Chapter-1

THE RISE AND GROWTH OF INDIAN ENGLISH NOVEL
CHAPTER - I

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ENGLISH NOVEL

INTRODUCTION

The novel appeared as a popular form of literature during the eighteenth century England. It was the result of the gradual democratization in Great Britain. But the novel, as a form of literature, is new to India. K. R. Srinivas Iyengar says, “For the novel, properly so called, we have to wait till the latter half of the nineteenth century.”

Still it is said the genre of novel existed in India as a crude form of literature. It is noticeable that the western influence on Indian English novel was quite obvious. It is said, “The early Indian English novel is derivative and imitative of English models. Early fiction writers copied their language from the works of English Romantics and Victorians.”

Indian novelists successfully employed European techniques of novel for expressing their ethos and sensibility. What naturally distinguishes Indian English novel from its beginning is its social concern, realism and its unfailing interest in man. It represents the cultural perspectives
of people. So Indian English novelists have given an expression to their hopes and aspirations.

An ardent love for novel in India began with the arrival of the English. It increased with the spread of English education in the second half of the nineteenth century. However, the early writers who began writing English novel were the writers whose mother tongue was not English. Still they wrote novels in English for giving an expression to their spirit of nationalism and to expose their social realities to the international community. According to C. Paul Vergheese, “A novelist, it may be said, is in search of a unity in diversity of life and civilization. He, therefore, cannot turn his back on the social realities of his time, but should crave man’s image in his art with his social awareness and insight into life.” The novelists of the period dealt with social problems for bringing in rapid social awareness. So here an effort is made to examine the birth and growth of Indian English fiction.

The birth of English novel in India is, to some extent, the result of historical, political, social and cultural incidents. Especially, Indian struggle for independence, Gandhian movement and partition are the three important incidents, which encouraged the birth and growth of English novel. Dr. Gajendra Kumar says, “The first half of the twentieth century has been rich and fruitful period for the Indo-Anglian novels which show the profound influence of the epoch making political, social
and ideological changes because of the Gandhian Movement."⁴ Mahatma Gandhi was an iconic figure in the movement. He was a symbol of many things for many people. He was seen variously as a great opponent of European imperialism and as a champion of civil rights for racial, religious and other minorities. He was an important critic of industrial system of production. His great quality lay in his ability to reach out to the poor and oppressed. A great Indian political leader and social reformer, Rammanohar Lohia says, “Tens of millions through the world saw in him their spokesman, the solace and the remedy for their suffering and distress.”⁵

The independence movement in India, “was not merely a political struggle, but a pervasive emotional experience for all Indians in the nineteen-twenties and thirties...”⁶ So the pre-independence movement was a political struggle for independence combining and confronting varied forces. The movement strove for ushering India as a sovereign secular independent nation purged of political, economic and social evils, which had spoiled the very vitals of national life. Thus the novels of the period are more national in nature.

The Islamic separatists became politically more important in India from the mid 1920s. Muslims made up about a quarter of the entire population of the sub-continent and they were in a majority in the northwest and in East Bengal. Their demand led to the creation of a
separate Muslim state in 1940. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, an old political rival of Mahatma Gandhi became the leader of this movement. He took the issue to streets in 1946, which led to terrible riots in Calcutta and other parts of India. The Congress leaders began to view Muslim majority areas as a possible liability for the fledging nation state and decided reluctantly to agree to the division of the subcontinent into two nations -- India and Pakistan. Indeed, the process of partition began on 15th August 1947. As a result conflicts between Hindus and Muslims involving Sikhs began rapidly. Thousands of people died and millions of them became refugees. Many leaders worked vigorously to alleviate the suffering of the affected. They insisted that the Muslims who remained in India should be treated as full and respected citizens of the new nation.

Thus the dramatic incident of partition of India played an important role in the rise and growth of Indian novel. Partition did not merely mean as two new geographical dimensions, but it gave birth to a new psychic dimension. It cannot be overlooked as an incident of the past, because it is another face of independence. The search for identity did not end with the departure of the British. It began with the most conspicuous event of Partition. So creative writers, especially Indian English Muslim novelists started discussing the theme of Partition in their works. According to Sukrita Paul Kumar, “Partition cannot just be
historicized as an event of the past. In actuality, that ‘past’ has been perpetually digging into the present. The creative writer in the sub-continent has been working and reworking the event of partition in fiction, if it only to come into grips with the dynamic thrust of human consciousness struck by both the collective as well as individual tragedy. For the relation between the actual social conditions and reality of the individual’s experience to be understood, the writer has had constantly to evolve a new strategy to confront the actuality of the historical and cultural ‘accident’ of the partition. Human relationships were re-evaluated, values were re-examined and a new sensibility emerged.” So the novels of the period dealt with the theme of partition and its consequences. Also it was the period of various socio-political movements. The progressive movement, independence movement and the wave related to Marxist ideology played vital roles in popularizing Indian English fiction. Of course, the writers of the period considered novel as a popular channel to convey their thoughts. But Indian novelists of freedom movement wrote novels in English “Not for the ‘Outlandish reading public’ but for Indians and for themselves primarily; and produced not with themes and situations that may appeal ‘to the West’ but those that may appeal to the Indians.”
So several factors have helped for the creation of Indian English novel. As a result, many writers began writing novels in English. Here an effort is made to study them in detail.

THE FIRST GENERATION NOVELISTS:

As mentioned above Indian English fiction came into existence only in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Indian writers earlier than that, of different stages were attached emotionally with their regional languages. Indians believed that English was a British language and hence it should go with them. In fact, the Englishmen or anything associated with them would bring them bitter feelings. But there was an argument that learning English would not mean a slave mentality. English language with its great literary heritage is no longer a language of a particular country or race. It is considered a ‘universal language’ that has several benefits. In other words "It is a wonderful window on the world and has thrown open to us a vast panorama or worldwide scientific, literary, cultural and political scene by which we have immensely gained." Another conformity in the pre-independence period to retain and favour English in India was that it was serving as a link language throughout the country. It was an official and court language, used extensively all over the country. English became popular in a very short while among the Indian populace. People
started using it for speeches, articles, pamphlets and discussing several current problems. Pramod Kumar Singh says, "In the mid nineteenth century, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had initiated social reform programmes and in the process, he favoured the English language for spreading the wealth of information and culture available in British publications. Ram Mohan Roy, though a master of Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic languages, felt that all renaissance knowledge was compiled mainly in European Languages." The early Indian English writing consists of pamphlets, essays and poems. Raja Ram Mohan Roy’s *Precepts of Jesus* (1820) shows his generosity of mind, mastery over English and sincerity in treatment of Indian themes. Then came the Dutt family, especially Toru Dutt and Romesh Chander Dutt as English writers contributing more to the literary field. Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Bankimchandra Chatterjee got entrance to the creative field later. They are considered the ‘Titans’ in the field of Indian writing in English. Really their contribution is unique. Equally great writers like Balgangadhar Tilak, Motilal Nehru, Ranade, Gopalkrishna Gokhale and Sarojini Naidu follow them.

Indian English writing continued to grow with the genres of novel and short story. The novelists and short story writers such as S. K Ghose, Manmohan Ghose, Michael Madusudan Dutt, S. M. Mitra, Raj Laxmi Devi, Kshetrapal Chakrabarty, Lal Bihari De, A. Mahadevaiah,
Behramji, S. B. Banerjee, Sardar Jogendra Singh, Balkrishna, Nagesh Vishvanath Pai, Sorabjee Cornelia, T. Ram Krishna and K. S. Venkataramani were the writers who were experimenting to provide recognition to Indian English fiction. They wrote social, historical and detective novels. Their historical romances were popular. Novels with political and social themes dominated the field during the period of 1860-1920.

Thereafter during the period 1920 to 1950, the next batch of Indian English writers like R. K. Narayana, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Khushwant Singh and a host of others were trying their art of fiction-writing with equal facility and felicity. They had unlimited and unrestricted themes. The novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Bhabani Bhattacharya deal with the themes of social criticism and political emancipation. They protest against feudalism and imperialism of the period. The religious and mythical Indian traditions have been successfully presented in the novels of R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao. Whereas, in the works of post-independence writers psychological and social tensions are exposed.

The novelists like R. K. Narayan, Ahmed Ali, Attia Hussain, Bal Krishna, A. Madhaviah and Jogender Singh have derived their main characters from the urban middle class. There are lively presentations of middle class manners and the conflict between tradition and modernity.
They exposed the snobbery, sentimentality, pretentiousness, hypocrisy, corruption and the other social evils in their works.

Among the beginners of Indian English fiction, Bankim Chandra Chattarjee (1838-93) is a pioneer writer who used and encouraged the works of novel in English widely. He played an important role in its rise and development. As Harish Raizada observes, for the first time, Bankim Chandra Chattarjee encouraged “The creative energy of promising writers who were hesitant and shy of writing novels... By writing historical, social and philosophical novels, he decided the future course of this literary form in India and came to be known truly as the father of Indian novel.”

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee wrote *Rajmohun’s Wife* (1864), and it is the first novel in English. It is said that he wrote the novel, in order to attract the attention of the west. As the first Indian novel in English it promised a rich growth. The novel is remarkable for Bankim Chandra Chatterjee’s narrative skill. He deftly uses the devices of accident, crime, thrill and suspense. It is a realistic tale of sufferings of a typical Hindu wife Matangini. Matangini’s character is nicely portrayed. Her boundless capacity for tolerance, her human consideration for Madhav, her selfless affection for her sister and her courage make her a bold Indian woman. However, Matangini’s husband Rajmohun is sketched as a villain who commits a series of crimes.
Many other writers followed Bankim Chandra Chatterjee’s example. Raj Lakshmi Devi published her novel, *The Hindu Wife* in 1876. A Kerala Christian missionary Mrs Richard Collins’ novel *The Slayer Slain* appeared in 1877. Kali Krishna Lahiri’s *Rashinara* came out in 1881. H. Dutta published his *Bijay Chand* in 1888; and Kshetrapal Chakrabarti’s *Sarata and Hingana* appeared in 1895. Apart from these writers, Rabindra Nath Tagore, a Nobel Laureate of English *Gitanjali*, is credited to have produced several novels primarily in Bengali but later on, some of them brought into English. His novels are, *The Home and the World* (1919) and *The Wreck and Gora* (1923). These are domestic and social novels. So Indian English fiction acquired its place in India gradually.

Toru Dutt (1856-1877), an eminent poetess of the period wrote a novel called *Bianca* (1878). She wrote it when she was just a teen-aged girl. It is said, *Bianca* is “more a product of imagination than of experience.” Here Toru Dutt describes the sorrow of her heroine Bianca and Bianca’s father. Bianca’s mother is sketched as a villain. The novel is artistically rich. But, because of Toru Dutt’s premature death it remained incomplete.

Lal Bihari De (1824-1894) is another Indian English novelist who wrote *Bengal Peasant Life* (1880). His is a realistic novel, dealing with a Bengali peasant family of the Samantas living in Kanchanpur village...
near Burdwan. The novel exposes various manifestations of exploitation caused by landlords, corrupt officials and foreign planters. Its plot is compact. Its characters are real and life-like. The novel is written in simple language. It is considered as one of the best Indian English novels written in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Shoshee Chunder Dutt (1824-86) was a prodigious writer whose collected works were published in six volumes. He wrote two novels, *The Young Zemindar* (1883) and *Shunkur* (1885). His first novel deals with Manohar, a young zemindar and his mentor Babajee Bissonath. Manohar accepts the British presence, gradually admitting that 'English rule' with all its drawbacks, is better than what the Mohammedan rule was. In his short novel *Shunkur*, S. C. Dutt deals with the social relationships and compromises of Indians with the newly arrived British. Here the British officers like Bernard and Mackenzie rape Shunkur's wife who has given them shelter. But the victim's husband Shunkur does not politicize the matter. He suffers in loneliness. Shoshee Chander Dutt’s novels deal with the burning issues of contemporary society.

Krupabai Satthianadhan (1862-94) is a good woman novelist of the period who wrote two novels, *Kamala, A Story of Hindu Life* (1894) and *Saguna, A Story of Native Christian Life* (1895). Both the novels deal with a similar theme. The novelist has a remarkable skill for story-
telling. *Saguna* seems to be autobiographical. Saguna, the heroine is the daughter of a Christian priest. She gets admission in a medical college and eventually meets a man who could share her life as an equal. In the other novel, Kamala’s life follows a different trajectory. Here, she is the daughter of a learned Hindu *sanyasi*. She is brought up in a sparsely populated hilly area, where she marries a young Hindu. Kamala does not understand the behavioural patterns of her new world, and despite her best efforts, she remains a misfit. Her happy moments are when her father-in-law allows her handle his books or when her husband gives her lessons in reading and writing. But such joys are short-lived, as the joint family system does not allow the things for long time. Soon afterwards her husband dies of cholera. Finally her father’s disciple marries her. Kamala accepts this, however. So the novel ends with a happy note. Krupabai Satthianadhan’s novels are set in Nasik hills. Krupabai Satthianadhan is a rare writer as these novels are not of mere archival interest. They offer a good deal of textual pleasure representing some of the earliest feminist and cultural concerns.

S. K. Ghose (1840-1911) is considered one of the most talented English novelists of the period. His *1001 Indian Nights* (1905) and *The Prince of Destiny* (1909) are celebrated works of remarkable literary interest. They deal with the theme of adventure, romance and suspense. *1001 Indian Nights* deals with the adventures of Narayan Lal, a royal
juggler. The juggler marries a beautiful princess Debala. Narayan Lal undergoes various risky trials to prove that he is a Rajput of royal blood. The king tests him. Narayan Lal is portrayed as a brave man. It is a well told romance, known for its skilled narration. *The Prince of Destiny* is a novel with a purpose. It is known as the first socio-political novel of the twentieth century. Prince Barat of Baratpur estate is considered to be the man of destiny and an emancipator of India from the British rule. The prince is sent to England for higher education. In England he stays with Col. Wingate and his niece Ellen, the Christian missionaries who had once lived in India. When he comes back to India, he finds Vashista, who has become a British enemy. He offers Barat to take charge of Indian army and starts a revolution against the British. Vashista, the priest and teacher play a vital role. The novel is a fictional autobiography of S. K. Ghose. The plot, though interesting, lacks an organic coherence.

Ramkrishna Pillai (1878-1916) was a south Indian writer. He wrote two novels, *Padmini* (1903) and *The Dive for Death* (1912). His *Padmini* is a romantic story of Padmini and Srirangaraya. *The Dive for Death* is a romance. The latter is the story of Devamani who marries Vijay, a youth of her choice. Both the novels are conspicuous for their presentation of social life.
A. Madhaviah (1872-1925) was a prominent south Indian English writer. He wrote *Clarinda* (1915), a historical novel and *Thillai Govindan* (1908), an autobiographical novel. *Clarinda* is a feeble work, describing the marriage of an Indian widow with an English officer. A. Madhaviah's other novel *Thillai Govindan* is a short work but artistically rich, dealing with Thillai Govindan's life. The protagonist of the novel is a young hero, who raises his voice against the gnawing evils in Hindu religion and society. He has the bearings of a social reformer. The plot of the novel is coherent and well-knit.

Jogender Singh was one of the celebrated novelists of the period. He was a biography writer. He has written the biography of Guru Nanak. His novels include *Nur Jahan* (1909), *Nasrin* (1915), *Kamala* (1925) and *Kamini* (1931). Among them *Nur Jahan* is a historical novel and it is more popular. It deals with the love story of Mughal prince Salim with Mihar, a beautiful daughter of Ghias Beg. Mihar becomes Nur Jahan after her marriage. *Nasrin* attempts to expose the lives of Nawabs and Zamindars. As a social novel, it describes the upper class life in the first decade of twentieth century. The first two novels are about Muslims in India and the other two, *Kamala* and *Kamini* deal with Hindu Rajas and Talukdars. *Kamala* is a romance of a hill girl of Almora. The heroine Kamala is kidnapped and carried to the palace of a ruler in an estate. The ruler Raja Jai Singh is corrupt but when he looks at Kamala, he is
overwhelmed by her behaviour and gives up his bad way of life. Ultimately Kamala marries Ratan Singh. The intention of the novelist is to condemn the evils of Hindu society. He criticizes caste system, child marriage and the miserable condition of widows. Jogendra Singh's next novel Kamini is more realistic and convincing. Its heroin, Kamini is a beautiful lady. She is the daughter of a village barber, Ramchandran. Her lustful admirers harass her. A Brahmin priest tries to seduce her. Then a voluptuous Raja tries to molest her. So do the policemen and Thanedars. Kamini escapes from her tormentors and takes shelter in the house of a Christian missionary, Miss Greenwood. There, she starts taking education, becomes bold and self-confident. Later she marries Ratan Nath. But she cannot enjoy her married life with him as she dies of brain fever soon. Thus Kamini represents courage and determination.

So Jogendra Singh has brought social realism and humanism to Indian English fiction. He is a trendsetter in this respect. But his novels are considered as cheap stories of amusement and they do not deserve any serious critical attention. G. P. Sarma says, "He has neither a good artistic gift nor a serious concern as a novelist."13

K. S. Venkataramani was one of the earliest writers who wrote two realistic novels, Murugan, the Tiller (1927) and Kandan, the Patriot (1932). His novels won immense popularity and drew the attention of eminent critics in India and Europe. Murugan, the Tiller is a novel with
a purpose. Ramchandran, the hero of the novel is a camp clerk. He is a dedicated and honest worker. His sincerity takes him to a higher position. He is elevated to a higher rank and is deputed to disband a gang of dacoits operating in a district of Madras. In course of time, he meets Murugan, his old and trusted tenant, who has been drawn to the fold of dacoits due to poverty. With Murugan’s help Ramachandran liquidates the gang of dacoits and regenerates them as the tillers of soil in the village of Meenakshipuram. Like Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi, Venkataramani disapproves industrial civilization and pleads for the return to nature.

*Kandan, the Patriot* is a superior novel. It is set against the background of Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930s. Gandhian movement in Indian politics is its central theme. Kandan, an Oxford educated Indian youth joins freedom movement. He launches non-cooperation movement in Tanjaore district. He is dedicated to the economic, political and social reconstruction of India. Rajeshwari Bai, the daughter of a millionaire and Rangan, who resigns his post of Assistant Collector join Kandan. They call a public meeting to discuss about ‘Swaraj Movement.’ The district authorities ban such a meeting. The military men start firing at gatherings. One of the bullets hits Kandan and he dies. So Kandan is shown as a representative of Gandhian ideology.
Venkataramani’s place as a novelist is high and secure. As a pioneer of novel writing with a purpose he influenced the future development of Indian English fiction. *Murugan, the Tiller* is an example of rural novel and *Kandan, the Patriot* is that of political novel. The two novels became enormously popular in the pre-independence literary panorama.

Dhan Gopal Mukherji has published many books in English in the early twentieth century. He wrote two important novels, describing Indian village life. His *My Brother’s Face* (1925) is a social novel, dealing with an Indian settled down in America. It is a document on the change in India in the early twentieth century. The novel is written in the first person singular. The narrator leaves his motherland in 1909 for America and Japan and returns home after thirteen years. He finds India a changed country under the grip of national awakening and new ideas. The narrator with his brother visits Agra, Banaras, Culcutta and many other towns, where he meets people and records their impressions about India.

Dhan Gopal Mukherji’s *The Secret Listeners of the East* (1926) is a novel of mystery and terror. The murder of General Gastry, the leader of scout movement in British India, creates the feelings of terror. Nirmal Chatterji, a doctor, plays the role of a master detective with the help of his adopted son, Virigu. So it is a detective novel with suspense and
mystery. Some vital political issues add a new dimension to it, making it more interesting. The plot is compact and the characters are well portrayed.

A. S. P. Ayyar, a district and sessions judge was also a novelist. He wrote two historical novels, *Baladitya* (1930) and *Three Men of Destiny* (1939). As a novelist he combines historical facts with imagination. Like Sir Walter Scott, he deals with historical facts not as a historian but as an artist. In *Baladitya*, Ayyar aims at portraying social, religious, cultural and political conditions of India towards the close of fifth century. As for the story, Baladitya kills Bhumaka to save the life of Yashodharman, his intimate friend. Then he escapes to Kerala. Yashodharman marries a daughter of Gunasagar, the king of Kalinga. Then Yashodharman, with the help of other Indian kings drives away the Huns. A Toraman king is killed and Mihiragula is defeated in the battle of Malwa in 533 A.D. So Baladitya, the Gupta ruler, gets back his kingdom. The novel deals with a dynasty.

A. S. P. Ayyar’s *Three Men of Destiny* is about Alexander, the great, who invaded India, and Chanakya who helped Chandragupta Maurya in establishing the Mauryan Empire. The novelist describes two stories related to Alexander and Chandragupta Maurya. However the novel is loose in its structure, Ayyar’s efforts are praiseworthy.
D. F. Karaka (1911-1974), a novelist of the pre-independence period is not properly treated. He has written three novels *Just Flesh* (1941), *There Lay the City* (1942) and *We Never Die* (1944). But his novels do not show any seriousness of purpose. Still he is considered as, “one of the few very popular and widely read Indo-Anglian novelists.”\(^{14}\) His novels deal with the British life in India.

*Just Flesh* is an interesting story over the conflict between tradition and modernity. Here the conflict manifests between a father and his son. Ronald, the father believes in the sanctity of English tradition and conventional morality. His son John, who belongs to new generation, differs from his father and disregards traditional norms. John’s outlook changes remarkably in the liberal, open and enlightened atmosphere of Oxford University. He believes in socialism and feels pity for the poor. The gulf between the father and son widens. John’s father dies unreconciled. Later John falls in love with Phyllis. Even he enjoys fame and prosperity. John’s success symbolizes the victory of new generation.

*There Lay the City* is about the city of Bombay. It is a tragic tale of unfulfilled love of a poor but beautiful English girl Judy. Her beauty and simplicity fascinate the narrator who knows that she is a fallen woman. One day when the programme is over the narrator takes her to his garret. As they sip whisky, Judy tells her past story of love-failure.
Her woeful tale touches the narrator's heart and he offers his hand to her. So she visits him. But one day she learns that he has already married somebody. The plot of the novel is organic. The characters are real and individualistic. Karaka's prose is journalistic and effective.

Karaka's next novel *We Never Die* is set in an Indian village. A stray picture of Indian freedom struggle is shown here through the eyes of an ignorant villager. Karaka endeavours to solve the problem of communalism. Karaka has realistically depicted a simple story with the background of civil disobedience and non-cooperation movement.

Krishnaswamy Nagarajan was another South Indian English writer. He wrote two novels *Athawar House* (1937) and *Chronicles of Kedaram* (1961). *Athawar House* is a domestic story, set in the pre-independence period. The story is about a Maratha joint family living in a south Indian village. The family is called Athawars. The novel covers the history of the family for a period of sixteen years. The novelist has deftly combined personal and family perspectives in one single picture. He describes freedom movement too. The Athawars get disturbed, when non-cooperation and civil disobedience movements take place in the village. A clash takes place between orthodoxy and modernity. *Athawar House* depicts the disintegration of joint family system in India.

There is a big list of neglected novelists. Some of them are important, for they have written fine works. On the contrary, some of
them are well-known just for their minor works. Few of them are K. E. Ghamat, who wrote *My Friend the Barrister* (1908), a biographical novel, and Bal Krishna who wrote a social novel *Love of Kusuma* (1910) in which Kusuma’s love and marriage with Mohan is the central theme. Other novels of the period are B. K. Sarkar’s *Man of Letters* (1911) (a social novel), R. P. De’s *Mother and Daughter* (1923) (a domestic novel) and Sir Hari Singh Gour’s *His Only Love* (1930), (a satire on the blind imitation of western ideals). Others include R. C. Chattopadhyaya, who wrote *The Sorrows of a Sub-Post Master* (1932), N. C. Sen Gupta who wrote *The Idiot’s Wife* (1935), H. Kaveribai who wrote *Meenakshi’s Memories, A Novel of Christian Life in South India* (1937), Shankar Ram who wrote *Love of Dust* (1938), C. N. Zutshi who wrote *Motherland* (1944) and Manjeri S. Isvaran, who wrote five volumes of short stories, *Necked Shingles* (1941), *Shiva Ratri* (1943), *Angry Dust* (1944), *Rikshawwala* (1946) and *Fancy Tales* (1947). Yet most of these works are not serious.

Thus many Indian writers have contributed widely for the growth of Indian English fiction. The list of early Indian English novelists is quite big. Of course, we do not know some of them today.

As the beginners, these novelists contributed to the rise of Indian English fiction. No doubt, the British writers influenced them. Besides, Indianization of English was an outstanding achievement of the writers.
of the period. The novelists representing various geographical regions harnessed English to express Indian ethos and sensibility. In spite of many hindrances and handicaps, the fiction of the period became a great literary force and powerful medium for creating social and national awareness. Naturally in the next phases the Indian novel achieved a full flowering.

THE SECOND GENERATION NOVELISTS:

The novels written by the second-generation writers are more modern and realistic, dealing with the problems of men and women passing through several revolutionary changes. The novels in the previous era were mainly concerned with the external aspects of society and little with exteriorization of the inner landscape of human psyche. After its considerable development by the hands of second-generation novelists the form of novel became more subtle, philosophical and psychological. This change in the content of novel necessitated the use of new technical devices. For instance, many novelists deftly used the devices of stream of consciousness technique. One can easily find out this technique in Mulk Raj Anand’s *Untouchable* (1935). Myth too was used as a technique to illustrate the novelists’ personal vision of life. Almost all the novelists of the period have interpreted myth in their
own manner so that it may contribute to the expression of their point of view.

R. K. Narayan (1906-2001), a south Indian started his career as a novelist in the year 1935 by publishing his first novel *Swami and Friends*. Today he is one of the most popular Indian novelists in English. He received inspiration and appreciation from great critic-writers like Elizabeth Bowen, E. M. Forster and Graham Greene. Thematically none of the contemporary Indian English novelists equals R. K. Narayan. According to C. D. Narasimaiah, “R. K. Narayan has no equal among the Indian novelists writing in English. He manages by a miracle of perception and choice of detail to convey the Indian without a single false feeling or gesture.”

R. K. Narayan concentrates more on Indian village community that is usually isolated from the main stream of modern life. No doubt, his literary world is a part and parcel of Indian community. Comparatively, “Narayan is a writer with a full commitment to certain spiritual and religious values and ideas, with which Indians are normally familiar. Narayan's vision is essentially moral, for the problems he sets himself to resolve in his novel are largely ethical. This is not to underplay the comic irony of an artist much admired by critics in the west; on the contrary it is his comic vitality that humanizes
Narayan’s grand vision. The elusive charm of his success is the direct result of a rare combination of comic sense and religious sensibilities.\textsuperscript{16}

R. K. Narayan’s first novel \textit{Swami and Friends} looks like a collection of essays about friendship and childhood enmities. It deals with the story of a grand cricket tournament of South Indian boys, who were playing on a strip of ground adjoining someone’s bungalow. But the boys are driven out by the next batch of intruders. Here Narayan immortalizes his school and college days.

R. K. Narayan’s novels have a co-relation between life and art. This is the reason why he is not merely a writer of childhood franks. He examines life in its bare details. He fills his novels with funny, sad, absurd, tender, holy and eccentric emotions. His works depict life and death. Some of it is autobiographical.

R. K. Narayan’s \textit{The Financial Expert} (1952) is a tale of Margayya’s miserable life. It remains in the history of Indian English literature as an everlasting work of art, because Narayan has shown a keen interest in his technique of individualizing and personalizing the theme of “Dubious alliance of money and affection.”\textsuperscript{17} Margayya’s desire for money and his ruthlessness in business are unforgettable. There are a lot of similarities between \textit{The Financial Expert} and \textit{The Vendor of Sweets} (1967). The hero of the latter, Jagan is like Margayya. Jagan is immensely practical and committed. But his son Mali, who goes abroad
to become a writer, fails to understand his father. Here Narayan gives the picture of father, son and daughter-in-law relationships. The novel is full of native humour.

R. K. Narayan's *The Bachelor of Arts* (1936) is the story of his personal experiences as an English teacher. It depicts the life of an Indian youth during his college days. The hero of the novel Chandran after completing his B. A. decides to go to England for a doctorate degree. There he falls in love with a girl. But he does not marry her, as his parents do not agree. Finally his frustration makes him a sanyasi.

*Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955) is a classic. It narrates the story of Gandhian influence on rural life in India. The novel bears a comparison with Raja Rao's *Kantapura* (1936). The central idea is Gandhi's appeal for non-violence. It is said, "In this novel Gandhi shuns psychopaths and reminds Malgudians of the injustice suffered by the untouchables in their town. Except a few, Narayan's stories and sketches describe Malgudi during the transition from British rule to self government, and gently satirize some of the civic and administrative follies that result from absurdly excessive patriotism." ¹⁸ R. K. Narayan's *The Dark Room* (1935) is about the unhappy life of a woman Savitri, who has three children. She is ill-treated by her husband. Savitri faces a number of problems in the rigid society.

R. K. Narayan's characters are ordinary, stupid, queer and simple. However, with the touch of irony and light humour, he immortalizes them. He is the writer of both the pre and post-independence period. He is the only writer whose literary career has been spread over sixty years from 1935 to 2001.

Mulk Raj Anand (b.1905-2004), R. K. Narayan and Raja Rao started their career more or less in the same period. But they are different from each other as to their literary approaches and objectives. Mulk Raj Anand is a humanist. He has a deep intellectual concern for humanity. One of the critics says, "His concern as a fiction writer has been always the redemption of the poor and oppressed of the society from the clutches of the rich and the oppressor -- an objective which he pursues with the zeal of a missionary." The problems of the poor and oppressed are there not only in India but also in other parts of the world. So when Anand tries for their redemption that is not only
concerned with Indian society but also with the society of other countries.

Marxism, Russian revolution and various European political ideologies influenced Mulk Raj Anand. At the same time Indian nationalism held a sway over him. Besides, he was one of the chief organizers of a progressive movement in England and India. He organized many Indian English writers’ workshops and conferences and created a lot of social awareness through his writing. Anand is an angry rebel for a good social order. It is said, “He has no tears, no grief but only anger and aims to change the whole Indian society.”

Mulk Raj Anand has written more than thirty books, which include novels and books of short stories. His major novels are Untouchable (1935), Coolie (1936), Two Leaves and a Bud (1937), Village (1939), Across the Black Waters (1940), The Big Heart (1945), The Seven Summers (1951) and Sword and Sickle (1955).

Mulk Raj Anand’s Untouchable narrates one day in the life of Bakha, an introspective young sweeper who lives in outcastes’ colony in a small cantonment town in north India. In a way it is a critique of society exposing social evils like hypocrisy, bigotry and casteism. Bakha, the hero represents the downtrodden class of Indian society. In those days the upper caste Hindus thought that sweepers were dirty. But Bakha says, “They think we are mere dirt because we clean their
The disgusting remark comparing himself with dirt exposes the inhuman treatment of the low caste by the callous upper caste. It is observed: “There was no provision for lights in the sweeper’s street. The nights were spent in utter darkness during the winter, however, they have to come out from their homes.” This reminds the lives of chimney sweepers of the Victorian society.

Bakha desires for education but his teachers do not like to teach the outcastes. It is a popular belief that if an upper caste Hindu touches outcaste students, he will be polluted. So socially Bakha is handicapped. In fact, thousands of Bakha-like characters achieve nothing significant in their lives. They end their lives in ditch where they have been born. Mulk Raj Anand presents Bhaka as a social victim. Though he is a saver of men, he is seen as a killer. Anand’s treatment of the downtrodden is realistic and the novel is considered a powerful documentation of the downtrodden.

Anand’s *Coolie* is about the inhuman exploitation of the poor. The novel has a multi-dimensional philosophy. It “relates a series of adventures in picturesque manner, only the hero is no rogue, but himself the victim of the world’s rogueries.” The novel focuses on Munoo. Munoo’s life is the life of India’s millions of starving souls, who are beaten, insulted and treated as beasts in several social occasions.
Mulk Raj Anand’s *Two Leaves and a Bud* is again about oppression. It is the story of Gangu, a Punjabi peasant. After his effort for work in Amritsar, Gangu goes to Assam’s tea estate as a labour. Still he fails there. His wife dies of cholera. Gangu requests the manager of that estate for a loan for his wife’s funeral. But the manager does not help him. Gangu’s daughter Laila becomes the victim of the Manager’s lust. Thus *Two Leaves and a Bud* is a story of the oppressors and the oppressed. For some time the novel was banned in India and Britain.

Mulk Raj Anand’s *The Village* is about a Punjabi boy-hero Lal Singh. The hero has studied till eighth standard and he is a defender of progressive elements. Lal Singh speaks against the popular beliefs of community. But finally he becomes the victim of corrupt feudalism and capitalism. It is observed: “In technique *The Village* is akin to *Coolie* though it is not in the tradition of the picaresque a simple story for expounding the theme with all the humour and pathos of the situations, an art where Mulk Raj Anand is a past master.”

*Across the Black Waters* is the second of a trilogy. The hero of the novel Lalu, a British soldier fights against the Germans. The writer has depicted Lalu’s observation of the farmers’ progressive agriculture and the role of co-operative banks in French society.

Mulk Raj Anand’s *The Sword and Sickle* is a continuation of Lalu’s story. As he returns home from battlefield Lalu decides to work as a
farmer. But everything is tipsy-turvy. His beloved mother is dead, his property is auctioned and he has lost even his home. The novel ends in a note of despair. Anand’s *The Big Heart* shows his concern for a completely different problem. The novel depicts the problems of working class people.

Mulk Raj Anand’s other novels are published in post-independence period dealing with the theme of various socio-political problems. Man’s quest for self-realization is the overall theme of Anand’s fiction. Most of his heroes try to achieve their goals by rebelling against social injustice.

Raja Rao (b.1908 -) is one of the popular novelists today. Of course, he is known more as a post-independence novelist. He has written five novels *Kantapura* (1936), *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), *The Cat and Shakespeare* (1965), *Comrade Kirillov* (1976) and *The Chessmaster and his Moves* (1988). *Kantapura* is his only pre-independence novel published in 1936.

Structurally and thematically Raja Rao differs from his contemporary writers. He has addressed both the East and West in his works. He is an experimentalist too. He has taken liberty with the form and style of writing. He has insisted upon the development of Indian English and he has strived for its recognition. Usually he discusses philosophical and metaphysical subjects.
Raja Rao’s first novel *Kantapura* is based on a folk tradition. It is said, “There are at least three strands of experience in the novel: the political, religious and the social.” In fact, it is a mixture of these three important experiences. No matter it is Raja Rao’s first novel, technically it is a trendsetter in the history of Indian English fiction. It exploits the stream of consciousness technique and dramatic monologue. The old grandmother goes on narrating her experience of the freedom struggle of the 1930s and 40s. This is the story of Gandhian era. She speaks of her village Kantapura in the old Mysore state. One can understand the nature of Gandhi’s influence on such a village then. The novel is compared with K. A. Abbas’s *Inquilab* (1949), where the readers are told of the Congress’s major political activities during freedom movement. The events like Dandi March, Civil Disobedience, Satyagraha, Round Table Conferences and Nehru’s social programmes are depicted.

*Kantapura* throws ample light upon the social structure of a pre-independence Indian village. For instance, it is a village “with narrow, dusty, rut-covered roads... wind through the hill and connect this interior village with the outside world. All the inhabitants of this village, whether they are Brahmins or Pariahs, are steeped in Hindu religious beliefs and superstitions. Rama, Krishna, Shiva and other Hindu deities being to them still living realities.” Moorthy, the hero of the novel, is a young man of noble qualities. He has discontinued his
education for the national cause. The villagers worship Mahatma Gandhi as lord Krishna. For the folks Moorthy is an incarnation of Gandhi. Raja Rao writes, “He is our Gandhi. The state of Mysore has a Maharaja but that Maharaja has another Maharaja who is in London, and that one has another in heaven and so everybody has his own Mahatma and this Moorthy who has been caught in our eyes playing as a child, is now grown up and great.” Moorthy is Kantapura’s Mahatma. He launches the freedom campaign in the village by taking out a procession to toddy groves to offer Satyagrah there. But the innocent, unarmed Satyagrahis become the victims of police atrocity. The presentation of contemporary issues is so real in the novel that it could be called a mirror of the age. In other words Kantapura is best known for its classic foreword, which reads like a manifesto for the practice of Indian writing in English. Many critics have appreciated the novel.

Bhabani Bhattacharya (1906-88) hails from Bihar. Like Raja Rao and K. A. Abbas, he is an experimentalist. He has, in his writings, discussed the themes of fascism, casteism, famine and freedom movement. Bhabani Bhattacharya started his writing when India was passing through a momentous phase in her history. The whole of India was in the final phase of freedom movement. But there was an unending hunger in Bengal. If physical hunger of Bengal engulfed more
than two million men, women and children, the emotional and political hunger swallowed the whole nation. So these heart-breaking incidents moved the novelist often provoking him to write. Bhabani Bhattacharya says, “A novel must have a social purpose. It must place before the reader something from the society’s point of view. Art is not necessarily for art’s sake. Purposeless art and literature that is much in vogue does not appear to me as some judgment.”

Bhabani Bhattacharya’s *So Many Hungers!* (1947) is a document on great historical draught in the West Bengal. It is unfortunate that the Sahitya Academy did not recognize the novelist of such remarkable achievement even after twenty years of its publication. Bhabani Bhattacharya wrote many more novels like *Music for Mohini* (1952), *He Who Rides the Tiger* (1954), *A Goddess Named Gold* (1960), *Shadow from Ladakh*, (1966) and *A Dream in Hawaii* (1975).

*So Many Hungers!* is the story of Bengal famine where people die in thousands. The inhuman businessmen and their agents in league with government organizations encash upon peoples’ difficulties. The theme of national movement and famine are vividly combined. The World War Second, evils of urbanization and population explosion are successfully delineated.

The novel deals with two Bengali families—one of them extremely rich and the other extremely poor. The irony is that these two families are related to each other by matrimonial alliance. The novelist
delves upon the story of a helpless peasant family. The heroine Kajoli faces many hardships throughout her life. Kajoli's father and elder brother are already in jail as a consequence of their participation in national movement. Kajoli is married to a young man who for sometime stayed with her family. When the whole village is famine-stricken, Kajoli's husband goes in search of a job. Unfortunately he is killed in a railway accident. As the family members are unaware of the tragedy, they think that he is still alive somewhere. When the young man left the house, Kajoli was five months pregnant. Now Kajoli, her mother and a little brother leave for the city of Calcutta for the sake of earning a living.

On her way to the city, a soldier rapes Kajoli. But the later is kind enough to arrange her some medical aid. Her mother and little brother are allowed to accompany her. She is given enough treatment for a few weeks in an army hospital. Meanwhile her kins live by begging. Later Kajoli joins her family on the pavement. But soon she realizes that it is impossible to live on charity for long. She becomes a prostitute and looks after her kindred. But her mother cannot withstand Kajoli's changed situation and she commits suicide.

*So Many Hungers!* is also about the World War thrust upon India letting loose untold miseries in the process. The story takes place as much in the soul of an intellectual of a very fine sensibility as in the
affected material world of Bengal and the rest of the country. Commenting upon Bhattacharya’s works, K. R. Chandrashekharan writes, “With his progressive ideas, his vision of glorious future, he has also great admiration for the spiritual and cultural heritage of the country.”  

Khushwanth Singh (b.1915-) is a popular journalist and a bilingual writer of modern India. He is considered a novelist of ‘Partition theme.’ Though his *Train to Pakistan*, (1956) is published in the post-independence period, it deals with the theme of pre-independence era. S. C. Harex observes, “It remains the best regarded novel in English on Partition.” The novelist exposes the downfall of Indian values in it. He says, “I had believed in the innate goodness of common man but the division of India had been accompanied by the most savage massacre known in the history of the country. I had believed that we, Indians were peace loving and non-violent, that we were more concerned with the matters of spirit, while the rest of the world was involved in the pursuit of material things. After the experience of the autumn of 1947, I could no longer subscribe to these views.”  

*Train to Pakistan* is a poignant story of the tragedy of Punjab happenings, when the people were seized by mad communal frenzy. It is a kind of warning to the young that they must guard themselves against being engulfed by the madness of communalism.
Khushwanth Singh's achievement lies in his detached way of narrating a story. His *Train to Pakistan* besides being the story of partition, is a story of Jugga's love for a Muslim weaver's daughter Nooru. Though the man falls in love with the lady, he is not destined to live with her. The catastrophe of partition does not allow them live together. The novel is set in Mano Majra, a village in the Punjab. In fact, Mano Majra was the first title of the book. The author's other novels include *I Shall not Hear the Nightingale* (1959), *Delhi* (1990) and *The Company of Women* (1999).

**MUSLIM NOVELISTS:**

The 'Swadeshi' awareness that began with the event of Sipoy-Mutiny in 1857 went through a number of phases like Hindu renaissance, Liberalism, Communal Riots, Terrorism, Non-Cooperation, establishment of Muslim League, Satyagrah, Jalianwala Bag massacre, Dandi March, Parliamentary elections, ultimately culminating in the achievement of complete independence on 15th August 1947. In this regard, the contribution of Muslim political leaders like Ali brothers, Siya Uddin, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Prof. Ahmed Ali, Sajjad Jhaheer, the ancestors of K.A. Abbas and several other Muslim intellectuals is of considerable importance.
According to Indian history, there is a solid reason for the Muslim novelists' change of faith to the country in the latter period of the pre-independence and even in the post-independence times. As we know their national commitment turned into communalism during the partition. It is well observed: "Muslim communalization too had a solid psychological basis, the inferiority complex of a community, which had lost her empire but found an ally in British administrators."\(^3\)\(^1\) Some of the Muslims of pre-partition period thought that Pakistan was a solution though it did not solve any of their problems. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, a political hero, who was a prisoner of passions, caused unrecoverable cultural damage, whereas the Muslim intellectuals within the community were entirely against his struggle. For instance, in one of his works K.A. Abbas has strongly commented upon this. He says, "The division in India is not between Hindus and Muslims but between those who wanted to see their country free and those who did not."\(^3\)\(^2\)

Muslim's urge for freedom, equality and brotherhood as reflected in their writings is unquestionable. Except some political leaders like Jinnah, the question of partition was not at all the question of the common folk. As we know most of these writers hail from the middle class Muslim families. As far as the aims and objectives of their writings are concerned, they do not differ much from the Hindu writers of pre-
independence period. Really the Hindu writers did not do any communal discrimination. Similarly Muslim writers have chosen their themes and characters from both Hindu and Muslim circles.

Although there were a few novels in English by Indian Muslim writers before 1940; interestingly the year 1940 is marked as the beginning of a new era in the history of Indian writing in English, for it saw the flowering of English novel at the hands of a couple of Indian Muslim writers. The new era, in fact, was marshaled by Ahmed Ali's *magnum opus Twilight in Delhi* (1940). James Trevor remarks that Ahmed Ali "laid the foundation for a new modest literary tradition in English with his first novel *Twilight in Delhi.*" He further states that Ahmed Ali "had shown the way to new writers in English." Ahmed Ali was recognized as the first Muslim novelist and his first novel was rated a classic in Indian English literature. As a pioneer novelist, he was able to attract the attention of the English-reading public. Interestingly, M. K. Naik brought all the Indian Muslim novelists under one category of which Ahmed Ali heads the list. He considers the rise of Indian English Muslim writers after 1940, as "an interesting literary phenomenon" and he calls it "the rise of the ethnic novels."

The prominent Indian English Muslim novelists of the pre-independence period are Ahmed Ali, K. A. Abbas, Humayun Kabir, Aamir Ali, Attia Hosain and Iqbalunnisa Hussain. Although India's
partition culminated in the migration of some of the Indian Muslim writers, they are still considered as Indians because they were born in India. Hence, the term, 'Indian Muslims' means those Muslim writers who were born in India and belong to the Muslim community. Interestingly, Ahmed Ali and Aamir Ali opted for Pakistan as their home, after partition, and became Pakistani nationals. Whereas, the other novelists lived in India. The present thesis attempts a detailed study of all the six prominent Muslim novelists.

Ahmed Ali (1910-1994) was an Indian born Pakistani nationalist. He was also the father of modern Pakistani literature, an epoch making poet, critic, novelist and educationist. He started his career as a poet and soon found his expression in short story and novel. He has written three novels *Twilight in Delhi*, *Ocean of Night* and *Rats and Diplomats*. Ahmed Ali lived for more than eighty years and enriched both Indian and Pakistani English literature.

K. A. Abbas was a prolific journalist, novelist and film scriptwriter of the pre-and post-independence Indian English literature. He was a contemporary of Ahmed Ali, Raja Rao and Mulk Raj Anand. He started his career as a journalist but later on, he went through various other channels of communication like film, theatre movement and public speeches. Abbas was a great nationalist, orator and a close friend of Pandit Javaharlal Nehru. He lived as an Indian and died in
India. He was multilingual and wrote in Urdu, Hindi and English. He was greatly influenced by O. Henry, Pearl Buck, Hemingway, Premchand and Mahatma Gandhi. He was honoured by a number of awards like Padmashree (1985) and Indo-Soviet Award.

Humayun Kabir is a minor Muslim novelist with a major work of art. His writings deal with the changes in the middle class Muslim society. For instance, his *Men and Rivers* is about the political turmoil in East-Bengal.

Aamir Ali is a contemporary of Ahmed Ali. He is one of the important Muslim novelists of the pre-independence India. He too has written much about the Hindu world. For instance, his novel *Conflict* is about a Hindu village boy Shankar who can be compared with Munoo of Mulk Raj Anand’s *Coolie*. Amir Ali’s other works are *Via Geneva* and *Assignment in Kashmir*.

Attia Hosain is the first pre-independence Muslim woman writer in English. She was known for her national politics. She criticized British Government for its policy of divide and rule. This is seen in her novel *Sunlight on a Broken Column*. Her novel deals with the event of partition and its evil impact. O. P. Mathur observes, “Attia Hosain portrays national politics as it affects family and divides it between those who go to Pakistan and those who stay on.”
Iqbalunnisa Hussain is the last Indian English Muslim woman novelist of the pre-independence period. She has written the novel *Purdah and Polygamy*, where she protests against the Muslim tradition of wearing purdah. According to her it is an excuse for suppressing women.
REFERENCES:


10. Ibid., p.16.


17. Ibid., p. 24.

18. Ibid., p. 38.


35. O. P. Mathur, *Indian Political Novel and Other Essays*,