As is the civilization of a nation, so is her literature. The image of the people of a nation, throbbing with life and its activities and thinking of themselves and the world around them as they see and understand it, is truly and convincingly projected in and through the creative efforts of her great literary geniuses. If it is true that students of a nation's civilization and culture cannot afford to ignore the claims and contribution of her literature, it is also true that students of a nation's literature have got to understand and evaluate her civilization and culture to formulate a suitable background of their study.

Literature and civilization (as also culture, society and life) are interdependent and tend to thrive on mutual development and advancement. Literature is the reflection of life and society in general which, in their turn, also shape and direct the course of literature. Of all the forms of literature, the novel perhaps is the most faithful, convincing and effective vehicle of a nation's ethos. The novel is the most potent, pliable and popular means of communicating a creative experience, evoking touching sentiments and profound thoughts in and about human life.

Fiction, as a form, has emerged much later than poetry and drama on the literary horizon. All life comes within
its jurisdiction and thus the entire gamut of human experience forms the variety of its range. The whole mass of human sensory experience furnishes the novelist with the raw-material for his fictional writing, but he has to subject this vast unwieldy, shapeless, lawless and even anarchic data drawn from human life to a coherent form of artistic excellence. It is, however, not the photographic representation of experience, but his judgement of human life and relationships which invests his writing with consistency, direction, shape, meaning, motion, tone and rhythm of art. He is an intellectual aesthete always eager to drink from the cup of human life to its very dregs. He does not shirk from the mental adventure of brooding on problems of human existence so as to trace profound and mysterious imports and hitherto unexplored possibilities. A novel is thus the sum-total of the writer's thoughts, experiences and imaginings and feelings, opinions and pronouncements, speculations and judgements, artistic urges and technical endeavours. It is not merely characters and incidents that are of vital importance, but the manner in which they have forced their entry into the author's consciousness and artistic form. Finally, it is not merely his experience of life and his representation of it but his vision of life which is overwhelmingly significant.

Fiction—reading is a pleasurable exercise in literary appreciation and understanding. It affords greater entertainment and enjoyment than other forms including
even drama and that too more readily, easily and conveniently. It is imbued with dynamic, vital and effervescent experience of life. At its best, it can widen and deepen our understanding of mysterious and enigmatic life and its intricate and delicate relationships. In addition, it can analyse, unfold and comment upon life's riddles and even pave our way to their solution, as it can also awaken and gratify aspirations of a fully synthesized and orchestrated way of life. The form of fiction, by its very nature and scope, admits a wider range of themes and techniques than any other form. In a very happy way, the novel has been described as "Pocket Theatre". This implies that this is the most effective literary form, since it can bring to any one's doorstep - poverty-infested, middle-class or wealth-ridden - the unfolding of subtle and intricate events of human drama in all its variety. The very firmament is the roof of fiction, thematically speaking. In a more special sense, fiction is thoroughly democratic: written for the people, of the people and by the 'people'. It is the greatest humanizing exercise and influence in literature and this is the basic reason of its wide human appeal and universal popularity. Fiction implies that every human being can become a true, interested and benefited reader and that every variety of human life can form its subject-matter. This is the strength of fiction but it also sometimes could become its very weakness. The spread of fiction-reading and its ever-growing popularity could perilously threaten its own existence. The
form has to encounter the dangers of vulgarisation resulting from its proliferation.

The novel is a malleable and suitable form for expressing the national ethos. A novelist can portray the larger life of the nation more authentically, convincingly and artistically than a poet or a dramatist. He can project a true image of his country's religion and culture and can bring out its political and social predicament minutely and deeply - as an insider. He can present analyse and criticise the social reality of his country. The Indian novel in English, therefore, can do greater justice to the Indian-ness of the Indian than Indo-Anglian drama, poetry or prose, especially in the socio-political context immediately preceding or following Independence. The task that lay before the Indian novelist in English in pre-Independence times was his quest for the national identity in face of the foreign oppressions and atrocities and in post - Independence times to affirm it in the Commonwealth and the United Nations Conferences.

After the initial spurt of Indo-Anglian novel - writing, the writers during the thirties started striving for establishing the genre as a potent instrument for social and political amelioration. K. S. Venkatramani was a pioneer in moulding the content in a characteristically Indian mode and presented Gandhian economic and political principles in his novels, but did not show any awareness of special stylistic problems of an Indo-Anglian writer of prose. Then
the 'golden' period of the esteemed "Trinity" of the Indo-Anglian novel was ushered in. Mulk Raj Anand frankly brought out the Indian social reality and ventilated his compassion for the social under-dog. R. K. Narayan delineated the Indian middle class life in all its simplicity, faithfully and artistically. Raja Rao competently expressed the Indian ethos and psyche, the Indian milieu and spirit and embodied in moving fiction the Gandhian precepts of truth, non-violence and non-co-operation or civil disobedience in a rural set-up. Bhabani Bhattacharya's social realism - conflict between tradition and modernity, industrialisation and Gandhian idealism - reminds us of Anand. Khushwant Singh's political realism is rather crude but its tone of genuineness is always unmistakable. Kamala Markandaya has tried her hand at a number of themes - a tiller's life, an Indo-British love affair in the turbulent, disintegrating 1942 - setting, East-West confrontation, an Indian expatriate's isolation in England, the contemporary Indian life as seen through the eyes of an adolescent girl. Mrs. Jhabvala surveys the Delhi middle-class society with an ironic slant. Anita Desai and Arun Joshi examine the problems of man's isolation and indicate the transition of the Indian novel from the external social scene to the internal psychic world. The novels of these Indian writers in English have, by and large, faithfully reflected Indian consciousness.
Language is the medium of all literature and so the form of fiction, too, depends upon the author's use of words and his peculiarity of patterning them into the basic units of prose writing. Generally, language does not seem to assume as important a place in the weaving of a story as in a poem, but the modern fiction writer wields a subtle technique to express fluid, evanescent and elusive problems of subconscious thinking, feeling, remembering, the modern novel warrants almost as close a linguistic study of fiction as that of poetry. Language is the vehicle of images and symbols in a story which may determine the formal and rhythmic quality of a novel and may establish, analyse and criticise relationship between characters in a novel.

Fiction has assumed an all pervasive importance in literary study. Its poetics is employed in valuations of the presentday major figures as also in revaluations of the celebrities of the past in the field of fiction. From the dialogues of the serious practitioners and critics of the form has emerged the contemporary aesthetics for the novel. The complexity of life has rendered the so-called distinction between poetic and prose language pointless in as much as it concerns the form of the novel. The artistic equilibrium between 'representational' and 'presentational' dimensions of a work of fiction must be cautiously maintained. The contemporary social reality is a subtle and complex thing
and if it is to be expressed adequately, the language of the novelist also must be so shaped as to attain stylistic competence based on experiments in diction, syntax and imagery. The language of an Indian writer in English is the product of a bi-ethnical co-ordination. His language should bear the weight of his indigenous experience and it should be a new variant of the British English, but this linguistic amalgam should not be radically, fantastically or grotesquely different from the original source and still it must have been moulded and metamorphosed in such a way as must suit the writer's native mind and milieu. As Raja Rao puts it, this language must express "the authentic rhythms and sensibilities of the Indian psyche."

The Indian novel in English, therefore, is a more dependable means for projecting the cultural image of the nation in the forum of world literature than the Indo-English poetry, drama or prose. The problem for the Indo-Anglian novelist is to channelise hopes and aspirations suitably through a language, which does not happen to be his mother-tongue, a language which he has acquired after a good deal of pains and has come to develop devotion for it. Language is a mere means, but it has to be put to use in an artistic way by him, since he is a creative writer. His acquisition of the language is almost a lifelong process. The language reveals to him its true identity, beauty and peculiarity in new and astonishing nuances, hues, shades of meaning, even tones, moods, rhythms. For
an Indian author in English the medium of his expression does not come handy, readymade, but he has to cultivate a special linguistic awareness so as to fashion for himself a suitable instrument of expression which should express best his creative urges and perspectives in the immediate context of representation of the social reality.

The period of apprenticeship of Indian writing in English when it excited attention, not because of its fidelity to documentation of Indian life, but the fact that Indians ventured and could actually write in a foreign language, viz. English, is long since over. The wrangles over the question — whether Indians can write creatively in English — waged by Chalapathi Rao, Prof. Ayyub, Jyoti Dutta, S. H. Vatsyayan, "Agyeya", as attackers, on the one hand and P. Lal and his writers workshop colleagues as defenders on the other, should by now be treated as settled for ever in favour of the Indo-Anglian writers, in view of the corpus and quality of their writing. The artistic predicament for the Indian novelist in English is how to convey Indian sensibility and experience through the medium of a foreign language. This presupposes that Indian English will be a sort of dialect of English as pointed out by Raja Rao. It should, however, be admitted that if there might be some loss from the viewpoint of form and expression, there would be some gain, too, from the viewpoint of thematic content and nascent sensibility and experience. This tool of expression, thus, would come to mean the author's private.
property like his religion. The degree of this linguistic competence or otherwise would naturally vary from writer to writer. If an Indian prefers to write in English, let him do so and confront the attendant peril or put in the requisite effort. There should be no 'emotional allergy' to Indo-Anglian writing or as Narayan himself probably experienced - 'English-baiting' or to be considered a 'drohi' ('traitor') if one writes in English by a writer in a regional language. As Bhabani Bhattacharya has pointed out, the Indian writer must be allowed to use any language he likes. A serious writer should be credited with some intelligence that he knows how more difficult it is to write in a foreign language than in his mother-tongue. He must be accorded all linguistic freedom in a free country and should not be harassed or victimized by linguistic chauvinism or regional parochialism. In fact, a writer may also fail in delivering the goods, if he is unaware of his linguistic limitations or is not competent or is just self-complacent. Eternal linguistic vigilance is the price of genuine authorship. Mere linguistic competence does not make anyone a great writer, just as mere architectonic virtuosity fails to confer authorship on anyone. Regional writing also does not always click. It matters not whether or how long an Indian writes in English, but how.

The 'triumvirate' of Indo-Anglian fiction made experiments with English to evolve a language that should best suit their sensibility, creative experience and artistic
purpose. Mulk Raj Anand was the first to translate Punjabi, Urdu and Hindi swearwords, abuses, proverbs and idioms into English. He distorted spellings of some English words on the basis of incorrect pronunciation of the illiterate Pubjabi. Moreover, the dialogues of his characters were translated verbatim from the vernacular into English. This was obviously to obviate the hurdle of drafting the conversation of non-English-speaking characters in English.

An adaptation or modification of English speech that has a general Indian tone is almost an insurmountable linguistic hurdle in the way of an Indo-Anglian writer's competent stylistics. This is the reason why there is the paucity of drama in English in India. These experiments of Anand are all right so long as they are not overdone, but they usually are and then they often sound jarring and, sometimes even ludicrous and grotesque, and fail to secure any purpose. Though Anand's experiments do not always help in imparting the sense of reality to his dialogues, his narrative prose is of a high order.

R K. Narayan has fashioned for himself an adequate means of expression for his average sensibility and comic vision of life. His language is that of an educated Indian which can express a straight thing in a straight way. His economy of expression is praiseworthy but his vocabulary
is rather limited. Alan Warner and William Walsh have a word of praise for his use of English. According to Prof. V. Y. Kantak, Narayan's language "this one-stringed instrument - like that ukelele - like thing! is adequate for his purpose." But this is not always so in any situation. The structuring of his language betrays cracks when Narayan has to express a tense moment or a complex thought or a tender emotion.

Raja Rao's language springs from the very Indian soil. It has the amplitude of the firmament overhead. It has the depth of the Arabic Ocean. There is no sense of restriction, averageness or adequacy. It is the language of the mind and the soul. It can scale imaginative heights. It can plumb emotional and tragic depths. It has the unmistakable Kannada flavour in his first novel and stories and the haunting and ennobling Sanskrit lilt in his second novel, the 'magnum opus' of Raja Rao and of the entire Indo-Anglian literature. Raja Rao achieves the desired artistic effect without, in any way, vitiating or warping the limpid, liquid, languorous flow of Standard English. This is experimentation par excellence. His language is not the language of statement but of symbol. It is purified of any stigma or stink of alienness, because it is the language of perception. Raja Rao's experiments with the language have borne fruit - the promise of which was held out in the Preface to his very first novel. He is a fitting answer to the question - can Indians write creatively in English?
Desani is another experimentor who has been praised by such literary giants as T. S. Eliot, Forster, Burgess and others. His *All About Hatter* is a quaint manufacture of stale cliches, worn out idioms, officialese, slang, heavy archaisms, hyphenated and long-winding compound words. It aims at parodying an imposed language for expressing the disintegrating Quixotian personality of the hero, Hatter.

Bhabani Bhattacharya also makes some experiments with English which indicate his serious concern for moulding a foreign language to express the Indian ethos and milieu. Its mixture of archaisms and modern colloquialisms help much in adapting the language. He has almost developed a linguistic mannerism of casting an interrogative spoken sentence-structure in the form of a written statement. He often heaps short sentences on the top of short sentences. This shows the influence of the sentence structures in Bengali.

Khushwant Singh and Chaman Nahal almost follow the lead of Anand and try to translate the Punjabi racy idiom almost literally. They too use swear-words and abuses. This is what they do to express well the kind of social scene they wish to portray. Their language assumes crude colours and rough shapes as it brings out the awful actuality of the communal holocaust. Sasthi Brata, Dilip Hiro, T. Murari, Jamila and Reginald do not fight shy in using crude words for suggesting sexual pre-marital, extra-marital copulation, adultery, debauchery and prostitution. This
indicates the contemporary sexual levity rampant in some sections of society in most countries.

Kamala Markandaya, B. Rajan and Santha Rama Rau have other problems of expression. Their linguistic lapses stem not from their inadequate knowledge of English but from their rare mastery of English to be seldom encountered even in the elite circles in England or the States. They are the expatriates who have settled down in the foreign countries and are thus flung far from the Indian social scene. Their sensitivities are almost Anglicised or Americanised. Their language is sometimes either too profound or too elevated for the Indian social reality they intend to bring out. They try to avert the imbalance between form and content by selecting the western or highly westernized milieu, which can bear the weight of their pompous, sophisticated and pedantic language. Markandaya's *The Coffer Dams* and *The Nowhereman* and B. Rajan's *The Dark Dancer* and Santha Rama Rau's *The Ambassadors* amply illustrate the point. Raja Rao too is an expatriate, but he conscientiously keeps on returning to India almost every year and thus retains his living touch with his people and country. There is no unrealistic or bizarre touch about his writing. His sensibility is Indian, though the same has become refined cosmopolitan and Pan-Indian.

Anita Desai and Arun Joshi hold out a brilliant promise for the future. Their language is a flexible tool of expression to bring out the agonized cry of a wounded heart.
The language of Indo-Anglian fiction is a plastic and pliant instrument for bringing out the contemporary Indian scene and situation and for portraying the inter-relation of characters and for delving deep into the innermost recesses of human mind.

III

The origin of Indo-Anglian fiction can be traced to the English-educated, Indian's love of imitation and desire of pleasing and placating the Britisher by writing in his language and in a manner approvable by him. This was in fact the contribution of the Anglo-Indian essays in the realm of writing romances, more in the manner of pastime than serious writing. The Indian writer, almost an ardent follower and the admirer of his British prototype, wove his romantic and historical yarns after the manner of Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Bulwer Lytton and Arnold Bennett and others. These novels were not serious in their execution. The novelists wrote correctly and correctly, but without any compulsive and inevitable urge. Their efforts were almost non-literary exercises in writing English by Indian students who were looking up to the British master's approval and approbation. Ramkrishna Ayyar, Ghosh, Mitra, Umrao, Bahadur, and others wrote 'historical' fiction which was really romance and only tangentially history. Anyway, they were the ones who blazed the trail and established the tradition of Indian writing in English.
Then came the next stage of development of Indian fiction in English which reflects the corresponding awakening of Indian consciousness owing to the national movement for freedom. During the thirties, the potent influence of the Indian National Congress spearheaded by Mahatma Gandhi brought about a radical change in Indian thought and consciousness. The writers felt deeply involved in the contemporary socio-political reality and the Indian novel emerged as a fit literary form of national expression. The Indo-Anglian novelist could not remain imperious to this tidal impact of Indian Renaissance and Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao followed the lead of such novelists as Premchand in Hindi and Rabindranath Tagore and Sharatchandra Chatterjee in Bengali in their treatment of socio-political issues. R. K. Narayan is also a product of this period but he appears to be his own leader, such a leader as hardly has any follower. He seems to reflect the impact of this turbulent socio-political weather of the thirties nearly two decades later. Earlier, Venkataraman stakes his claims as a bold precursor of this nationalist trend of Indo-Anglian fiction. In fact, he is a bridge between the initial period - which romanticized past history and the developmental period - which romanticized the present. For Anand, Rao and even Narayan, there already existed an eager Indian audience - English educated but alive to Indian socio-political reality, values and ideals.
Then came the next generation of Post-Independence Indo-Anglian writers of fiction. With the advent of freedom, these writers had 'God's plenty' in the choice of their themes. New horizons had opened out and there was no peril of incurring the ruler's wrath, if they fully exposed the atrocities of the British Raj. Quite a few novelists have emerged on the current literary scene to bring out the impact of Indian social, political reality—past and present. In addition to the 'sovereign' trio of Indo-Anglian fiction, viz. Anand, Narayan and Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Kamala Markandaya, Khushwant Singh, B. Rajan, Manohar Malgonkar, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Nayantara Sahgal, make their presence felt in no uncertain manner. Their novels display a variety of themes and an admirable grasp of the novelcraft. They show how the Indian novel in English has become an impressive and artistic means for expressing the national ethos and culture.

Since the beginning of the seventies has emerged a new set of smart and sophisticated novelists on the Indo-Anglian scene. Anita Desai and Arun Joshi are prominent amongst them. They seem to have been particularly influenced by the literary genius of modern novelists, such as Proust, Henry James, Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Camus, Kafka, Sartre and others. Man's isolation in this crowded and congested world has gripped their sensibilities and they endeavour to express the agonised cries of their characters through babbling in interior monologues and
painting bleak, bruised and bereft mindscapes. Chaman Mahal, however shows a firmer grip of social and political problems in the manner of Hemingway which he might have imbibed in the course of mastering the secrets of Hemingway's style, the veteran Hemingway scholar that he is. Along with these new and upcoming talented novelists, the novelists of earlier generations are also depicting the contemporary human predicament-isolation and despondency.

The Indian fiction in English has not only achieved a measure of maturity and excellence, but it holds out a bright promise for the future. Whatever might be the attitude of the Indian government, to the role of English in education and administration - and ultimately this might also adversely influence the position of English in the field of commerce and the daily routine - life of the average educated Indian, it seems impossible at present that the language can be banished from the frontiers of our country and mind. Uma Parmeshwaran's apprehension that Indo-English literature would hardly survive beyond 2000 A. D. seems to be pessimistic and unwarranted by the presentday Indian situation. Anyway if not Indians in India, then, Indians abroad - those expatriates, voluntary exiles, the Raja Raos, Kamala Markandayas, Dilip Hiros, Sasthi Bratas, Rama Raus, Nirad Chaudhuris and Dom Moraeses will continue to write in English and will not let Indo-Anglian writing pass into oblivion.
A serious study of any contemporary literature presupposes a knowledge of its origin and growth. It is interesting to trace how a literature thrives by facing problems peculiar to it and finding out solutions to them. Its harvesting is not all too sudden. It is a gradual and continuous process of cultivation. This is true of all literature but particularly true of fiction which is perhaps most influenced by social awareness and involvement. Independence forms a very interesting line of demarcation in respect of Indo-Anglian fiction. Pre-Independence Indo-Anglian fiction has an historical as well as formative significance and there is a marked difference between the Pre-Independence fictional output and the post-Independence contribution to fiction from the viewpoint of form and content.

The present study attempts to answer the question whether the attainment of Independence - certainly one of the most momentous events in the history of India - has brought about any significant and radical changes in the outlook of the Indian novelists writing in English - and in their selection and treatment of themes and their overall attitudes.

Pre-Independence fiction deals with the sociological, political, religious, philosophic and cultural aspects of Indian life, but the thematic treatment is indicative of
a pioneering effort.

Nagarajan's *Athawar House* is a systematic family study depicting the slow but steady disintegration of a cumbrous family. It shows that fissiparous tendencies in a joint family are inevitable, but all members of the family have to stick together and the rule of the head of the family must prevail. Moribund Gopinath's consent to the proposed inter-state marriage of Sona and Venkataramani symbolises the passing out of an old social order, making way for a new and liberal one. R. K. Narayan, in his Pre-1947 novels, depicts the family in its mono-tier framework. The family, in *Swami and Friends*, like the one in Raja Rao's "Javni" - implies a happy world. Chandran, in *The Bachelor of Arts*, after his vicissitudes in the fields of study and love, falls into the family groove. *The Dark Room* shows how a family could almost be wrecked by a liaison, but the family somehow survives. In *The English Teacher*, Krishnan's devotion to Sushila, even after her death, indicates the novelist's faith in the traditional family ideals. Raja Rao shows, in *Kanthapura*, how the family claims could be set aside owing to a grave concern for the deeper problems of life, such as struggle for one's country's freedom. Mulk Raj Anand's treatment of the family is, more or less, restricted to the economic-political impact on the family. It is remarkable that he depicts the degeneration of the family owing to the new social order brought about by industrialization.
Most Indo-Anglian novelists before Independence express the conventional views on the problem of marriage. R. C. Dutt's *The Lake of Palms*, Madhaviah's *Thillai Govindan* and Dora's *Sugritha*, present the problem of the plight of the widows in the Hindu society. Anand, Narayan and A. V. Rao show how the problem of dowry wrecks many a girl's life in their short stories "A Village Wedding", "The Green Belt" and "Renunciation" respectively. Jogendra Singh, Nagarajan, Kumara Guru and Shankar Ram express conventional ideas about the position of a daughter in a Hindu family and the feminine ideal. Subramanyam's *Indira Devi* is a silly tirade against inter-racial marriages. S. M. Mitra, however, looks sympathetically at the problem of inter-racial marriages Umrao Bahadur (in *Hard Times*) and D. F. Karaka (in *We Never Die*) depict the problem of inter-community marriages. K. A. Abbas (in *Tomorrow is Ours*) shows the miseries which entail an inter-caste marriage owing to age-old religious dogmas and feudalism. Manjeri Isvaran, Malini Tarkhud, Abbas and Narayan have drawn memorable pictures of happy married life, when a marriage symbolises the union of two personalities, two egos, two lives, two souls into a single harmonious togetherness.

The two points about the treatment of the theme that recur are (i) the degeneration of—and the consequent devaluation of—the Brahmin, especially the priest (ii) the attitude of the high castes to the Untouchable. Sir Jogendra Singh and Anand criticise the priestly class
very harshly in *Kamni* and *Untouchable* respectively and show the priests as selfish, mean, hypocrìtical, greedy. A Madhaviah, in *Thillai-Govindan*, points out how some Brahmins are fanatical about their Brahminism and saivism. Kumara Guru, in *Life's Shadows*, looks at Brahmins through a Brahmin's eyes, but his is a fairly impartial picture. Dhan Gopal Mukerji shows, in *My Brother's Face*, that before war, being a Brahmin was a passport to any place but between the war and Gandhi, the Brahmin's prestige has been knocked. Sir Jogendra Singh shows, in *Kamla*, how the rich and the powerful flout the rules and regulations of their castes. A Madhaviah indicates how urbanization has indirectly contributed to the loosening of caste bonds. Umrao Bahadur, Karaka, Nagarajan and Abbas portray inter-community or inter-caste marriages and the consequent social repercussions. These novelists are not in favour of caste tyrannies but their reactions are not so aggressive as one finds them to be in later fiction.

Mulk Raj Anand's sympathy for the lowly and downtrodden finds its genuine and forceful expression in his Pre-Independence novels. He deals with the life of untouchables, coolies, tea-plantation labourers, villagers, soldiers and factory workers. His views on these have not been shaped under and independent of the Gandhian sociopolitical philosophy. R. K. Narayan is the same, sympathetic observer of middle class life. Raja Rao writes as a true Gandhian and his *Kanthapura* is a remarkable
picture of the fight for freedom waged, shoulder to shoulder, by all the three classes and all the quarters—top from the Brahmin quarter down to the pariah quarter. His humanitarian sympathy for the lowly finds its expression in his short stories. Manjeri Isvaran, Narayan, Jogendra Singh and Abbas present the problems of the poor with sympathetic understanding. D. G. Mukerji, in My Brother's Face, and K. S. Venkataramani, in Murugan the Tiller present the idealistic pictures of the Indian peasant. Manjeri Isvaran's 'Gap in the Wall' shows the mutual distrust of the two polar classes—the poor and the affluent. Jogendra Singh in Kamla, appreciates the simple, honest and hard working peasant as contrasted with the idle Royalty. A. Madhaviah in Thillai Govindan criticises Brahmins and higher class landlords as the exploiters of the toiling low-class tillers.

In the Pre-Gandhi phase, The Prince of Destiny and Hindupore very guardedly—and yet boldly enough—expressed the Indian discontent and longing for freedom. Though these novels are technically speaking, naive, they have a tone of validity of content in all their amorphous turns of the story. Venkataramani's Kanichon the Patriot is the first significant novel on the political theme. It has a sense of immediacy born of the author's sincerity and courage. Jogendra Singh, in Kamni, mildly and cursorily criticises the British rule, but his
predelections for the British and his self-consciousness are not concealed. S. M. Mitra, in *Hindupore*, looks at the Indian political situation through Indian eyes only. He stresses the resemblance between the Irish and the Indian political situations under the British and also their mutual Indo-Irish affection and regard. D. G. Mukerji, in *My Brother's Face* shows the most potent national influence that Mahatma Gandhi had become overnight following the monstrous Amritsar massacre. Umrao Bahadur, in *Hard Times*, comments on the role of pro-league Muslims and nationalist Muslims and their attitude to Indian politics and Hindus and on the British exploitation of this anti-Hindu sentiment. Nagrajan draws, in *Athawar House*, a vivid picture of Gandhiji's Dandi March. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* is the first great Indo-Anglian novel in which there is a perfect fusion of thematic authenticity and technical awareness. Raja Rao is committed to Gandhism—at least, so he was, in pre-Independence times—and his choice of the theme and of the grandma narrator accord well with his Gandhian ideals. *Kanthapura* is not only an achievement but also a standard by which to measure any achievement.

Before Independence, there were many native rulers under the British sovereignty who controlled the destinies of people in their states. Quite a few of them lived like hungry monsters clawing into innocent, helpless feminine flesh and revelled in different varieties of sexual orgies.
The court atmosphere would stink of debuchery. Sir Jogendra Singh's *Masrin* describes the sensual and degenerate life of Nawabs and Zamindars. Singh's *Kamla* is the story of a hill-girl abducted by the agents of a ruling prince. His *Kamni* also depicts the travails of Kamni, a poor barber's beautiful daughter, whom the prince—her employer—tried to seduce. Ram Narain's *The Tigress of Harem* draws a picture of the romantic and sensual life in a prince's harem. Umrao Bahadur's *The Unveiled Court* describes how the Maharaja could not be stopped from having any woman he fancied. *The Memoirs of a Maharaja's Mistress*, by an anonymous author also follows the lead of these novels. It is more medieval, crude and brutal and deserves to remain anonymous. A. V. Rao's short story 'Virtue has its own reward' also suggests how the princes were addicted to drinking and debauchery. All princes were not wicked. Some of them were good administrators, kind-hearted and alive to national interests. The Prince, in Shankar Ram's short story, "The Rajah's Last Hunt" gives up hunting for ever and takes a vow of non-violence. *The Prince of Destiny* and *Hindupore* illustrate how some princes were liberal in their outlook and would love to see their country free from the foreign shackles. Indo-Anglian fiction before Independence fails to present any realistic or convincing picture of the Princely Order.

The Indian encounter with the foreigner, before 1947,
largely meant that with the Britisher on account of the British Rule. The Indo-Anglian novel draws an affectionate picture of the Irishman, because of his sharing, more or less, the same political predicament with the Indian. Lord Tara and Harvey, in S. M. Mitra's *Hindupore* show how identification and sympathy are born of identical political situation and experience. The Englishman as an individual was an unpredictable factor owing to his hauteur, racial vanity and blind prejudices. To Ironside, in *Hindupore*, and to Croft-Cooke and Reggie Hunt, in Anand's *Two leaves and a Bud*, Indians were sub-human beings. Some Englishmen in Jogendra Singh's *Kamni*, looked askance at Miss Greenwood's mixing with Indians freely. This sense of segregation is revealed in an aggravated form, in *Hindupore*, in the caddish behaviour of one Jonathan Toddy who falls out with Ram Singh, thinking him to be an ordinary 'nigger'. This reminds us of what later Mahatma Gandhi had to put up with in South Africa in a similar, insulting, encounter. Christian Missionary activities in India assumed a religio-political significance. Through the Hutchinson-Bakha encounter, in *Untouchable*, Anand signifies the absence of understanding between the Britisher and the Indian. Sir Reginald White, Mr. Little and Jimmy Thomas, in Anand's *Coolie*, represent the forces of exploitation. Croft-Cooke and Reggie Hunt, in *Two leaves and a Bud* typify the British highbrowism. The relationship assumes a much less acrimonious form in his *Across the Black Waters* where the common Indian Soldier and the British officer put up a joint
fight against the common enemy on a remote, strange, alien soil. Anand boldly shows the mutual maladjustment in the Indo-British relationship; but cannot maintain the objective stance. As the novelist himself admitted, he was inclined to favour his Indian characters and caricature most of his British characters."

Religion is such a paramount influence in India that it has spiritualised all spheres of life. The pre-Independence era was full of battle-cries against superstition, ignorance, orthodoxy, fanaticism, religious hypocrisy as also against social backwardness, economic deficiency, cultural degradation and political servility. Jogendra Singh expresses, in Kamla and Kamni how the true faith knows no wavering. Mitra's Hindupore also asserts this religious faith. Gouri, in Nalini Tarkhud's The Jagirdar of Palna, says that he will never give up her faith and trust in God. Nagrajan, in Athawar House, indicates that the righteous and God-fearing would never be forsaken by God. Kumara Guru, in 'A son's shadow', indicates that a Hindu's belief that this world is a mere illusion enables him to have a philosophic and stoic attitude to life. Mukerji, Madhaviah and Tarkhud criticise the orthodox Hindu's belief in the superemacy of the Hindu race and superstitious faith. Shanker Ram, Mitra, Tarkhud explain the working of the Law of Karma which justifies the ways of God to men and reconciles us to miseries in human life. Jogendra Singh and Anand are equally critical of the
Brahmin priest and the British Missionary. Anand's earlier novels speak of his distrust of institutionalised and ritualistic religion and humanism is his new religion. Raja Rao also does not believe in the traditional forms of religion in spite of frequent references and invocations to Goddess Kenchamma—and his new religion is the Gandhian campaign for freedom.

It would be interesting to find out how national culture withstood the ravages of the alien rule in the pre-Independence era, because a culture is tested when the country is under the foreign heels. D. G. Mukerji, in My Brother's Face, illustrates hospitality and protection of those who seek shelter as the endearing traits of Indian Culture. Nalini Tarkhud, in 'The Jagirdar of Palna,' shows how Indian culture holds a woman's chastity as more valuable than anything. Jogendra Singh, in Kamni, suggests that Indian Culture honours woman, but woman as daughter is regarded as sacred as goddess. An unfailing stress on brahmacharya is a characteristic of Indian culture. Venkataramani, Umrao Bahadur and Raja Rao reveals how some young persons, in the Gandhian era, expressed the intensity of their love for the motherland by taking a vow of brahmacharya, till the country's freedom was won. Manjeri indicates that only those, particularly the Indian peasants, who are 'unsullied by foreign influence' can safeguard their national culture. Isvaran presents the appreciative estimate of Indian culture by the Englishman.
In Mitra's *Hindupore*, Mr. Long is made to admit that the East rules the West religiously and culturally. This sounds too wishful to be convincing and betrays the novelist's consciousness of the burden on him to prove Indian Culture to be better than any. D. G. Mukerji, in *My Brother's Face*, suggests that the Westerners can find in India some balm of healing for their minds fed up with sheer materialism. He also seems to be a victim of self-consciousness regarding the superiority of Indian culture. He, however, aptly brings out the Tagore ideal of the cultural synthesis of East and West.

The family, the problem of marriage and the caste system are dealt with in a traditional but adequate manner and the slow but steady changes affecting these Indian social institutions are faithfully indicated in the loosening caste-bonds, the trend towards disintegration of cumbersome joint families, occasional inter-caste, inter-community and interracial marriages. The Indo-Anglian novelist extends his full sympathy to the socially underprivileged and is vigilant about social disparity and injustice. The novel reflects the political atmosphere of the nation quite faithfully and satisfyingly, keeping in view the predicament of writing guardedly against the probable charge of sedition. The debaucherous, tyrannous and criminally luxurious ways of the living of the prince are exposed, but the emergent picture leaves out the glory
and greatness of the Princely Order as also the psycho-
analytical portraiture of the Prince as an individual.
The depiction of the Indo-British encounter, on the whole,
seems to be fairly representative. The traditional reli-
gious and cultural climate of the country is aptly presen-
ted, but there is, however, no serious or sustained effort
to vindicate the invincible supremacy and peculiarity of
Indian religion and culture. On the whole, pre-Independence fiction in English seems to have prepared a good basis for the post-Independence creative harvest.

Pre-Independence Indo-Anglian fiction reflects the
pioneering and elementary stage of the development of
Indian fiction in English from the viewpoint of thematic
treatment and technical experimentation, but it ensures a
sure step in the direction of establishing the western
forms of the novel and the short story in the special context of Indian life in all its diversity.

The Post-Independence novel is a fuller expression of
the transformed ways of life. It is free from any psych-
ological constraints which were consciously or unconsciously experienced by the earlier novelists. In both the spheres of form and content the later novel is certainly more confident and mature, thus coming into its own.
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