In 24 years I had succeeded in making a kind of return journey, shedding my Indian nerves, abolishing the darkness that separated me from my ancestral past.¹

In the earlier pages of our present study we have come across diverse aspects of the literary works of two great authors of the present age V. S. Naipaul and Indira Goswami from a compartists’ view. It has also been pointed out that the works of V.S. Naipaul with reference to India: A Million Mutinies Now (1990) and Indira Goswami’s Pages Stained with Blood depict historical events and have portrayed the society around them in general and the Sikh history of a very crucial time in particular. These two works are the results of fiery imaginations which tend to be living testimonies of two historical periods. They both have used real situations creatively. Every creative writer makes use of a tradition and genre to present their views. So here Both Naipaul and Goswami have not used traditional genre but used an altogether new mode of expression which enables them to occupy a privileged position and write in first position. Both of them have taught themselves to see the world through the eyes of people.

V.S.Naipaul’s first book on India ends with the sad confession that “this was a journey that ought not to have been made”. After many returns over the years, he hasn’t only come to feel at home in India; his conception of how to write about India has changed.

“What I hadn’t understood in 1962, on had taken too much for granted, was the extent to which the country had been remade……”²

In India: A Million Mutinies Now, Naipaul depicts the protests and achievements that represents the changes that the people of India are going. Here he feels that he had succeeded in making a kind of return journey and abolished the darkness of mind about India. He is now historically conscious of the Indian present situations.
In *Pages Stained With Blood* presents a series of vignettes of broken lives and blighted hopes culminating in the murderous violence and fury of 1984 riots in Delhi.

Both the writers have brought history through their work. Infact T.S. Eliot’s emphasis on the importance of *Tradition* in the moulding of a writer is very significant in the evolution of literature. Every writer needs ‘a historical sense’ to grow beyond a particular limit. It involves “a perception not only of the pastness of the past, but of its present; the *historical* sense compels a man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order.” (T.S. Eliot, *Tradition and the Individual Talent*, Sacred Wood, London; Methuen and Co. Ltd. Sixth edition 1960). We can thus apply very appropriately this contention of T.S.Eliot in the historical perception of both these two writers.

So in conclusion, the brief summary of the preceding chapters will thus make explicit not only on the point mentioned above, but on the whole approach of my work under discussion.

Chapter-1 dealt with depicting novel as an art form and its relationship with history, travelogue and diary.

A novel is a literary type of certain length that presents a ‘story’ in fictionalized form. It can be distinguished from other literary forms by its immense flexibility. There have been numerous experiments with the form and it is difficult to say which phase is more important as its relevance has been changing from time to time. In literature one finds different literary types which are extremely rigorous and form-oriented.

Novel portrays human conditions and interprets life and the novelist is a creative artist who presents and interprets these concrete facts of life in an artistic way which again makes him or her acting like a historian in some ways. The modern novel has broadened its base and has enlarged its scope of treatment. In the essay on the ‘*Art of Fiction*’ published in *Partial Portraits*, Henry James has shown the high ideals of Novel as an art-form. To him it should be judged by artistic canons.
In Bengal and Assam too the growth of novels is seen and there is gradual change in the form of novel. With this changing mode novel is a social document written with the writer’s imaginative approach towards the world around him and in course of time the novelist works like a historians in documenting the events and developments taking place in the society. In both the works of Naipaul and Goswami it is seen that both have acted like historians in bringing out the events that have been so crucial in India.

In Chapter-2, an attempt has been made to discern and discuss the bare- facts of history of the Anti – Sikh Riot, together with the root of its movement in the historical perspective and sequence and the impact that it had in context of socio-political conditions in India. The idea is to know how these bare- facts of history are delineated by these two authors of international fame. The three days between the 1st and 3rd November, 1984 saw Delhi engulfed in flames in an unprecedented wave of violence which left more than 2000 of its Sikh citizens dead. The charred remains of the corpses, the burnt out shells of houses, and 50,000 people uprooted and traumatized in horror and agony huddled together in the relief camps are a scar in the history of India and this finds a reflection in Indira Goswami’s *Pages Stained With Blood* and also in V.S.Naipaul’s *India : A Million Mutinies Now*.

Chapter -3 presents a comparison of in both the authors focusing on the novels in particular theme, content and style. It is seen that works of Naipaul and Goswami oeuvre is immensely rich in thematic content and artistic narrativization of the content. Both have written about human experiences in a variety of situations. Both have employed various narrative techniques as viable vehicles of expression in their works. They have very well combined realistic experience with novelistic art. As a travelogue writer, Naipaul has never travelled for sight-seeing, but with definite theme and has observed everything in accordance with it. Even Indira Goswami has travelled and observed and analysed and have portrayed the problems of the people of India whether political, social or religious in nature.

In *India : A Million Mutinies Now*, Naipaul has been able to perceive link between reaction, violence and creativity. Naipaul have provided fictional magnitude to some of the characters like Periyar and Namdeo Dhasal among others. He has juxtaposed Gandhi with Periyar and thus revealed its personality. Naipaul has
depicted India comprehensively by taking a microscopic view of its people, their customs, habits, cultures and institutions. He has painted the pictures of towns, buildings and historical monuments among others in several ways. He has portrayed some pictures like a tourist guide, or a spectator-reporter or a person reflecting on what he has seen. He has heard the echo of the spirit of the mutiny of 1857 in contemporary Indian life. In *Pages Stained With Blood* portrayed the deceit, cruelty and injustice of anti-sikh riot of 1984. The prelude to the eruption of blood-mad-violence is built by reminiscences of the horror of partition and glimpses of the human wrecks it has left behind. Old Delhi with her crooked byways and historic memories whisper to the author of similar cruelty and betrayal and violence down the ages as she restlessly explores its obscure nooks in her obsessive quest for expiation. She seeks to confront and record unflinchingly the most terrible and painful images of man’s inhumanity to man.

Chapter-4 depicts an analysis of similarities and dissimilarities in Naipaul and Goswami. Both of them have ‘Historical sense’. It is seen that these two dazzling contemporary stars of literature had striking common features, both writing on India which provokes comparison. As seen in Chapter-5, that Naipaul had an Indian Brahmin ancestry, though born in Trinidad. Indira Goswami was also an Indian Brahmin ancestry hailing from Assam and both being historically conscious, as seen in their writings open a very important chapter in Modern Indian History i.e. depiction of Sikh-history and anti-Sikh riot. Infact, in recent times it is seen that the boundaries between history and fiction are increasingly blurred as in the case of texts under discussion.

In Chapter -5 : it is observed that the life of V.S.Naipaul and of Indira Goswami and their evolution as writers reveals again a typical example. Naipaul is a product of diaspora. His Hindu immigrant background, upbringing in Trinidad, and his ‘flight’ or escape to England for pastures new is the story of many third-world writers. Indira Goswami born to educated family and being a woman struggling in male-dominated society after her husband’s death is again a story of many sensitive women writers. Both are sensitive and humanistic writers and they depict the reality of their world.
So it is seen that many of our recent fiction-writers have reflected keen interest in history and the line between the two disciplines is continuously getting blurred in the works of novelists. They have written about human experiences in a variety of situations representing different cultural concepts.

Though the relation of novel and history may sound paradoxical on the surface, yet the truths that all these works contain in them are traces of history. The study reveals that fiction grows out of the sensibility of its creator, which consciously or unconsciously offers a much richer and complex account of the society they live in.

The historians or the historiography cannot claim for certainty, as the past events can be interpreted in more than one ways and there is a possibility of re-interpretation of the perceived truths. It is specifically true in the case of a country like India where heterogeneity and plurality prevail. A single event may have different connotations for different sets of people. It is almost impossible to provide a single comprehensive and accommodative version capable of incorporating diverse interests of the people. So these authors bring in the elusive complexities of their time.

It is possible to have several images of the same event in accordance to the standpoint of the beholder. In this sense, though their works cannot replace history but they complement each other and thereby help us in understanding and identifying the past.

Thus, as has been observed in the previous chapters that Indira Goswami and V.S.Naipaul have made use of history in their works in different ways and by doing so they have not only narrated hitherto untold histories, but also provided their visions of different events by re-narrating them in their works. In the process they have given a purposeful direction and vitality to Indian English writing in general and novel in English in particular.
References

2. Ibid, p. 517.