THE ISSUE
It was not until the collapse of medieval world view with its static social structures and all pervasive religious values that man became aware of society as a complex of institutions and secular forces. With this awareness the entire perception of social reality acquired a new focus. Since Renaissance, there has been a radical shift from the other-worldly theocentric universe to a universe where man is its centre, the be all and the end all of human endeavour, struggle and achievement. Historians are sharply divided on fixing precise dates regarding when the Renaissance began or ended but there is no ambiguity about what it stood for. It heralded the emergence of a secular state with its...

...stress on the development of the individual, i.e. a new attention to fame, glory, and the expression of personality; a discovery of the world based partly on the new voyages of exploration and partly on the new work in natural science; and a discovery of man, involving a new psychology and new concept of humanity.¹

The Renaissance marks a dividing line between the theocentric and anthropocentric, geocentric and

¹Bronowski, J., Mazlish, Bruce, The Western Intellectual Tradition, p. 21.
cosmocentric approach to reality.²

Ironically enough the theocentric worldview as counterposed to the temporal, the here and now, the historical contingency, has persisted in diverse forms of subtle and subterranean existence. Renaissance marks the breaking of the umbilical chord of mankind and its launching into history.

²In 1615, Galileo wrote in a letter to the Grand Duchess Christina of Tuscany, Concerning the Use of Biblical Quotations in Matters of Science:

"I methinks that in the discussion of natural problems, we ought not to begin at the authority of places of scripture, but at sensible experiments and necessary demonstrations. For, from Divine Word, the sacred scripture and nature did both alike proceed.... Nature, being inexorable and immutable, and never passing the bounds of the laws assigned her.... I conceive that, concerning natural effects, that which either sensible experience sets before our eyes, or necessary demonstrations do prove unto us, ought not, upon any account, to be called into question, much less condemned upon the testimony of texts of scripture, which may, under their words, couch senses seemingly contrary thereto.... Nor does God less admirably discover himself to us in Nature's actions, than in the Scripture's sacred dictions."

These remarks signify the breach between science and religion, in the claim that the book of nature is as authoritative a work of God as are the books of the Bible. Nature, according to this view, is to be regarded as an order outside men. Man could trace beauty and truth together, not by projecting himself – not, as it were, by looking from the earth as centre – but by entering humbly into nature's inexorable design. Science was regarded as an impersonal way of looking at the world, a reading of the language of the universe in a new and absolute symbolism.
Occupying a central place in the universe, man now sought to define himself in the context of time and space. Instead of seeking anchorage in the transcendental, he was forced to find his bearings in and through history without an apriori or a readymade metaphysics coming to his rescue. In supercession of the readymade myths, human reality came to be informed by the dynamics of historical forces. Realizing that he is born into a contingent universe and it is he who evolves forms of life, institutions, ideas, beliefs and values, man saw himself as his own maker and author of his destiny. In fact, as an intensely individualistic culture with emphasis on the dignity of the individual and belief in man's creativeness Renaissance was the source of inspiration for most of the libertarian movements in subsequent times, Says M.N. Roy.

This period first gave the highest development to individuality, and then led the individual to the most zealous and thorough study of himself in all forms and under all conditions. The mode of conceiving and representing both the individual and human nature in general was defined and coloured by that influence.

Through this adventure of self-making, man became aware of his potentialities, capacities, etc.
and his vision of himself. A phase of euphoria followed in which man was intoxicated with himself and with his capacity to make and remake himself after his imagination and the possibilities of exacting his imagination in remoulding his universe. This sensibility ushered a phase of humanism, the best expression of which we find in the rationalist views of human nature on the one hand and the empiricist epistemology on the other. Whereas the rationalist like Descartes/Spinoza and Leibnitz emphasised the role of reason rather than revelation in human knowledge and conduct, it were the empiricist like Locke, Berkeley and Hume who pointed out the centrality of human experience in acquisition of knowledge. By the eighteenth century Vico and others had recognized the role of history in human affairs, and human perception of reality. It was also realized that history is man-made and offers a range of possibilities on the one hand and imposes a range of limitations on the other. Thus human nature was alienated from its divine double and had to

"In the night of thick darkness which envelops the earliest antiquity, there shines the eternal and never fading light of truth; that the world of human society has certainly been made by man, and its principles are therefore to be found within the modifications of our own human mind."

reckon with the impersonal, the inexorable time which unfolds itself through history. The unity between man and divine was snapped and man had to eke out his identity, destiny and integrity in and through history. Even though the break with the mythical world view influenced man's self-perception as a being who had evolved through historical processes which were not divinely ordained yet man could not do away with myth altogether. Against the eternal, the transcendental, man now saw himself as a limited contingent and a finite being who had to look for his identity beyond, yet through, the contingent condition in which he found himself.

It was in such circumstances that novel emerged as an art-form. It is only when man began to search for the meaning of human existence within a socio-historical framework that he needed an instrument that could help him to penetrate the reality with objectivity. "The novel", says George Lukacs,

"is the epic of a world that has been abandoned by God. The novel hero's psychology is demonic, the objectivity of the novel is the mature man's knowledge that meaning can never quite penetrate reality, but that, without meaning, reality would disintegrate into the nothingness of inessentiality."
Recognition of history as a crucial and inalienable dimension of human experience and reality necessitated the creation of novel as an art-form as distinct from epic romance and drama. The epic and the drama are the typical products of a mythical world - a world in which man tried to reconcile the tensions within and without by positing a set of supernatural forces. The novel came into existence when history began to supplant myth.

Michael Zerarra, in this context, says:

"The novel's emergence as an art form affirms, essentially, that there was no society without history, nor history without society. The novel is the first art to represent man explicitly as defined historically and socially. In myth, manifestly, man is a social being but his story is only developed by obscure means, by the intervention of gods, heroes or magical events. With the novel, society enters history and history enters into society.... The historical development of the novel comprises two opposite tendencies: the novel was born and established itself as a genre on account of, and to account for, historical and social phenomena; it attained the status of art when it set itself over against them."

In its essence/novel is a problematic art form. At its core lies man's indefatigable struggle to assert his humanity against the forces which undermine it. The novel emerged as an attempt to depict human condition in its historicity/treating present as history/and openness.

Zerarra, Michel, Fictions: The Novel and Social Reality, p. 11.
breaking into the future - the precarious balance between freedom and determination. It is not incidental that the rise of the novel coincides with the search for explanation of the human situation in the context of society? The history of the novel can be better understood if we relate it with the attempts of industrial society to synchronize the social world of man with his personal world, the mirroring of the structure of the state in the structure of family, the tensions of the social classes being reflected in the interpersonal relationships and so on.

It is relevant here to observe that along with the new vision of man, a new mode of production was also taking shape which has come to be known, in Marxist terms,

"Thus, the novel, in contrast to other genres whose existence resides within the finished form, appears as something in process of becoming. That is why, from the artistic view-point, the novel is the most hazardous genre, and why it has been described as only half an art by many who equate having a problematic with being problematic. As form, the novel establishes a fluctuating yet firm balance between becoming and being; as the idea of becoming, it becomes a state."

Lukacs, George, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.
as the capitalist mode of production. Thus, with the emergence of new science and new technology the old feudal order started crumbling and along with it the social institutions and personal relationships which were its manifestations. With these developments, the old relationships between the individual and society based on authority and loyalty, which seemed to be organic and inviolable, were also threatened and became problematic. The European society switched over to a period of conflict, dissonance and impersonalisation of relationships between the capitalist and the worker as against the personal relationship between the feudal lord and the serf. The relationship between the feudal lord and his serf had a romantic aura about it. The feudal lord was like a father figure, an individual rather than a faceless institution. His relationship was based not on naked self-interest but on the allegiance, loyalty and duty. He never tried to extract the utmost advantage from his land nor did he look upon the workers as daily wage-earners. In fact, it

8 "The Renaissance was also the beginning of modern capitalism. Capitalism can be defined as a system in which the individual seeks, consciously and rationally, by economic means to attain financial profit as his end. Thus, on the scale of individual business activity, rational methods of bookkeeping were introduced and involved banking operations were carried out. On the scale of the city-state, calculated economic imperialism marked the new age."

Bronowski, J., Mazlish, Bruce, op. cit., p. 41.
appeared as if he consumed whatever he needed and left the worry of producing to his tenants. That's why Marx advocated that in order to hasten a revolution this relationship must be reduced to the economic relationship of the exploiter and the exploited. The relationship which was apparently based on principle of care and recognition was now transplanted into purely economic and objective relationship. Says Ralph Fox in this context:

"The bourgeoisie, wherever it has got the upper hand, has put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations. It has pitilessly torn as-under the motley feudal ties that bound man to his 'natural superiors', and has left no other bond between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous 'cash-payment'. It has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervour, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered

9 It is necessary that this appearance be abolished - that landed property, the root of private property, be dragged completely into the movement of private property and that it become a commodity; that the rule of the proprietor appear as the undisguised rule of private property, of capital, freed of all political tincture; that the relationship between proprietor and worker be reduced to the economic relationship of exploiter and exploited; that all personal relationship between the proprietor and his property cease, property becoming merely objective, material wealth; that the marriage of convenience should take the place of the marriage of honour with the land; and that the land should likewise sink to the status of a commercial value, like man."

Marx, Karl; *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, pp. 57-58.
freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom - Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation. "The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-labourers."10

The transition from man as 'care' to the 'economic man' is not merely a shift in perspective; in the first case man is intuited as subjectivity which knows nothing of the dynamics of social context, while in the second case the same man is transformed into an object. After coming of capitalism man has an existence only as an element within the system; outside the system he is unreal. With this conflict between the man and the social system, individual found himself an alien, an outsider in a society which is governed by the laws of expediency dictated by the vested interests of the privileged who happen to control the forces of production. It was this conflict which found expression in the novel as an art-form.

Eversince its inception, novel is dominated by the recognition of the role of history as a shaping and constitutive element of human experience. Novel is no "time less story" but a concrete historical portrait concentrating on human relationships and feelings. From

10 Fox, Ralph, The Novel and the People, p. 77.
the earlier fiction it is distinguished by its use of history as the seminal influence on the person which replaces the reliance of earlier narratives on disguise and coincidences. It is essentially a middle-class cultural product developed in the 18th century and coming of age in the 19th century. Instead of fictitious adventures and marvels, man living within the framework of society becomes the central focus. Portrayal of ordinary people and every-day bourgeois life constitutes a direct reflection of a specifically middle-class sensibility. Novel is a literary reflection of the basic characteristic of social development of the historical evolution of an industrial age. The novel is the epic of the middle-class world, a world in which industrialization and growth of individualism centred on cash nexus, fetishization of exchange value at the cost of basic human concerns.

"The novel is a specific outlook on the world, expressing not heroism but the prosaic mind, the common place reality of commercial and

11"Basically, the novel, for the first part of its history, was a biography and a social chronicle and so it has always been possible to show that the social chronicle reflected to a greater or lesser degree the society of the period - and one does not have to be a sociologist to see that."

Goldmann, Lucien, Towards a Sociology of the Novel, p. 6.
industrial society.\textsuperscript{12}

But the novel as an art-form struggles to transcend the mundane reality of bourgeois life. As a middle class epic, novel articulates man's yearning for poetry and wholeness, the yearning which is suffocated by the reality it describes, the reality of socio-historical situation against which novel is a strategy of defiance. The novel, according to Hegel, embodies the contradiction between the 'poetry of the heart' and 'the prose of external conditions antagonistic to it':

"The novel is essentially concerned with describing the career of an individual in search of some totality, some coherence, some identity, whose image he carried deep within himself. This venture of his is doomed to failure since there is no common standard, no mediation possible, between the mentality of the hero and a world which is ruled by market values. This contradiction, which it is the modern novel's task to resolve, turns the fictional character into a problematic being. Unlike the epic hero, whose exploits exemplify and embellish the accepted values of his world, the fictional character sees himself confronted with the impossible, while the possible still remains part of his being."\textsuperscript{13}

Even though novel originated and evolved in opposition to the mythical world-view eking out the

\textsuperscript{12}Swingewood, Alan: \textit{The Novel And Revolution}, p. 6.

\textsuperscript{13}Zeraff, Michel, \textit{Fictions The Novel and Social Reality}, p. 90.
possibilities of its survival through social historical contingencies/it has nevertheless to fall back upon the mythical ethos. A transcendental home-sickness and a yearning for homecoming according to Inkacs characterises the spirit of the novel. The nostalgia of home-sickness is a scathing criticism of the brutalisation and fetishization of human values in the contemporary world. Yearning for homecoming is a search for wholeness and the outcry of atomized, debased, oppressed humanity against tyranny exploitation and repression. One can discern a double pattern in the structuring of the contingent social, historical situation and the normative structures of humanist values.

"By means of history and the fictional story, mythical cosmogony may remain divided between the supernatural and the human, until the time when the latter eclipses the former. Yet this eclipse could be apparent only; the 'life of values' as Forster said, is just as necessary to the modern novel as the mythological order was to mythical tales when they were in the process of twining into fiction."15

The normative structures express 'the poetry of the heart' reincarnating the myth, departure from which marks

14"... the novel form is, like no other, an expression of this transcendental homelessness."Inkacs, Georg, op. cit., p. 41.

15Zeraffa, Michel; op. cit., pp. 80-81.
the rise of the novel. Over and above the social cultural condition of man emerges the possibility of search for new consciousness, new myth for regeneration of man and creation of humanistic utopias. Between the imagined and the real world one can discern a complex relationship of tension and antagonistic or a non-antagonistic clash affirming the triumph of man over what crushes and trivialises him. Although these expressions do not always correspond to the actual class conflicts and class consciousness yet the dominant class values of capitalist society inform the origins and development of novel. It is for this very reason that the novel form cannot be reduced entirely to economic, political and social conditions in which it emerged as a genre in spite of the fact that it actually depicts man's struggle to transcend or transform the given socio-historical world. Dealing with socio-economic and political conditions novel attempted to transcend the mere description and analysis of them by penetrating into the very texture of social life showing the diverse shades and nuances of the way individuals experience themselves in society. The reality which novel sought to capture was much more than the conditioned and historical facticity for it focussed the human situation not merely from external sociological perspective but portrayed the ways in which men perceive and come to
terms with their conditions. Human experience draws past into the present and seeks to transcend the present in terms of the vision of the future which is guided by certain values and norms. It is true that these values are also rooted in the historical conditions yet they change the present for they represent that which is unrealized and is aspired for. Norms and values continually act and are acted upon by socio historic conditions. This activity of internalizing and transcending of values and norms is the human praxis which the novel attempted to identify. In the novel the human condition finds expression as a tragic vision in which man is situated in an open structure which is historically determined and yet man is endowed with the freedom to succumb to this structure or transcend it.

Assuming that novel is an art form which is most preeminently qualified to depict human situation in terms of history and individual consciousness, western sociology has devoted its attention to the exploration of the nature of relationship between novel and society. Whereas Madame de Stale emphasized the role of national character and

16"For at the heart of the novel form lies man's praxis, his never-ending, restless quest to realise his humanity and purpose, the affirmation of his ultimate freedom."

Swingewood, Alan; *The Novel And Revolution*, p.268.
climate in the development of literature, Taine strove to develop a scientific method for analysing literary form which could help in discovering the causes of which the form was a product. He held that literature reflected an environment of racial and climatic forces and could be treated as a document of the age. Taine did show awareness of the economic forces that shape literary production but his analysis of the text in the context of the economic aspects of the milieu was rather naive and superficial. His contribution would perhaps lie in the fact that he initiated a mode of inquiry which later on developed as sociology of literature. Taine maintained that, race, moment, and milieu comprise the material foundations exhausting all 'real causes' and all 'possible causes of movements', and claimed that 'if these forces could be measured and deciphered, one could deduce from them... the characteristics of the future civilization'. The interaction of race, moment, and milieu, Taine believed, produces either a practical or a speculative 'mental structure', and this leads to the development of 'germinal ideas', characteristic of certain centuries and epochs, which find expression in great art and literature. Taine's understanding of literature anticipated the 19th century positivistic methodology of understanding social and human activities. 17

17 While Taine was clearly aware of the strong economic pressures on literary production, he rarely went beyond crude correlations. He made few serious
was the view that human actions and social institutions are to be analyzed and explained with the same scientific rigour that is employed in the study of nature. Consequently it was assumed that the laws of causality were operative in the social and cultural phenomenon in the same way as in nature. This approach reduced literature to mere reflection and epiphenomenon of the social conditions. The influence of positivistic views was so pervasive that even Engels and Flekhanov could not escape the influence of mechanistic and deterministic approaches in their understanding and analysis of culture and literature despite disclaimers to the contrary. They attempts to link the economics of writing, the economic aspects of milieu, which had become so marked during the commercially-minded nineteenth century, with the literary text itself. As with the other parts of his conception of milieu, his tendency is always to explain the literary work mechanically, as a response to external conditions."


"According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence, if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase."

Engel’s letter to Bloch of September, 1890 quoted in Marxism and Literature by Raymond Williams, p. 79.
attempted to relate literary structures to class structures and held that literature was no more than mere reflection of classes and class conflicts. Under the positivistic influence an attempt was made to establish a strict causal relationship between literature and society. No attempt was, however, made to link specific texts with specific social conditions. This mechanical and external definition of literature regarded literature as being determined by the inexorable laws of social existence. The Plekhanovian understanding of literature reduced the history of literature to a purely ideological history with the aid of occasional ingeneous speculations in which the specific aesthetic elements of the text were invariably ignored.  

Besides the positivistic streaks in the writings of Engels and Plekhanov, the other tendency within the Marxist tradition has been to use Hegelian categories as has been done by Lukacs, Gramsci and Goldmann. Lukacs devoted exclusive attention to the problem of literary

19"Plekhanov's study of literature emphasized the weaknesses of early Marxist literary sociology. He naturally stated the explicit sociological foundations of art and literature, but in doing so tended to lapse into crude mechanical correlations. He tended, too, to dismiss most literature written after 1850 as a form of bourgeois apologetic."

Laurenson and Swingewood, ibid., p. 51.
form in his *The Theory of The Novel, Studies in European Realism and Historical Novel* in which he maintained that the greatest artists are those who can recapture and recreate a harmonious totality of life. In a society where the general and the particular, the conceptual and the sensuous, the social and individual are increasingly torn apart, the great writers combat the alienation and fragmentation of capitalist society by projecting a rich comprehensive image of human wholeness. According to Lukacs, novel emerges as an art form when it became possible for the writer to grasp his own present as history or to see past history 'the prehistory of the present'. The richness of the content and formal achievements of novel are rooted in the richness and profundity of the total social process.

As Lukacs attacked a mechanistic understanding of the relationship between literature and society, Gramsci questioned the mechanistic interpretation of relation between base and superstructure. Arguing that man is not a mere passive recipient of the external conditions

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20 Gramsci's *Prison Note Books and Modern Prince And Other Writings* have influenced a considerable number of new-left thinkers who are critical of the orthodox mechanistic interpretations of Marx's writings.
which he simply absorbs in his consciousness. Gramsci suggested that superstructure constitutes an effective operative domain of its own kind which cannot be simply reduced to the economic structure. Gramsci urged that a proper Marxist understanding of human nature has to see man simultaneously as the creator of the social and historical world through his praxis and also as a being who is determined by these forces which are of his own making. He further suggested that with the emergence of a class society the dominant class exercises hegemony by creating a sense of political, economic, intellectual and moral unity of a world view through its ideology. Between the writer and the dominant culture subsists an

21 A lived hegemony is always a process, it is not, except analytically a system or a structure. It is a realized complex of experiences relationships and activities with specific and changing pressures and limits, in practice i.e. hegemony can never be similar. Its internal structures are highly complex, as can readily be seen in any concrete analysis. Moreover and this is crucial, reminding us of the necessary thrust of the concept. It does not just passively exist as a form of dominance. It has continually to be recreated and defended and modified. It is also continually resisted, altered, challenged by pressures not at all its own. We have then to add to the concept of hegemony the concept of counter hegemony and alternative hegemony which are real and persistent elements of practice.

uneven and contradictory relationship. The novel reflects bourgeois individualism and liberal ideology and an affirmation of man's freedom in a fictionalized world as the same is being denied in the actual social structures. It is in this sense that the novel emerged and matured with the bourgeois and shaped out as secular history in conflict with the class which negates the values and ideology which it professes. Raymond Williams has, in this context, pointed out:

Cultural process must not be assumed to be merely adaptive, extensive, and incorporative. Authentic break within and beyond it, in specific social conditions which can vary from extreme isolation to pre-revolutionary breakdown and actual revolutionary activity, have often in fact occurred. And we are better able to see this alongside more general recognition of the instant pressures and limits of the hegemonic, if we develop mode of analysis which instead of reducing works to finished products and activities to fix positions are capable of discerning in good faith, the finite but significant openness of many actual initiatives and contributions. The finite but significant openness of many works of art, as signifying forms making possible but also requiring persistent and variable signifying responses is then especially relevant.22

Influenced by Lukacs and Hegelian School of Marxist criticism/Lucian Goldmann's main preoccupation was to examine the structure of the literary text and

22Ibid., p. 114.
the degree to which the text manifested the structure of thought or world view of social class or group to which the writer belonged. According to him a well-defined and coherent world vision which means a "complex of ideas, aspirations and feelings" unites the members of a social group into a community and gives them an identity distinct from those belonging to other groups. In a few exceptional cases members of a group attain a consciousness which integrates them with the society around them. He concludes:

The men who express this vision on an imaginative or conceptual plane are writers and philosophers, and the more closely their work expresses this vision in its complete and integrated form, the more important does it become. They then achieve the maximum possible awareness of the social group whose nature they are expressing.23

The more closely a text approximates to a complete coherent articulation of the social class's world vision, the greater is its validity as a work of art. Goldmann termed his critical method as genetic structuralism which he defined in the following words:

"Genetic structuralism sets out from the hypothesis that all human behaviour is an attempt to give a meaningful response to a particular situation and tends, therefore, to create a balance between the subject of action and the subject on which it bears, the environment. This tendency to equilibrium, however, always retains

23 Goldmann, The Hidden God, p. 17.
an unstable, provisional character, in so far as any equilibrium that is more or less satisfactory between the mental structures of the subject and the external world culminates in a situation in which human behaviour transforms the world and in which this transformation renders the old equilibrium inadequate and engenders the tendency to a new equilibrium that will in turn be superseded.

Thus human realities are presented as two-sided processes: destruction of old structurations and structuration of new totalities capable of creating equilibria capable of satisfying the new demands of the social groups that are elaborating them.²⁴

Goldmann sought to discover a structural relation between a literary text, world vision and history itself, the text, the work and a dialectical method of criticism which moves consistently between the text, world vision and history. Goldmann stresses the role of specific literary convention and tradition in the creation of literature but literature itself does not select the elements out of existing tradition for its own development. This selection is carried out by the writer in terms of his own social values. The relationship between the individual literary work and the collective consciousness which it expresses in what Goldmann calls homology of structures.²⁵ To put it in other words, the internal

²⁴ Goldmann, Lucien, Towards a Sociology of the Novel, p. 156.

²⁵ The relation between collective ideology and great individual literary, philosophical, theological etc.
structure of a literary work according to Goldmann bears a close parallel relation to specific social structures. According to him collective consciousness is not a primary or an autonomous reality, but it forms the backdrop of the overall behaviour of an individual in a group. The social character of literature arises from the fact that an individual is incapable of establishing a coherent mental structure. Goldmann approaches literature not as a passive mimesis of the writer's class position but as praxis of the writer in his group and social activities. He writes:

"What really separates, in this as in all other spheres, Marxist sociology from positivistic, relativist, or eclectic sociological tendencies is the fact that it sees the key concept not in the real collective consciousness, but in the constructed concept (zugerechnet) of possible consciousness which alone, makes an understanding of the first possible." 26

Goldmann emphasizes the dialectical interaction of the individual to the group and of the group to the class. Genetic structuralism seems to identify the significant creations resides not in an identity of content, but in a more advanced coherence and in a homology of structures, which can be expressed in imaginary contents very different from the real content of the collective consciousness.

structure within each literary work and those external to it as a continuous shuttling forward and backward from the text to the social structure of the writer's group.

The value of Goldman's emphasis on literature as praxis, however, is contradicted by the attempts to construct a sociological theory of the novel in terms of a homology of economic and literary structures.

From Taine to Goldmann, western sociology of novel, Marxist or otherwise, has been circumscribed by the relationship between the literary work and social conditions. In spite of Marx's attempt to see social reality as a structure, evolving and self-forming whole, the influence of idealism, positivism and reductionism has been so strong that the individual and society have been reified on the one hand and counterposed against each other as a consequence of this reification. Besides this reification there has been a reduction of the possibilities of the individual to the conditions for those possibilities. Actually this approach leads to a double mystification of the phenomenon to be studied rather than an explication and laying bare of the character of the phenomenon in its concreteness as Marx had originally envisaged neither man nor literature can exist without certain conditions for their being is only in and through them but it is important that being is not equivalent to conditions nor
to the circumstances.27

The apparent existence of culture as complex of meanings and values independent/individual human beings leads to the reification of the cultural reality. This reification results in a mistaken view that society is merely an external environment to which human beings have to adapt themselves in the same way as animals adapt to the natural environment in order to survive. According to this view, which has found expression in the writings of behaviorists and structure-functionists like Skinner and Parsons, human personality is formed by successes and failures of the individual in adapting to the social environment. What is being ignored is that society does not consist of external conditions alone but also includes fantasies, dreams and projections of individuals in terms of which they interpret it and interact with one another. The fact that human consciousness

27"Sociology of literature can develop only through its grip on texts, not in reducing literature to the status of a reflection of society. Not only do writers articulate social values within their work, and these will surely have certain ramifications for the work's unity and possible literary qualifies, but writers are part of the world they describe, frequently struggling with the question of values, and this potential activism must not be discounted in the analysis of their work."

Laurenson, Swingewood, op. cit., pp. 87-88.
is simultaneously a reflection and a project, is both receptive and active, is missed by positivists and idealists. As conditions change and unfold, the human subject goes along and develops a new sensibility.

Sociologism, tacitly assumes that while economic structures and formations change throughout history man's ability to perceive the world has remained unchanged since antiquity. The failure of sociologism is rooted in its tendency to abstract conditions from their human circumambience. Conditions outside history, conditions without a subject are not only a petrified and a mystified artefact, but also lack all objective sense. Conditions in this form lack what is most important even from the methodological perspective, namely proper objective meaning. Social reality ceases to have its objective character and disintegrates into independent wholes, individual and society on the one hand and method and theory on the other. This break up of social reality leads to petrifying conditions on the one end and subject and psyche on the other, one of which is alternatively seen as passive recipient or active determinant. One finds expression in mechanistic materialism and the other in mystified idealism. To see literature in social context is to cautiously avoid seeing it as a mysterious creation of consciousness on the one hand and mere
reflection of the social conditions on the other. The split which the capitalist ideology has fostered between individual and society fails to see individual as social and society as not an external fact but the interiorisation of the norms which are constitutive of human context. E.H. Carr rightly suggests that tensions between the individual and the society are not produced by juxtaposition of abstractions but because of groups of individuals trying to promote policies favourable to the group against those that are inimical to it. He points out:

"Individualism, in the sense no longer of a great social movement but of false opposition between individual and society, has become today the slogan of an interested group and, because of its controversial character, a barrier to our understanding of what goes on in the world. I have nothing to say against the cult of the individual as a protest against the perversion which treats the individual as a means and society or state as the end. But we shall arrive at no real understanding either of the past or of the present if we attempt to operate with the concept of an abstract individual standing outside society."\textsuperscript{28}

As against the Western vision of dichotomizing the totality of social human reality into individual Vs. society, contingent Vs. the eternal, the historical Vs. the transcendental, subjective Vs. the objective the fact Vs. values, reality Vs. myth, the Indian cultural

\textsuperscript{28}Carr, E.H., \textit{What is History?}, pp. 34-35.
tradition has a different perspective to offer where an attempt has been made to understand the reality in its comprehensive rather than in its fragmented form. The split that has sharpened since renaissance has given problematic character to a novel in the West. Though over the last two centuries/novel in the West has developed the changed considerably from a biography to social chronicle to a probe into the inner life of man, it has retained its problematic character. The hero of the novel remains a problematic individual, his search for the authentic through the inauthentic/which is his historical situation/gives a tragic character to it. The relationship between the individual and society is seen in terms of a conflict which is reflected in the structure of the novel. In the 18th century the novels of Fielding, Richardson and Stern/society exists as background and yet an all-encompassing reality which is taken for granted by the characters. In a Thackery novel, society creeps into the vitals of characters and forms substance as well as meaning of their experience. In nineteenth century novels/society is represented as an oppressive mechanism and in the 20th century, society assumes the character of an impersonal ruthless impregnable system which swallows the individual reducing him to an object, a fragmented and split entity continuously threatened with decimation.
The western novel during the last two centuries has explored the various shades of individual's relationship with society with or without the possibility of transcendence in socio-historical sense. The novel has emerged as an offshoot of 'alliance of western man with time' and has grown under tensions and strains of that alliance. The conflict, the possibilities of combat, resistance and struggle involved in search for authenticity and truth have been seen as the only forms of transcendence which are to be worked out in and through history. In this process a resort has been made to create new myths which are not expected to bear any divine sanction but are creations of the resolve of man to make fumbling assertions of his sovereign identity and humanity. These attempts are an implied confession on the part of western culture which is founded on time and history and laws of social determination that it is not able to sustain the new myths for they continuously fail to correspond to the changing ethos and socio-historical temper. It sounds ironic that break from one form of myth has only resulted in desperate search for new kind of myths.

The Indo-Anglian novel\(^{29}\) which is a hybrid of

\(^{29}\)"For the novel, properly so called, we have to wait till the latter half of the nineteenth century when the western impact on India's cultural front had
the Indian and the Western cultural traditions has attempted to imitate the form and structure of the Western novel but does not share the problematic character of the Western novel. The problematic character is lacking for in the Indo-Anglian novel the conflict between the individual and society is unusually underplayed and obscured due to the structures of feeling and belief deeply ingrained in the psyche of an Indian that an individual is a constituent of the whole creation and the social and historical dimension of human reality is not an end in itself but an intermediary stage between the here and the now and the eternal. The belief in the intermediary character of socio-historical human reality usually results in the blurring of the conflict in the Indo-Anglian novel. The predilection for the cosmic, the absolute and the transcendental, inevitably results in the undermining of the socio-historical human reality which primarily is the scope of the novel as an art form in the West. It was perhaps this conflict that accounts for the late emergence of the novel form in India.

Iyengar, Srinivasa, K.R., Indian Writing in English, p. 314.
India. Meenakshi Mookerjee rightly suggests:

"The novel, the genre of imaginative literature which gives artistic form to the relationship of man and society, was conspicuously absent until the nineteen-twenties. One reason for this absence may be found in the fact that the novel as an art form came to India with the British and it was new in every Indian literature even though it must be said that the Indo-Anglian novel came into existence long after the novel had become an established genre in other Indian languages. The delay in the development of prose fiction in Indian literature has often been related to the late emergence of the historical sense among Indians. The novel as it developed in the western world is particularly concerned with time and space and their effects on man. The novelist has been increasingly less concerned with the unchanging moral verities and their presentation in a timeless setting and more with the precise location of historical man in the flux and flow of society."  

Can an art form which essentially is an outgrowth of historicization of human reality accommodate the transcendental without compromising its structural and thematic integrity is the basic and most crucial issue of Indo-Anglian novel. Whereas the historicization of myths and mythicization of history forms the dialectics of the western novel, such a dilemma does not arise for the Indo Anglian novelist for he does not admit of the irreconcilibility of history and myth. At the heart of the western novel lies the conflict between what is and

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what should be. This conflict of course can be resolved within the sphere of the novel at best; it can be reconciled. Such a reconciliation leads a man towards self recognition when he can have a glimpse of some meaning in a meaningless universe.

"The immanence of meaning which the form of the novel requires lies in the hero's finding out through experience that a mere glimpse of meaning is the highest that life has to offer, and that this glimpse is the only thing worth the commitment of an entire life, the only thing by which the struggle will have been justified."

whereas the western novel is marked by first a break away from myth and eventually return to myth, the Indo- Anglian novel is permeated by the metaphysics and ontology of the sacred and works out its structure not in terms of conflict and contradiction between the sacred and the secular, the transcendental and the contingent but through their organic growth, merger and fusion. The Indo Anglian novel, an adaptation of a western genre to express a sensibility which is a byproduct of the Western influences on the Indian mind, has a tendency to fall back on the Indian tradition. It is, for this reason, necessary to understand the cultural tradition of India before studying the Indo-Anglian

31 Lukacs, Georg, op. cit., p. 80.
fiction. Despite the western domination during the colonial period, the major cultural tradition in India continues to fall back on the sacred which has, as against the western tradition, a unified metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and social theory. The most important issue in the sociology of Indo-Anglian novel is, therefore, to identify the basic features of the Indian socio-cultural reality in terms of the emphasis that is given to mythic transcendental dimension of experience in the Indian sensibility. For this purpose it is necessary to understand the nature and mode of participation of the sacred in the every day and ultimate apprehension of the human condition by a consciousness which is not marked by the split between the sacred and the secular. In the next chapter an attempt will be made to present briefly a profile of the sacred tradition to the extent it is relevant for understanding Indo-Anglian novel.