation of women has been one of the common themes in Indian English novels. Post independent novelists like Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai and Shashi Deshpande present the themes of exploitation of women and their struggle against it. They try to break the age-old pattern of sexuality and sensuality and in the process discover themselves as human beings.


*Cry the Peacock* presents woman as a victim of the superstitious beliefs of Astrology. *The Voices in the City* (1965) and *Where Shall We Go This Summer* unfolds the story of atrocities on women. *Bye-Bye Blackbird* (1971) presents the East-West encounter. It is a story of a woman who is fed up with the children and stifled by the cruelty and callousness of urban life. *Fire on the Mountain*, *The Clear Light of Day* and ‘Fasting and feasting’ present stories of woman’s loneliness, nostalgia, and exploitation.

Arun Joshi articulated moral complexities of human life. The characters in all his novels are lonely, cut off from their kindred in the

Nayantara Sehgal, a niece of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was a political columnist. But she did not favour any political creed in her novels. Most of her novels are political. Her first novel *Time to be Happy* (1957) deals with political activities of 1942. *This Time of Morning* (1965) portrays many political figures of her time *Storm in Chandigarh* (1969) shows the aftermath of the division of the Punjab into two states. *The Day in Shadow* (1971) deals with the problem of divorce and disintegration of the marriage system in India. *A Situation in New Delhi* (1977) deals with the Naxalite movement and political unrest after the death of Pandit Nehru. *Plans for Departure* (1986) is a historical novel.

Besides these major writers, there are a host of other writers who made a noteworthy contribution to Indian English Novel. Humayun Kabir in *Men and Rivers* (1945) deals with fatality in human relations. Sudin N. Ghosh’s *The Vermilion Boat* (1953) is a fantasy with an undercurrent of serious intention. G.V. Desani's *All about H Hatter* (1948) is a narrator hero’s journey through life cutting across classes, professions and continents and accumulation of a variety of impressions through it. Justice Anant Narayan’s *The Silver Pilgrimage* (1961) is an account of the journey of a Prince on foot to Kashi in mediaeval India. Dilipkumar Roy’s *Miracles Do Still Happen* is based on the East-West encounter. K.M. Munshi’s *The
Lure of Power is set in the period between two world wars. Anand Lall’s The House of Adampur presents upper class aristocracy in Gandhian age.

Thus after a glance at the development of the novel tradition in Indian English literature, it can be observed that there is a considerable variety of themes in the novels after 1970. It is during the eighties that Indian novelists earned recognition and acclaim in the western world. The eighties and the nineties have been the most productive and eventful decade of Indian English Literature in terms of quantity and quality. The loss of identity, the search for identity and alienation have been recurring themes of the modern novels. Great masterpieces were created by the highly creative minds. Salman Rushdie’s Midnight’s Children (1980), which became an international bestseller, can be called a turning point in the history of Indian English Literature. It is followed by his Shame and Satanic Verses. Vikram Seth’s A Suitable Boy and The Golden Gate, Amitav Ghosh’s The Circle of Reason, The Shadow Lines, Calcutta Cromosomes’, Upamajnu Chatterjee’s The English August, Allen Sealey’s Trotter Nama, Rohintan Mistry’s Such a Long Journey and Fine Balance, Shashi Tharoor’s The Great Indian Novel are the internationally acclaimed novels written during this period. As they followed the footsteps of Salman Rushdie, they are considered as the children of Rushdie.

Yet another group of novelists made significant contribution to Indian English fiction. It consists of Shashi Deshpande who wrote The Binding Vine, A Matter of Time, The Dark Holds No Terror, If I Die Today etc. , Gita Mehata published her Raj Karma Cola and The River Sutra. Nina Sibal’s Yatra, Arundhati Roy’s The God of Small Things, Namita Gokhale’s Passions and Paro and Himalayan Love
Story, Boman Desai’s *Memory of Elephant*, Balraj Khanna’s *A Nation of Fools*, Deepankar Roy’s *Hell Bent*, Shobha De’s *Socialite Evenings* and Rama Mehata’s *Inside the Haveli* attracted the attention of the entire English speaking world. Indra Sinha’s *Animal’s People* (2007) based on Bhopal tragedy deals with poverty, hunger and other man-made calamities which fall heavily on human life. Madhavi Nikam in her “Theme of Hunger in Indra Sinha’s *Animal’s People*” says,

*Animal’s People* is a protest against industrialization. Indra Sinha lays emphasis on the raw horrors that makes the reader realize the effects of industrialization on the poor…Poverty and hunger debase humanity to an unfortunate level. The rich lose their conscience but the poor show great humanity and dignity. *Animal’s People* reminds us Bhabani Bhattacharya’s *So Many Hungers*! (Nikam 65)

Thus it can be concluded that the journey of Indian English novel which begins from Bankimchandra Chatterjee’s *Raj Mohan’s Wife* (1964) to Indra Sinha’s *Animal’s People* (2007), has passed through tough times and it required a tremendous expertise and enterprise on the part of the authors to establish Indian English novel as a genre of repute. It started with the glory and the grandeur of the great and turned to the liberty and resistance of the common. Initially they imitated the voices of their masters but later turned to their own brothers’ and neighbours’ voices and finally to their own inner voices. Through the novels written in the different phases we get the changing picture of the Indian political, social, economic and psychological world.

Arthur Koestler in his *The Yogi and the Commissar* expresses his views about the novel as a form of literature He says,
The perfect novel, then indeed presupposes a totally open window and that the author should have all embracing knowledge of the essential currents and facts of the ideas and theories of his time. This knowledge is not for actual use - that would produce an encyclopedia not a novel. It is for use by implication. It has to act as a catalytic agent, as the Saliva in process of creative assimilation. Without it characters will be distorted and the story arbitrary like Victorian plot. The act of creation presupposes omniscience. (Koestler 32)

The Study of Indian English novel in the light of this quotation enhances our perception of novel as a form.

While analyzing a text critically it is not always considered necessary to look for similarities between the writer's life and his fiction, between the people he meets and the characters he creates. However, this approach of relating the works of writers biographically and sociologically proves profitable in assessing the fiction created by the committed writers. It appears more convincing especially when we study the fiction of the expatriate writers like Kamala Markandaya and Bhabani Bhattacharya who have been called native-aliens, and Mulk Raj Anand who has been called propagandist humanist from the West. It is essential to see how the novelists like Kamala Markandaya and Bhabhani Bhattacharya living thousand of miles away from the Indian shore produced novels rich in Indian sensibility. It shows that though they lived abroad their consciousness was deeply rooted in Indian soil and that the criterion of domicile only cannot confirm his or her Indianness. To see how deeply they are rooted in the Indian sensibility a scrutiny of the lives and works of all the three writers is a necessary prerequisite.

Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004)
Mulk Raj Anand was born, as a third child among the five, in a well to do family at Peshawar in 1905. Anand’s father, mother and the birthplace made lasting impressions in shaping his consciousness.

As Anand’s father Lal Chand Anand was an educated person, he provided his son with an access to books and insisted upon him the importance of school. As an army officer he had to move his family from one place to another. Anand's father became critical towards Hinduism as he was brought up in a missionary school. He joined Arya Samaj, a critical movement of Hindu-religion. Lal Chand was responsible for his son’s skeptical view towards Hinduism. As a child his father was his hero and he took pride even in some of his dubious qualities.

However Anand’s mother Ishwar Kaur was not educated and belonged to an orthodox peasant family. She had a blind faith in religion and was more gentle and pious than her husband. Anand developed a flair for reading the ancient Indian epics and mythology from his mother. His mother was well versed in folklore. Her recitals of songs, myths, tales and epics of Indian culture created in him an awareness of the richness of Indian Literature. Anand inherited his sense of compassion and sympathy for the lowly and the downtrodden from his peasant mother. In spite of this, her excessive religious enthusiasm and her superstitions developed in him a dislike for religion.

His early education in cantonment schools also developed a dislike for Indian culture and religion. The cantonment curricula had emphasis on English history, ideas and institutions. If there was anything Indian it was shown inferior to British. So Anand grew up hating everything Indian. Two incidents of his school life made a lasting impression on his personality. The first, the death of his cousin
Kaushalya, aged nine, when he was eleven and the second, the suicide of his aunt Devaki, as a result of her excommunication from an orthodox Hindu society. Anand quotes this tragic happening as an initial fire of his protest against caste, class and religion bound Hindu society.

Anand's birth place, Peshwar is also responsible to develop his skeptical views against religion. Peshawar had a multifaceted tradition. There was a confrontation of many cultures like Muslim, Buddhist, Sikh, Hindu and even Greeks and Roman. Anand did his college education at Khalasa College, Amritsar. During his college days he had an abrupt affair with a Muslim married woman, Yasmin that disturbed him for the time being. He was also further disturbed by his father’s inhuman and callous treatment to his mother. As a child, Anand had a sense of admiration for the British no less than that of his father. But when he got into his teens he began to realise the humiliating treatment given to the Indians by the British. His later hatred for the Sahibs added to his dislike for his father.

After a virtual emotional break up and his disjunction from his father, he decided to go to London for higher studies and research in Philosophy. Though his father disliked the idea, his mother financed him by selling her jewellery. With the financial help also from his Principal Lal Mohan and a poet friend Dr. Iqbal, in September 1925, at the age of 20, Anand went to London. His stay in London is viewed as a prototype of patterning the rest of his life. While in London, he registered himself at the University College as a research student for a Doctor's degree in Philosophy under the guidance of Prof. G. Dawes Hicks. In the beginning he could not cope up with his guide's intellectual exercise. His guide then advised him to go to a small village near London to work on his research where he came in contact
with his guide's daughter Irene. She liked his narratives and asked him
to write about his life story. On her request he wrote his confessions
which ran into 2000 pages. As both liked each other's company, he
expressed his love to her. She promised him to marry if he found a
publisher to publish his confession. The confession was modeled on
Rousseau's *Confessions*. During his continental trip with Irene, he
came across James Joyce's *Ulysses* and D.H. Lawrence's novels, and
the classical European past in Rome.

Anand’s academic pursuit, once disturbed by his involvement
with Irene, was further diverted by another social event that awoke his
social sensibility. He happened to have a first hand observation of a
coil miners' strike in England. His love for the common man made him
sympathize with the miners' cause. The miseries of the poor touched
upon a tender chord in his heart. During the strike he was assaulted for
supporting the workers. The strike was ruthlessly crushed by the
government. He came to realize the essential sameness of the lot of
common people everywhere in the world. He discovered the
connection between the British rule in India and the situation in Britain
itself. Incidentally around the same time, he came across an article
written by Karl Marx for the *New York Tribune* in 1853, which
presented a critique of the British imperialist domination of India. It
made him fully aware of the pangs of slavery and the need to break the
cycle of exploitation.

In his early days Anand established friendship with many
writers like Eric Gill, E. M. Forster and Bonamy Dobree. In the later
stage he had Dylan Thomas, Leonard Woolf, T. S. Eliot, Jack Lindsay,
George Orwell and H. G. Wells as his friends. As he faced financial
crisis during his London years he had to earn his living by working in
different places. While working in a Book Store he could read
Tolstoy, Goethe, Leonardo's note book, Henry James and James Joyce that made him plunge into an exciting world of ideas through books.

Like all his writer friends, Anand was sensitive to the stresses of his times. Though the European tradition influenced his intellectual make up, the whole of his emotional make up had been already influenced by the rich Indian tradition. Anand was influenced by Eric Gill, the sculptor whose views on capitalism and human equality were similar to those of his own. He felt kinship with Dickens and E. M. Forster but most of other intellectuals of England like Eliot and Lawrence did not influence him much.

Despite many extra academic involvements he pursued his studies slowly but surely and was doctored for his thesis on the Philosophy of Berkeley, Hume and Russell, in 1929. While writing Untouchable he read an article in Young India written by Gandhi, describing how he met Oka, a sweeper boy and looked after him. Impressed by this, Anand found Gandhi's narrative more truthful and authentic than his artificiality in Untouchable. Anand stayed in Sabarmati Ashram with the Mahatma for three months. Gandhi advised him to read Tolstoy's book on childhood, boyhood and youth as a model of sincere writing. Here Anand took off the mask of the Brown Sahib. He discarded the corduroy suit and necktie and started wearing kurta pyjamas. During his stay he revised the manuscript of his novel Untouchable.

He came back to London in 1933 and tried to publish his first novel Untouchable. But unfortunately for him, the offer was turned down by 29 publishers. Anand was so depressed that he contemplated to commit suicide. His plea was then accepted by the thirtieth publisher only when E. M. Forster wrote a preface for it. Thus Anand’s first novel Untouchable was published on 1st of May, 1935. The public
response was tremendous. It was criticized as a 'dirty book' by many but was also hailed as a classic by some critics in London.

The period between 1935 and 1945 was the most productive period in Anand's career as a novelist. He published *Coolie* (1935), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), *The Village* (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1940) and *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942) and *The Big Heart* (1945). He also published one collection of short stories under the title *The Barbers’ Trade Union and Other Stories* in 1944.

After his return to England, he maintained his relationship with the Indian League and aligned himself with Marxist socialism. He returned to London in 1939 with the very intention of going back to India to continue his work. But the outbreak of the War changed his plans. In London he tried his level best to influence the British public opinion in India's favour. Through the publication of *Letters on India* he attacked British colonialism and misrule in India. *Letters on India* infuriated his intellectual friends in London. He stayed in London, working with B.B.C. Eastern service from 1941 to 1945.

He returned to India in 1945. After staying in Lahore for one year he went on to Bombay. In Bombay he met Anil De Silva on whose advice he started the art magazine *MARG*. After his return to Bombay he remained busy in attending and organizing national and international conferences in India and abroad. Besides editing *MARG* he contributed to a host of other magazines and journals. He visited many countries as a representative of India. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1967 by the President of India for his distinguished service in the field of art and literature. His *Morning Face* won him Sahitya Academy Award in 1972.
Anand spent his old age at Khandala, a small hill station close to Bombay. Out of his royalties for his writings he purchased some landed property at Khandala. He founded a Charitable Trust 'Sarvodaya Sabha' and devoted his old age for humanistic cause. He preferred to spend his old age in a tiled roof cottage at Khandala rather than in Bombay or Delhi. The serenity of Sarvodaya Campus with its rustic simplicity fascinated him more than the commercialized metro cities. Mulk Raj Anand breathed his last on 28th Sept. 2004.

The present research aims at scrutinizing his novels Untouchable (1935), Coolie (1936), Two Leaves and a Bud (1937) and The Sword and the Sickle (1942), and The Road (1951) for the exploration of the themes of poverty, hunger and exploitation. Before beginning with the study, it would be in the fitness of things to take a thematic survey of his other novels too which do not directly deal with these themes as their major concern. The Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts (1938), a long short story of 66 pages, deals with the education system and its failure in the pre-independent India.

The trilogy The Village, Across the Black Waters and The Sword and the Sickle are popularly known as Lalu Trilogy. Lalu is the representative of Indian peasants. The Sword and the Sickle is being discussed in detail in the present thesis. Among the other two, The Village (1939), the first novel of the popularly known Lalu trilogy deals with the sufferings of peasants in India. Anand makes his protagonist Lalu fight against the absurd customs and traditions which hinder the progress of the villages.

Across the Back Waters (1941), a novel set in France, deals with the horrible effects of war on an individual. The Indian soldiers join the British and French army against Germany in the First World War. The Big Heart (1945) is Anand's seventh novel. It depicts a conflict
between the forces of tradition and modernity. Ananta, the hero, a coppersmith protests against the degradation of every kind. It deals with caste and class problems.

*Seven Summers, Morning Face* and *Confession of a Lover* are autobiographical novels. Through Krishan Chandar, the hero, he has presented three stages of his life. *Seven Summers* (1951) deals with his childhood from 1908 to 1914. The novel depicts the Indian society of the early phase of the 20th century and through sensitive consciousness of a child he throws light on some of the social issues of that period such as casteism, child marriage, superstition and faulty education system.

*Morning Face* (1968) won the Sahitya Akademi Award for 1971. It deals with his quest for identity which takes him to the new vistas of life and makes him fight against social tyrannies. In this confession he also talks about his sensuous relationship with women. *Confession of a Lover* (1976) covers the period of his student days as an undergraduate from 1921 to 1925. The fourth volume of his autobiography *The Bubble* deals with his five years story in England. It encompasses letters, diaries and journals. Through his letters to his friend Noor, his Dublin Diary, Journals to Irene and letters to his father, he tries to discover himself. Anand's project of *The Seven Ages of Man* a fictional biography of his remained incomplete. These last two publications *Little Plays of Mahatma Gandhi* (1991) and *Nine Moods of Bharata : Novel of Pilgrimage* (1998) were parts of his fifth volume of *The Seven Ages of Man*. Anand's writing of autobiographical novels cover almost 50 years of his life.

It would also be interesting to find out the themes of his other fictional works. His *Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953) is a story
of the extravagant life style of the Maharaja of one of the Indian states before its merger into the Indian union and of the evils of feudalism.

_Gauri_ (1960) is the only novel, with a woman protagonist. It expresses his concern about the sufferings of women in India. He not only voices the protest against ill-treatment of woman but also suggests what an Indian woman should do for her emancipation.

_The Death of a Hero_ (1964) is a true story which took place during the Pakistani invasion in Kashmir after the partition. In addition to these novels, Anand also published several collections of short stories. Among them are two volumes of Indian fairy tales and different collections of short stories. Some of them are _The Tractor and the Corn Goddess and Other Stories_ (1947), _Reflections of a Golden Bed and Other Stories_ (1953), _The Power of Darkness and Other stories_ (1966), _Between Tears and Laughter_ (1975). He has also written non-fiction on a wide range of themes including literature, politics, music, dance and art. His views on these subjects are spread over many collections. Some of them are _The Hindu View of Art_ (1933), _The Golden Breathe_ (1933), _Apology for Heroism_ (1975), _Homage to Tagore_ (1946), _Letters on India_ (1942) and _Marx and Engels on India_ (1939).

Anand has been criticized for his leaning towards Marxism. But Anand criticizes communism in _Apology for Heroism_ for denying "to people the very liberation and human rights for which the revolutions were fought" (Anand 184). He did not believe in any programme of political action. Instead he dedicated himself to the cause of humanity. He refused to be a votary of the dogmas of Marxism. In the earlier stage of his life he was attracted towards Marxism but later the influence of Tolstoy, Ruskin and Gandhi gave firm footing to his view on socialism. He was committed to humanism more than any other
‘isms’. He shows respect and love for man and faith in humanity. He believed that literary work has the power to move the world towards compassion and kindness.

He attacked many social evils like casteism, exploitation, suppression, religious fanaticism and inequality. For him social, economic and political freedom is essential for the emancipation of the downtrodden. War is the failure of human wisdom, feudalism is a terrible evil and ill-treatment to the woman is a barbaric act. He was of the opinion that Industrialization should be used for the welfare of the society. Education system should be reformed to suit the needs of the times and that casteism and untouchability are crimes against humanism.

Mulk Raj Anand is the most controversial Indian English writer in the history of Indian English writing. He has been criticized for his fictional and non-fictional writings. There are “nearly four hundred critical contributions published over seven decades that constitute the critical discourse on the writer’s work” (Riemenschneider 46). Some of the critics in the first generation of Anand’s critics call him ‘propagandist’ rather than ‘artist’. Anniah Gowda calls Anand’s work ‘propagandist writings’ and argues that Anand’s works must be grouped with “all the literature that is specially identified with Marxist revolutionaries in all countries” (Gowda 51). Some critics call him the champion of the downtrodden, for others he is a Christlike person embracing compassion, and for some he is a Dickens and for others he is an Orwell. Some call him ‘apostle of the poor and the weak’, some others say that Anand is a pure flame, so sincere and humane.
Bhabani Bhattacharya (1906-1989)

Bhabani Bhattacharya was born on November 10, 1906 at Bhagalpur, Bihar, in an educated Brahmin family. His father Promotho Bhattacharya was a civil servant at the time of Bhabani’s birth. He later on became a judge. His transferable job provided plenty of opportunities to his son for travelling around.

At the age of six he had been to Chapra, Ranchi and Puri. He studied in school at Puri, a seaside town on the Bay of Bengal. While at school he began to compose poems. He not only recited them before the formal gatherings but also published them in magazines. At this stage he was exposed to both English and Bengali literatures. He found himself comfortable with both the languages while writing on his own. As a young boy he was fascinated by the collected works of Shakespeare. He was only twelve when his writing appeared in the famous children’s magazine Mouchak.

For his higher education he got admission in Patna University. Initially he enrolled himself in the Science stream, as he wanted to be a great scientist like Jagdish Chandra Bose. But he graduated with honours in English Literature from Patna University, in 1927.

In his college education he was stimulated by Ibsen and Bernard Shaw. He read voraciously at college. The novels of Roman Rolland, Knut Hamsun, John Steinback, Sinclair Lewis, John Dos Passos and Upton Sinclair provided him with an adequate perspective for his writings. But in his teens he was not sure of his aptitudes and inclinations.

At the age of 19 he visited Shantiniketan. He won a prize in a literary competition held to select Tagore’s poems for the anthology ‘Chayanika’. He caught the attention of Tagore, who later became his
Gurudev. In fact it was a letter from Tagore expressing his warm appreciation of Bhattacharya’ writing that launched him on his writing career. After his graduation he went to London to pursue his literary studies. He sought admission in King’s college, London and joined History department for his master's degree. For his Ph.D. thesis he chose a topic related to socio-economic as well as political problems of the 19th century Bengal. In his thesis he traced many social evils and explained how callously they were tackled by the British authorities. He completed his Ph.D. in 1934 and took the degree from the University of London.

Bhattacharya also attended the London school of Economics where he studied under a political philosopher, Herald Laski, whose Marxist interpretations influenced him. While in London he became an active member of the Marxist Associated League which was working against British imperialism. His political associations aroused suspicion in the minds of British rulers.

In London he pursued his literary activities. He joined the junior P.E.N. club in London and associated himself with the progressive movement of the time. The western writers like Leo Tolstoy, Bernard Shaw and Ibsen influenced him and acquainted him with conscience of humanity. They also taught him to raise voice against all kinds of evil forces. Bhattacharya was also influenced by Dos Passos's quest for a just social order. His reading of Sinclair Lewis and Upton Sinclair made him aware of social injustice, exploitation and human degradation in the modern society. His study of history and readings of the western writers made him realise the humiliating position of his own people in India. It aroused his anger and made him decide to fight for human rights against imperialism through his works.
He returned to India in 1934. In 1935 he married Salia Mukherji. Her father encouraged him to write, as he saw great potential in his son–in-law. Salia, like her father gave an impetus to Bhattacharya's literary career. She was an extrovert, full of gusto and vitality. Bhattacharya, on the contrary, was an introvert, shy and modest. She used her energies and talents for enriching her husband's work. She helped him in the writing of his fiction. She provided facts for his fiction. In her 40 years of married life she was the source of inspiration for his creative writing.

He did many jobs to earn his living. He worked as a Press Attaché at the Embassy of India in Washington in 1949. He became the Assistant Editor of 'The Illustrated Weekly of India' in 1950. He also worked as a consultant to the Ministry of Education of the Government of India in 1961.

He stayed in Hawaii for three years as a visiting Professor in the University of Hawaii. Afterwords in 1973, he joined the University of Washington as Walker-Ames Professor. He lectured in New Zealand and Australia as the guest of the Governments concerned. He received the University of New Zealand's Prestige Award in 1962. In 1967 he won the prestigious Indian National Academy of Letters Award for the year for his novel *Shadow from Ladakh*. Finally he settled in Manchester, U.S.A. He spent his retired life with his wife in the U.S.A. till his death in 1989.

A brief survey of his literary achievements begins with *The Golden Boat*. During his student career in London, Bhattacharya translated a number of short stories written by Tagore into English. They were brought in the form of a book under the title *The Golden Boat*, published in 1932. Bhattacharya worked as an editor-cum-chief translator of *Towards Universal Man*, the book which contains the best
of Tagore's thoughts on society, education, politics and economics. *Some Memorable Yesterdays* with its alternative caption *Men, Women and Events of Indian History* was published in 1941. It was a collection of Bhattacharya's essays. His next work *Indian Cavalcade* was published in 1944. It is a long but fascinating account of India's trials and triumphs through the span of 20 centuries. It is a varied life experience from King Vikrama to Vivekananda.

His career as a novelist started in 1947. He depicted the Indian life through his novels. All his novels of the early phase are set against the contemporary historical events and social conditions. His themes are based on real life experience. He not only depicted the social, economical and political changes in his period but also analyzed the forces working behind these changes. Gandhi's ideology made a deep impact on him.

While working on his Ph.D. thesis he studied the Indian social life. While working on Tagore's essays he came close to the Indian society. The social environment in which he was brought up blossomed his imagination. All the novels of Bhattacharya deal with the contemporary problems in India. He thinks that a novel should be concerned with the social reality. It must have a social purpose. About his own practice Bhattacharya has made the following statement in an interview:

... Unless a writer has keen observation and an eye for noting the details of general behavior of folks, he cannot write a social novel. I have developed this habit and I have not missed a single opportunity of observing incidents, happening, where I can gain something for the writer in me. Most of my characters have shaped themselves from the real Earth. (Joshi)
There are six novels to his credit. Poverty, hunger, exploitation, East and West encounter and rapid industrialization and its impact on Indian society are his major themes. So Many Hungers and He Who Rides a Tiger based on the famine of Bengal in 1944, deal with poverty, hunger and exploitation. Music for Mohini depicts a conflict between the old and the new or the modern and traditional values. A Goddess Named Gold shows how the rich and greedy exploit the poor for their selfish needs. His fifth novel Shadow from Ladakh is set against the Chinese aggression of India in 1962. His last novel A Dream in Hawaii presents an encounter between the spiritualism of the East and the materialism of the West.

Out of Bhattacharya's six novels, only three novels So Many Hungers, He Who Rides a Tiger and The Goddess Named Gold deal with the themes of poverty, hunger and exploitation. However to gain a wider insight into his writings, it is necessary to discuss his other novels in short. Music for Mohini, Bhattacharya's second novel, was published in 1953. The action of the novel covers the period after 1948. It depicts the conflict between orthodoxy and modernity. The author attracts our attention towards some of the social problems like casteism, untouchability, widow-remarriage and child marriage.

Shadow from Ladakh was published in 1966. Though the novel is set against the Chinese aggression in 1962, the central theme of the novel is the synthesis of the Eastern spiritual values and Western modernism, tradition and modernity, asceticism and worldliness and village and city. India's burning problems like unemployment, poverty and untouchability are also covered in it. Bhattacharya's fifth novel A Dream in Hawaii (1978) is concerned with the violence in the western countries.
The brief survey of these novels shows that though they mostly deal with the East and West encounter, old and modern values and spiritualism and materialism, they deal with the themes of poverty, hunger and exploitation on a very marginal level.

In the criticism available some of the critics call him a Marxist; some criticize him for his mechanical sociology and oversimplified philosophies. Some find defects in his presentation of heavily symbolic relationships. Some say that he does not stick to any fixed ideology. Regarding the criticism on her literary output, Balram Sarot in *The Novels of Bhabani Bhattacharya* says, “Bhabani Bhattacharya, one of the leading Indian English novelists of older generation, though widely popular abroad, suffered a comparative neglect in his own country” (Sarot 8). Sarot is quite right because not much criticism is available against or in favour of Bhabani Bhattacharya as a writer.

**Kamala Markandaya (1924-2004)**

Kamala Markandaya is a pen name of the novelist. Her name before marriage was Kamala Purniya and she became Kamala Taylor after marriage. She was born in 1924 in a famous Purniya family, a fairly orthodox Hindu Brahmin family in Mysore. Her forefathers were Diwans or advisors in the court of the Maharaja of Mysore. They were landowners, financers and administrators.

Kamala’s father resigned as a rebel and joined government service in the railways as a transport officer. Kamala was the youngest of his two daughters and two sons. She was nurtured in the princely fashion. Kamala’s father’s job made her travel not only in India but also abroad. Due to her father’s transfers she had to attend different schools. She obtained much of her education in Coimbatore from 1931
to 1939. When she was fifteen, her two brothers were sent abroad for education. Her only sister went to Madras and joined a political party.

At the age of sixteen she entered Madras University to graduate in History. While in the University she took to writing and journalism. Her inclination to writing and journalism caused her to neglect her university education. Initially, she worked as a journalist on the staff of a short-lived weekly newspaper. After this job she stayed in a remote Indian village for a long time which helped her understand the village life. This period is often referred to as a tour that encouraged her for writing her first novel *Nectar in a Sieve*.

During the war period she took the job of an army liaison officer for a short period. Later she started working as a freelance journalist in Madras and Bombay during which she published many short stories. In 1948, she migrated to England to make her career as a journalist. Her experience with minor Indian periodicals in India did not help her in setting herself in the circle of British journalists.

Her initial period in London was a bleak period of her life as she had to face many financial difficulties. During that period she did many dull jobs to earn her living. Later she married an Englishman, Bertrand Taylor from whom she had only one daughter, Kim, who acquired the British citizenship. Kamala lived a very private life at Dulwich in London.

Though she was pro-western in her attitudes, and spoke with British accent, she never lost her Indian identity. She continued to wear saree and bindi throughout her fifty and odd years in London. She describes herself as a Hindu-Brahmin in religion and an anti-imperialist in politics. She died in June 2004, in London, after a brief illness.
Her novels are studied in American Schools and Colleges as documents to make the students understand the real India. It is not surprising because her picture of India is as authentic as any Indian who has not left Indian boundaries. In fact it is sometimes more authentic due to the objectivity in her observation. She has not come under any ‘isms’ or theories to which many Indian writers seem to have fallen a prey. She has played the role of a natural observer in her novels. Uma Parameshwaran calls her native-alien. She highlights the strengths as well as weaknesses of the East and the West. Her attitude is that of a reformist.

She is a committed novelist like Mulk Raj Anand and Bhabani Bhattacharya. Like them she has used the form of novel as a vehicle for communicating her vision of life. She does not believe in the walls of caste, religion and culture. She expresses her concern over the growing unrest in Indian society. She feels that exploitation of the poor by the rich is one of the chief reasons of it. Like Mulk Raj Anand she not only poses the problems but also suggests solutions through her novels. She wants to spread the spirit of love and fraternity.

In the early phase of her career as a writer, she could publish some of her short stories in India, but in England she could not get a publisher to publish her first novel *Nectar in a Sieve*. However she continued to write with the hope that some day she would find a publisher. She could get her first novel published in 1954 by Putnam in London which achieved immediate international success.

Through all her novels she displays different colours of Indian culture. The dominant themes in her novels have been East-West encounter, rootlessness, poverty, hunger and exploitation and human relationships. As the present thesis deals with her two novels *Nectar in a Sieve* (1954) and *A Handful of Rice* (1966) which portrays poverty,
hunger and exploitation as their major themes, it would be appropriate to have a brief look at her other novels too to get a holistic picture of her choice of themes.

_Some Inner Fury_ (1956) is a dramatization of the East-West encounter. The patriotic writer’s feelings for Indians and her hatred towards the British are shown through the different members of a single family and their series of conflicts. _A Silence of Desire_, (1960) Markandaya’s third novel, explores the theme of human relationship through the clash between traditionalism and modernism, between faith and reason. _Possession_, (1960) her fourth novel deals with the East-West encounter, human relations and politics. She shows how the Western people try to exploit the Indians for their selfish gains. Caroline Bell, an English lady tries to possess a poor Indian boy Valmiky.

_The Coffer Dams_ (1969) her sixth novel reveals the theme of the East-West encounter in a novel way. She presents the old theme of East-West encounter in her own fresh style by highlighting the economic help that underdeveloped country like India received from England. _The Nowhere Man_ (1972)is a story of an Indian inhabitant in England. As the title itself indicates, it is a story of a displaced, rootless Indian. Markandaya’s eighth novel _Two Virgins_ (1973) deals with moral degradation in Indian society, where man exploits man for selfish purpose. The novel also deals with the East-West encounter and a contrast between tradition and modernity.

_The Golden Honeycomb_ (1977) is her most ambitiously designed novel. It covers a long period of fifty years and three generations. In this historical novel she has presented a variety of themes. The novel tells us that the Rajas and the Maharajas of the native states were responsible for British regime in India as they were
the pillars of the British imperialism. Through *The Golden Honeycomb* Markandaya has comprehensively depicted the theme of colonial conflict comprehensively. It also shows her meticulous research regarding historical facts. Markandaya’s last novel *Pleasure city* (1982) presents the world of her dream, where there are no barriers of creed, colour or caste, where human values are supreme and where there is respect for one another.

Most of the literary criticism available on the novels of Kamala Markandaya has been restricted to her early novels. Her expatriate status has been held against her by many critics. Kamala Markandaya, Bhabani Bhattacharya and a few others were labeled as expatriates, exiles or immigrants, in order to dismiss their works considering it the second hand material. Regarding this Makarand Paranjape says, “In hands of such writers India becomes a nostalgic place, constituted out of memory thus denying its changing evolving reality”(Nabar 41). He thus accuses them as they have lost their “touch with the objective reality of India” and puts it bluntly that they sell India. They cater to the demands of the westerners. Some of them have criticized Markandaya for her over simplification of village life in India as an absent narrator. She is accused of over-playing poverty in rural India with a conscious effort to make her work more acceptable to the readers in the West.

The above review of the life and works of Mulk Raj Anand, Bhabani Bhattacharaya and Kamala Markandaya is clearly evident of the influence of social and political upheaval in India on their writings. Their novels seem to be primarily the outcome of the contemporary Indian social life. Their intense realism can never be called exaggeration of the facts. Their novels are tableau of the ferocious
poverty, hunger, and exploitation. No other Indian English novelist of that age dealt with these themes as effectively as they did.

Mulk Raj Anand, Bhabani Bhattacharya and Kamala Markandaya grew up in the British culture and western ideology, but they did not lose their Eastern sensibility. The Western impact on them made them observe the world objectively. As all the three writers worked as journalists, attitude of a journalist clearly lurks in their writings. If we see critics’ views on all the three, we find two major objections raised against them. First, they wrote to entertain the Western people and, secondly their novels are illustrations of their commitment to Marxist ideology. It would really be interesting to find out whether they really wrote to entertain the Western readers, or whether they were plagued by the social realism to provide a sociological document to the western eyes. Whether they exaggerated the Indian poverty, hunger and exploitation to attract the Western readers, as the miseries of the poverty stricken masses in India are often more alluring to the Western eye than to the Indian readers, whose senses are blunted by the constant presence of it or they exposed the underlying brutal reality of Indian social life. All the three writers have denied the charge of their commitment to Marxism. It is also curious to relate the influence of Gandhian philosophy as they belong to the Gandhian era.

All the novels selected for the study cover the entire span of forty years: from 1930 to 1970. One of the surveys shows that more than fifty-five percent of population in that period was living below the poverty line. Fifty percent of the national income was enjoyed by the twenty percent of the rich and only five percent of it percolated to the bottom. (The World Book Encyclopedia Vol.15.) It is therefore more appropriate to discover how the novels of these writers depict this
intense reality effectively by touching the chords of Indian sensibility and how they present the themes of poverty, hunger and exploitation and whether there are any similarities and differences in their thematic treatment.

The present research aims at purely a thematic study of the novels written by Mulk Raj Anand, Bhabani Bhattacharaya and Kamala Markandaya particularly dealing with the themes of poverty, hunger and exploitation. Mulk Raj Anand has written more than fourteen novels in all but the novels which deal with poverty, hunger and exploitation as their central themes are: *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942), *The Road* (1961).

Bhabani Bhattacharaya has a total of six novels to his credit but the following three novels are fully devoted to these three themes: *So Many Hungers* (1947), *He who Rides a Tiger* (1952), *The Goddess Named Gold* (1960).

Out of the ten novels written by Kamala Markandaya only two novels treat poverty, hunger and exploitation as their concern. They are: *Nectar in a sieve* (1954) and *A Handful of Rice* (1966).

All the selected novels of the three authors are analyzed, interpreted and evaluated on the basis of the themes of poverty, hunger and exploitation with reference to certain operative categories of novel form namely setting, plot, characters and Author’s perspectives.

The thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is an Introduction. The first part of it deals with a brief survey of contemporary fictional scenario. The second part deals with life and works of three selected authors and the third part deals with some of the important essential definitions of terms related to the themes.
Chapter II is the detailed study of Mulk Raj Anand’s 5 novels, chapter III is the study of Bhabani Bhattacharya’s 3 novels, Chapter IV is the study of Kamala Markandaya's two novels Chapter V is the conclusion

As the study revolves around the three concepts of poverty, hunger and exploitation, it would be necessary to have a brief idea about the way these concepts are defined.

**Poverty:** *The New International Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary of English Language* defines poverty as ‘a state of being poor or without competent subsistence, the condition that relates to absence or scarcity of requisite substance or elements, or meagerness of supply.’

The synonyms of poverty given in the same dictionary are privation, indigence, destitution, needs, want and penury.

Privation is a painful lack of what is useful or desirable. Indigence is lack of ordinary means. Destitution is lack of the basic necessitis of life and penury is cramping poverty.

According to *the Concise Oxford Dictionary of current English* poverty can be meanness or inferiority.

*Random House Dictionary of the English Language* defines it as ‘serious lack of the means for proper existence’.

For *The Scribner Bantom English Dictionary*, defines poverty as a state opposite of riches. The term ‘comparative poverty’ is explained in it. A man whose income is suddenly cut into two is plugged into comparative poverty. He may have to go without cars etc. rather than without food or clothing.
Macmillan English Dictionary defines it as a situation in which someone does not have enough money to pay for basic needs. It is also lack of something especially ideas or feelings.

For Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, poverty is a situation or experience of being poor or impoverished and ‘poverty stricken’ means extremely poor.

Encyclopedia Britannica Vol.11 gives detail explanation of ‘poverty’.

Poverty may be defined as an insufficiency of the material necessities of life. This is not a very exact definition as necessities of one society may be luxuries in another and unluxuries in a third. The idea of insufficiency is likewise difficult to fix with precision. Encyclopedia further says some writers make distinction between poverty as the normal condition of a population and indigence as a crisis caused by the interruption of income.

Encyclopaedia Britannica gives three types of poverty. they are:

1) Individual poverty is the condition of wants that result from individual misfortune or incapacity.

2) ‘Collective poverty’ accounts for two situations a scarcity of resources or an unequal distribution of resources.

3) Ideal poverty exists in Christianity and Buddhism. They give a large space to the conception of poverty as a virtue. Both religions provide a few vows of poverty to be taken by those entering the religious life.

Encyclopaedia Britannica says the meaning of poverty in Chinese and Indian poverty in actual experience is that mass of
population in these countries must spend most of their energy in earning food. Even so they are unable to obtain balanced diet.

*The Word Book Encyclopedia* also says that definitions of poverty vary greatly from country to country just as living standards do.

*Lexicon Universal Encyclopedia* also calls it a relative term. It is lack of goods and services necessary to maintain adequate standard of living. The definition of the term ‘adequate’ varies.

**Hunger**: According to *The New International Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary of English Language*, hunger means craving for food. It can be also weakness caused by the lack of food.

In *Concise Oxford Dictionary* hunger is defined as an uneasy sensation or exhausted condition caused by the want of food.

For *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* ‘hunger’ is a compelling need or desire for food.

For *Scribner Bantam English Dictionary* hunger can be any strong desire.

In *Macmillan English Dictionary* hunger means a lack of food that can cause illness or death. It also means a feeling you have when you need to eat something. In Canada and the U.S.A. the literary meaning is of hunger ‘a feeling you have when you want something very much.’ The word ‘appetite’ is a pleasant word used for hunger for this feeling.

*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* defines hunger as ‘lack of food especially for a long period of time that can cause illness or death. It is a feeling that you need to eat. It is a strong need or desire for something.
In *Encyclopaedia Britannica* ‘Hunger’ and ‘thirst’ are explained under one category. There are two theories of hunger and thirst given in it, peripheral theory and central theory. According to peripheral theory, it is such a peripheral change of dryness of the throat or contraction of the stomach that signal physiological deficit. Central theories hold that physiological deficit, essentially involves localized brain areas.

In *The World Book Encyclopedia* the social aspect of the word ‘hunger’ is explained. It is one of the world’s main social problems. Growing populations, floods, draughts and other natural disasters are the reasons of it. Millions of people suffer from hunger as they are too poor to buy enough food.

**Exploitation:** According to *The New International Webster’s Comprehensive Dictionary of English* exploitation is selfish employment for one’s own use or advantage. The same meaning is given in *Chamber’s 20th Century Dictionary*. In the *Random House Dictionary of English Language*, Exploitation means selfish utilization of profit. It also gives the positive meaning of it. Exploitation also means use of public relations and advertising techniques to promote a person or a product. The same positive meaning is given in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*. *The Scribner Bantam English Dictionary* also gives another positive meaning as achievement, feat or heroic deed.

In *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*’ Exploitation means unfair treatment to someone or use of a situation in a way that is wrong in order to get some benefit.

For *Longman Dictionary of the English Language* exploitation is a situation in which you treat someone unfairly by asking him to do
things for you, but give them very little in return. In commerce and economics exploitation is amounts to use of resources for business or industry. It also means full or effective use of something. It is an attempt to get as much as you can out of a situation, something unfairly.

Though poverty, hunger and exploitation are the three different terms denotatively, all the three share the similar connotations as they are all interrelated. The term ‘poverty’ has been used as destitution or serious lack of means for proper existence. It can be comparative or ideal poverty but it is not the lack of ideas or feelings. The term ‘hunger’ is a compelling need or exhausted condition caused by the want of food. It is not used positively as a strong desire for something or only an appetite. The term ‘exploitation’ is used as a selfish employment of someone or something for one’s own advantage. The positive meaning of it is not taken into consideration in the present study. Despite being quite familiar to all, an exhaustive study of the meaning of the terms hunger, poverty and exploitation would be useful to probe into all the necessary aspects of the novels undertaken for the study.