The purview of this study is Indo-Anglian fiction with reference to the novels of Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan. It would rather be difficult to maintain that these three novelists can be said to represent and exhaust Indo-Anglian fiction. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that Indo-Anglian fiction owes, to a great extent, its genesis and character to these three novelists. In spite of the fact that eyebrows are no more raised about the credentials of the Indo-Anglian fiction, it remains problematic whether Indo-Anglian novel can be situated and appraised either in the tradition of the novel in the West or with reference to the indigenous fiction being written in Indian languages. A careful analysis of exclusive discussions of English or Indian fiction clearly indicates that Indo-Anglian fiction with minor exceptions, remains of marginal significance in both the contexts for some reasons or the other. Therefore, it is relevant and necessary to consider the character of Indo-Anglian fiction for an adequate understanding of such a response to it both in the West and within the country.
A glance at the sociology of literature would show that whether it is man moment and milieu or the homology between socio-economic conditions and literary structures, the effort has been to correlate the changes in the form and content of literature with the socio-historical context. Distinction has been made between the active and potential consciousness on the one hand and between the normative and the prevalent historical conditions on the other. But the emphasis has all along been to establish a nexus between consciousness and social conditions. Developments in the sociology of literature can be seen as closely related to the general developments in the western sociology as such. In the west, sociology rests upon the assumption that there are strong correlations between the consciousness and social structures -- an assumption which found its most explicit and emphatic expression in the writings of Marx and those who followed his methodology of understanding societies and social consciousness.

An analysis of the western intellectual tradition since Renaissance and the social developments in Europe tempts one to see a close interaction and reciprocity between the social conditions and consciousness. Attempts have been made to establish one-to-one correspondence between the changing social conditions from feudalism
to capitalism and the changing structures of consciousness. Though it is difficult to postulate a lack of close-relationship between social conditions and consciousness in the western history, yet the gaps between the two do not allow one to affirm any rigid deterministic correspondence between the literature and society of which it is a product. The first chapter is an attempt to provide a brief exposition and analysis of the issues involved in considering the possibility (or impossibility) of a sociology of novel.

The most striking implications of accepting the main tenets of sociology of literature are to concede that the intellectual and artistic creativity is not autonomous. Sociologists of literature disagree on the nature of determination of literature by the social conditions. Whereas some attempt to look for homologies or rigorous resemblances, there are others who deny the relevance of social conditions in understanding a work of literature. Though it may be reluctantly conceded that social conditions may explain the genesis of a work of literature, it is pointed out that literature is not merely a superstructural reflection of the economic base, but that between the base and the super-structure there are important mediations. Thus it is not difficult to
see that in all debates concerning the possibility of sociology of literature, a close relationship or interaction between consciousness and social conditions is conceded to by all. The disagreements rests upon the exact character of mediations or determinations.

Unlike the west, in India there has not been such a close relationship and interaction between the social conditions and consciousness. Consciousness has, for various reasons discussed in the second chapter, remained oblivious of the changes that have been taking place in the socio-political and cultural context. Despite the processes of change which were unleashed by alien rule, new social institutions, technology and cultural values, Indian psyche has continued to cultivate the exotic cults and the myths of the perennial unchanging past. This aspect of the Indian psyche has been briefly explored in the second chapter of the thesis.

The modern western thought is founded on a split, a dualism between the mind and the body, the individual and the social, the sacred and the secular, the eternal and the temporal. On the contrary, in the traditional Indian thought this kind of split or dichotomy was inconceivable due to the interpenetration and organic relationship between the eternal and the temporal, individual and the social, metaphysical and the moral.
Since the sacred is not identified with an organised religion (say Church) as in the west, the demarcation between the sacred and the secular becomes extremely difficult in the Indian context. The dominance of the sacred on the Indian culture-psyché may be regarded as the most crucial feature of the Indian social reality. In this context, it is also relevant to consider the impact of the Western colonialism on it.

In order to understand the contemporary Indian social reality one has to come to terms with the peculiar character of cultural dominance of the West over India. The western colonialism penetrated so deep into Indian soil that the very perception and self-image of the Indian cultural tradition has acquired a western orientation.

It is a fact of history that Indian cultural tradition, as it is normally understood today, is the discovery of the European scholars - a scholarship which encouraged obscurantist mystifications on the one hand and inflicted a sense of inferiority on the other. In the wake of British educational policy, a new consciousness was generated which apparently sought to promote rational and scientific temper but undermined, in fact, the hold on the native of his own cultural tradition. It is not difficult to see that this East-west encounter was not an encounter between two cultures confronting on equal
grounds - but a master-culture attempting to devour the native culture.

Indo-Anglian fiction like all other intellectual activities in a colonial society is a typical expression of the native's attempt to come to terms with this situation of crisis - though this coming to terms found easy routes either in escapist return to the mythical glorious past or succumbing to the onslaught of the dominant culture. There are very feeble attempts to critically examine the roots of the crisis with a view to overcoming it. This study of Indo-Anglian fiction is an attempt to appraise the character of these attempts and the psyche that underlies these works.

The present study was originally inspired by late Prof. Jagdish Chandra who constantly emphasised the need for constructing a sociology of Indo-Anglian novel. It is difficult to say how Prof. Chandra would have reacted to the final shape of the study. But for his unflinching and disarming confidence in the worth of the pursuit, the occasional disruptions, sometimes circumstantial and more frequently temperamental, would not have let the project be completed.

Dr. (Mrs.) Nirmal Mukerjee was kind enough to take over such a difficult charge of guiding the project.
and seeing it through after the sad demise of Prof. Jagdish Chandra. It is an irony that Prof. Jagdish Chandra has deprived me the opportunity to express my gratitude to him and I do not know how to acquit myself of my gratitude towards Dr. (Mrs.) Mukerjee.

It would be less than fair if I were not to mention that it was only Mr. C.M. Mittal who could prepare a typescript out of an illegible and erratic hand.

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