CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS
The foregoing chapters are not a survey of the National Movement and its fictional representation. The focus of critical attention is on the value of the creative writing and not on its historical importance. In the course of the discussion, it is emphasized that certain texts have served as models in the sense that they influenced the structurality of other texts. The National Movement has two significant features. One is the path of ahimsa enunciated and practised by Mahatma Gandhi; the other is the path of violent resistance and retaliation preached and practised by Bhagat Singh and his followers. *Kanthapura* is a Gandhian text, *Anandamath*, which was written much earlier in Bengali, dramatizes the path of resistance and retaliation. These two novels to a great extent determined the structural components of later novels like Chaman Nahal's *The Gandhi Quartet* and Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges*. Throughout the discussion, it is assumed that Partition, Novels like *Train to Pakistan*, *A Bend in the Ganges*, and *Azadi* dramatize a significant aspect of the National Movement. In these novels we notice a
narrative competence that makes them readable and durable. Speaking in creative terms, these novels are successful works of fictional art in the sense that they have a taut structure and a complex theme. Mulk Raj Anand's *Lover's Complaint* deals with the dynamics of communal harmony and disharmony at the level of politics, but it is more a love story than a novel on the National Movement. The significance of the novel lies in the love ethic preached by Yasmin.

In *War and Peace*, Tolstoy's concern was to show the impact of a foreign invasion on man and society. In 1930's and 40's most Indians felt that their land was invaded by a foreign power. This strong feeling, patriotic and psychological influenced the entire society. It is out of this that Kamala Markandaya's novel *Some Inner Fury* seems to arise. The blurb of the novel tells us, "In the struggle for independence in India non-violence was the rule. This book is based on the exception. No reference is however intended to any political party, past or present, even where specific names have been used."¹
The most significant point in the narrative of the story is the Quit India Movement to which several lines in the narration are tied. Govind, the adopted brother of Meera and Kit is associated with violent acts. He and his men set fire to the school in which Premela works. She is inside the school and is suffocated to death. Premela is the wife of Kit. Meera loves Richard but their love ends with Kit's murder and the trial that follows. As the title suggests, the fury of the agitating mob is less dangerous than the furious impulses that drive the human mind. Perhaps the novelist is very naive in trying to drive home this sort of message but what is significant is the way in which she handles the East-West theme, symbolized by Meera and Richard respectively. In order to assess the significance of the theme and its dramatization, it is thought critically valuable to bring into the discussion novelists like Forster and Paul Scott, who attempt to dramatize the East-West relationship in the context of the Indian National Movement.
There is an anecdote in Malgonkar's *Bandicoot Run* which the chief character Brain Gilchrist narrates. Gilchrist met Forster in 1946 when he (Forster) came to Hyderabad. He asked Forster:

"About one thing, mostly. I said to him: 'My Forster, You're often quoted as saying that, if you were ever called upon to make the choice between betraying your friend or your country, you hoped you would have the courage not to betray your friend. Did you really mean it?'"

Gilchrist's question seems to sum up some of the vague notions people have about Forster and his work. *A Passage to India* implies a number of unarticulated reservations about Indians and their culture. Forster is not happy with the Hindu religion, manners and customs, and their English. More than Godbole, it is a Muslim, Dr Aziz, who occupies the central position in the novel. Forster's orientalism seems to confine itself to some of the minor points that are not taken seriously by the orientalists. From Gilchrist we learn that Forster did not give any kind of answer to his..."
question. A reconsideration of *A Passage to India* in the post-colonial context makes one feel that the novel takes for granted the prevailing disharmony in Indian society at that time. Although it is very ironical, the colonizer's culture is not very explicit about merits or otherwise of the Indian culture. Notwithstanding the earlier observations, *A Passage to India* has served as a model for the Indian and the Western novelists to dramatize personal relationships.

Although we cannot say that Jhabvala's *Heat and Dust* is influenced by Forster, we notice a few points of resemblance between the two, *Heat and Dust* and *A Passage to India*. *Heat and Dust* weaves together Hindu and Muslim cultures, not from the point of view of either the Hindu or the Muslim, but from the point of view of a Westerner who comes to India to reconstruct the personal experience of one of her great-aunts, Olivia. Throughout the narration, the implied irony seems to be that the terrain and the environment have a greater say on the Indian life than either orientalism or other western isms.
Unlike Jhabvala, Paul Scott in his *The Raj Quartet* tries to be more historical and objective. In other words, it is not the National Movement that occupies the imaginative and fictional focus but its socio-cultural implications. The change in the political scene has not re-oriented either the imperialist creed or the Indianess of the Indian culture. The paths of peace and violence are not evolved by refinement or brutality, but by the exigencies of the given historical situation. Hence *The Raj Quartet* is a more imaginative and comprehensive statement of the colonial problem, glimpses of which one gets from Forster. When Arnold describes culture as sweetness and light or poetry, we should not consider it a mere colonial proposition. The National Movement generated a culture, inclusive sense may be called a third-world culture. Although in a critical discussion of the third-world literature ethnic factors play a crucial role, there is the muted affirmation of values associated with Arnoldian sweetness and light. The novels I discuss emphatically
affirm that apart from its political significance, a mass movement like the National Movement has its own consciousness and unity of voice. It is this cultural aspect of the Movement that has become a fertile ground for the growth of fiction, fiction which has more cultural significance than political significance.

In short, it can be maintained that the National Movement is a renaissance of Indian culture. It also brings to a central focus the cultural variety of India. But on the whole, these rich and disparate cultures were made to co-exist because of the great movement in which great minds participated. The writings of Gandhi, Aurobindo, Nehru and other great national leaders are not only reinterpretation of Indian culture, but are sources of rich, creative writing. Apart from its significance as a novel, Raja Rao's Kanthapura is an eloquent summing up of the major writings of Mahatma Gandhi. We learn more about the horrors that took place during the partition from A Bend in the Ganges than from any history book.
REFERENCES:
