CHAPTER -VI

FICTIONAL TECHNIQUE

1 INTRODUCTION

The Partition of India, an important event affecting many aspects of life, has drawn the attention of politicians, historians and creative writers. Just as polemical and historical writings narrate the experience of the Partition, creative writings too narrate the same. The fictional mode of narration is different from that of historical and political narratives. Fiction is not just a dry report, nor is it a diary, nor yet does it just chronicle the event. The task before a creative writer is not only, like a historian, to document the factual event, but also as an artist, to recreate the human experience of the event imaginatively. Fiction is primarily a work of art. The substance of a work of art is the chaotic experience of human life. Here unsystematic life experiences are put into a meaningful whole. The same material may be put differently by different writers. This is due to not only to the vividness of the particular experience but also the individual writer’s unique way of handling the experience. This act of translating vivid experiences into a work of art demands certain skills on the part of the writers. The skills involving "literary and artistic craftsmanship"\(^1\) constitute fictional technique.

However, an in-depth study of all the technical elements of these novels needs a separate study. In this chapter an attempt is made to discuss the structures of the novels; their characterization—
the human images they portray; the role of the narrators and their
types; literary modes of narration; and the handling of language.

II STRUCTURE

According to J.A. Cuddon, structure means “The sum of the
relationships of the parts to each other; thus, the whole.” Each novel
consists of its own organic whole which is constituted by its different
parts. On the basis of the relationship of the parts to the forming of
the whole, the novel, generally, can be divided into ‘tight’ or ‘organic
structures’ and ‘loose’ or episodic structures. With reference to this
criterion the structures of the novels under study are analysed here.

First, Khushwant Singh’s *Train to Pakistan*. Here the novelist
emerges as a highly accomplished craftsman. It is a novel without
technical flaws. It exhibits a tight and compact structure. The
hallmark of the novel is its biting economy. With a limited number
of events and a short period of time Khushwant Singh manages to
cover many dimensions of the holocaust. The structure of the novel
can be described as dramatic, because the novel is packed with
actions and there is an extensive use of dialogues. As V.A. Shahane
observes, “Edwin Muir might have described *Train to Pakistan* as a
novel of action, (...) as a dramatic novel.” Moreover, the novel
presents conflict at various levels. There is a communal conflict
between the Sikhs and Muslims; conflict between individuals—
Juggut Singh and Malli’s gang; conflict between a ruffian and the
bureaucracy; conflict within oneself— Hukum Chand and Iqbal
Singh represent the conflict within oneself. All episodes in the novel
are organically connected with each other. Since the centre of the
novel is Mano Majra, the world of Hukum Chand’s bureaucracy and
the intellectual world of Iqbal Singh move towards the centripetal
world of Punjabi village life, where Juggut is a romantic hero. The whole drama of the Partition takes place in the pastoral background of Mano Majra. As aptly pointed out by V.A. Shahane, "*Train to Pakistan* has a well-conceived structure and well regulated architectural pattern."^4

Like *Train to Pakistan* B. Rajan’s *The Dark Dancer* has structural unity. But it is to be borne in mind that the focus of *The Dark Dancer* is not only the holocaust but also the theme of cultural conflict. As K.R. Srinivas lyengar notes, "There are two clear strands in the story: the tragedy of Krishna’s marriage and the tragedy of Partition."^5 The structural unity of the novel depends upon a skilful weaving of these two strands. The story of the Partition begins where the story of east-west encounter comes to an end. Both complement each other. As Bruce king says, the "story of east-west encounter also suggests an analogy between a divided man and a divided nation."^6 What gives unity to both the parts is, first, the protagonist’s (Krishnan) involvement in both of them; second, the crisis of one part leading to the other, and thirdly, the common phenomenon of division. The plot of the novel can be put as follows: Krishna’s marriage with Kamala; his union with Cynthia, which divides the couple; failure of the Cynthia-Krishnan relationship, which leads to reunion of the couple; then there is a dramatic change— Kamala’s sacrifice during the Partition riot, and finally Krishnan’s suffering leading to self-knowledge. There is a logical connection in the chain of the above mentioned parts.

Technically, Attia Hosain’s *Sulilight on a Broken Column* is different from all the other Partition novels in Indian literature in English. As Mulk Raj Anand opines, being influenced by Virginia
Woolf “she understood, very perceptively, that there was no beginning and middle and end in fiction any more. No plot. Only pattern.”

But the form of the novel is autobiographical. In this form the novelist has been able to bind various themes into an organic whole. The novel embraces a number of themes, such as, the theme of social change, the Partition, personal fulfillment, the theme of growth and maturity, the theme of east-west encounter etc. All these themes are either directly connected to the protagonist— Laila— or carefully observed by her. Hence, the centre of the novel’s structural unity is Laila— the change taking place in her through out the novel. In fact, there is change at various levels— personal and public spheres. Personally, Laila grows from an orphaned girl of 15 to a widowed mother of a girl child; in the public sphere, there is disintegration of the feudal order, India’s politics undergo a change from colonial rule to native rule. All this is inter-woven within the structure of the novel. Nothing seems unnecessary from the point of view of structure.

Manohar Malgonkar’s *A Bend in the Ganges* is an epic novel. As Meenakshi Mukherjee remarks, the novel “is panoramic in scope and epic in aspiration, crowded with events from modern Indian history, beginning with the Civil Disobedience Movement of the early thirties and ending in the post-partition riots in Punjab.” The novel is divided into thirty six chapters. All episodes in the novel are logically connected. In fact, Malgonkar is “a conscious weaver of plot.” The aim of the novelist here is, as he himself acknowledges, “to show how non-violence does not suit a large country like ours.” Hence, at the centre of the novel is the Gandhian ideology of non-violence. Here the violent mode of terrorism is contrasted with the non-violent mode of Gandhianism. The novelist has been successful
in carrying through his mission. It is partly because of the technique of contrast and partly because, "the structure of the novel is symmetrical and the organization of material is well-planned."\(^{11}\)

Like Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges*, Raj Gill's *The Rape* is also cast in an epical mode. But the novel lacks the panoramic and epic vision of *A Bend in the Ganges*. The novel has a melodramatic plot. It hardly rises above the violent episodes. For example, chapter 11 presents many melodramatic scenes of killing. Even the love story between Dalipjit and Jasmit ends up melodramatically. But what is important about the structure of the novel is that the two dominant parts of the novel— the theme of love and the theme of violence— are inter-connected. And the community story binds them integrally.

Just as Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* and Raj Gill's *The Rape* are novels with an organic structure, Chaman Nahal's *Azadi* is also tightly knit as an organic whole. The novelist seems to be very ambitious here. He has tried to portray a holistic picture of the Partition. Hence, the novel runs into 371 pages. It seems to be the bulkiest of all the Indian novels in English about the Partition, where the theme of Partition is central. The novel is divided into three parts: 'The Lull', 'The Storm', and 'The Aftermath'. All the three parts— one leading to another— form the organic whole of the novel. The focal point in the novel is dislocation of Lala Kanshi Ram and his family, along with other Sikh and Hindu families. The novel depicts the impact of Partition both on public life and private life. The thematic structure of the novel can be diagrammed as follows:
Both the public life and private life are artistically interwoven in the novel. The protagonist's journey—both physical and spiritual; his search for identity and his final dignity form the basis of the novel's thematic unity. But as K.C. Belliappa notices, "the writing is loose at times and lacks a tautness which would have resulted in better readability. Though the novel is divided into three parts, the structural pattern does not receive enough attention at the hands of the novelist." It is all unavoidable when the novelist chooses an epic canvas and the treatment of the theme is very ambitious.

Sharf Mukaddam's *When Freedom Came* is a simple and short novel. Like *A Bend in the Ganges*, *The Rape* and *Azadi* it is not a novel with a broad canvas. On the other hand it is a compact narration of the Partition. The novel belongs to the Fielding tradition of the picaresque mode. The journey of the protagonist from his village to Bombay unfolds a series of adventurous episodes in the novel. The novel is divided into 12 chapters. The structure of the novel is compact. The novelist employs the principle of contrast. The
city experience and village experience are contrasted. They are evenly balanced.

Shiv K. Kumar's *A River with Three Banks* suffers from some technical flaws. According to Shamala A. Narayan, the novel "is just a sentimental love story." It is divided into 24 chapters. At the centre of the novel is a protagonist transcending communal barriers. In the development of this centre, some parts of the novel do not come as part and parcel of an organic whole. For example, chapter 16 and 17, which depict the Christian and British characters, seem unnecessary.

Thus, most of the novels here have a well conceived structure. But Shiv K. Kumar's novel is an exception. It exhibits a loose structure.

## CHARACTERIZATION

Since all the novels deal with human stories, human beings people the world of fiction. E.M. Forster calls characters "word masses." Here characterization means the novelist's art of painting human images in his/her novel.

To speak of Khushwant Singh's manner of characterization, there is a remarkable strength in his art of characterization. His characters are both types and individuals. Hukum Chand, Iqbal Singh, Meet Singh and Imam Baksha represent their respective profession and class. At the same time they are portrayed as distinctive individuals. There are three major characters— Juggut Singh, Hukum Chand and Iqbal Singh. The rest are minor characters. The novelist has drawn these three major characters from three different worlds. Juggut Singh is a typical Punjabi youth representing
a sense of adventure, valour and a crude romantic strain generally associated with the Punjabi temperament.

If Juggut Singh is a romantic hero, Hukum Chand is a realistically drawn hero. He represents the bureaucracy trained under the British administration. In the character of Iqbal Singh the novelist gives an image of a typical westernised intellect. In the opinion of H.M. Williams all the three characters “are transformed by the experience of violence.” The transformation is very emphatic in Hukum Chand. This is a character portrayed in depth. He sees within himself. And in the world of Mano Majra even the minor characters are not insignificant. They have an important role to play. Juggut Singh's mother, his lover Noor, though minor characters, are not insignificant. Their role is also important. Haseena, Meet Singh, Imam Baksh are all people of the time. They body forth the manners and morals of the time. Besides, there is also economy in Kushwant Singh's art of portraying human images. Further more, they are so realistic that they are true to history and haunt the readers.

Though B. Rajan's *The Dark Dancer* has an epic canvas, it accommodates fairly a lesser number of characters. The two important characters in the novel are Krishnan and Kamala. Krishnan is a typical product of the colonial education system. He represents the foreign-returned man of the time. His outer journey from South India to North India at the time of the communal conflict and his inner journey from the west to the east educates Krishnan. But, Krishnan's wife Kamala remains the centre of attraction from the viewpoint of the Partition. She seems to be the female counterpart of Khushwant Singh's Juggut Singh. Like him she sacrifices her life by saving a person belonging to the opposite community. As Meenakshi Mukherjee rightly puts it:
Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1966) (...) hinges on the love between Jugga, a Sikh ruffian, and a Muslim girl. Similarly in B. Rajan's *The Dark Dancer* (1959), the idealised character Kamala dies trying to save a Muslim prostitute from the attack of two Hindu hooligans. In both these cases there is a well meant attempt to invest these deaths with some greater significance through deafening symbolic overtones. 16

Like Khushwant Singh Rajan too strikes a humanistic note in the character portrayal of Kamala. The portrayal of Cynthia provides the conflict between the east and the west. Rajan seems to have created a Sikh character, whom Krishnan meets in his journey to North India, to give a Sikh point of view to the Partition. In fact, meeting a Sikh in the north Indian region is not an accident.

The portrait gallery of Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column* contains twenty seven principal characters. Among them the Muslim characters have a major share. Since it is a *bildungsroman*— "The subject of these novels is the development of the protagonist's mind and character, in the passage from childhood through varied experiences— and often through a spiritual crisis— into maturity and the recognition of his or her identity and role in the world"17, the focus of the novel is Laila. She is the centre of consciousness in the novel. And she is the storyteller too. The novel gives more of an inner Laila than the outer characteristics of her personality. She is an introvert and a passive observer of things around her. Attia Hosain exhibits a remarkable grasp of character and shows herself to be master of character portrayal. Her major characters especially aunt Abida, Saleem, Kemal, Zahera come alive both externally and
internally. She brings in different people from different walks of life. Apart from men drawn from the feudal set-up and highly educated intellectuals, there are gardeners, sweepers, jewellers, managers, hakims, maidservants like Nandi and Saliman, business men like Harish Prasad Agarwal and Laila's ex-governess Mrs. Martin etc. Her range is wide. What is remarkable about Attia Hosain's art of characterization is her sensitivity to human speech and gestures. Each individual is different and has his or her own manner and speech habits. They are typical at the same time as they are individuals. As Mulk Raj Anand rightly observes:

In fact, most of the characters, from the old landlord, the European-educated rakish uncle, the aunts, the cousins, the female servant, the poor relations and the husbands preferred for the girls, the English governess, the Anglo-Indian college fellows, approximate to the intersection of personal and type behaviour which makes them all symbolic—albeit concretely symbolic, if I may mix my metaphors.18

Malgonkar manifests extraordinary insight into the elemental forces in human nature. His characters are more individuals than types with few exceptions. He presents human images in such a way that they come alive as a mixture of both good and evil. Gian Talwar is the most interesting character of all in the novel in this respect. As Ayyappa Paniker observes, "Gian Talwar appears to be the most confusing portrait in Malgonkar's impressive gallery of human types."19 He begins as a Gandhian and ends up a pseudo-Gandhian. Though he is sometimes cunning and opportunistic, he honestly confesses his guilt as a murderer and tries to help a family
in trouble. Like Gian, the other two important characters—Debi and Shafi—are portrayed in the round. Debi is invested with humanistic ideals. He stands in the line of Juggut Singh in *Train to Pakistan* and Kamala in *The Dark Dancer*. He begins as a terrorist and ends up as a sacrificial figure celebrating the value of love. The character of Shafi is historically the most authentic. Though he is portrayed as an individual human being, he represents a type. He is a typical of the Muslims of the time who started as nationalists and ended up as communal dividers. The only female character that is alive in the novel is Sundari, a symbol of sex. Feminists may find their point of view wanting in Malgonkar, as his portrait gallery is primarily male-oriented and Sundari is depicted merely as a sex symbol. The other characters such as Basu, Tekchand, Patrick Mallgin have a peripheral role. But they are nevertheless historically authentic portraits.

Raj Gill's fictional world encompasses three important characters—Dalipjit and Jasmit as lovers and Leila, a Muslim character, rather as a victim of the Partition. These are sketched in with a little flesh and blood. Dalipjit is portrayed in some psychological depth. The Partition brings about a radical change in him. In his hallucination he kills Gandhi:

"Gandhi has been shot dead at his prayer meeting."

He laughed himself amused at the sentence. How could Gandhi be shot dead? He was not living. He had shot Gandhi long back, years ago. They could not shoot a dead Gandhi. It was nonsense. (288)

If Jasmit is portrayed as an innocent girl, Leila is portrayed as a mature girl with a spiritual inclination. She stands the test of time.
Being a direct victim of the Partition—raped by the father of the son whom she loves so much, she bears the pangs of the Partition. What is important, however, in Raj Gill’s art of characterization is that he deviates from the stereo-type of Hindu/Sikh boy falling in love with a Muslim girl or vice-versa, though Leila falls in love (not in a physically sense) with Dalipjit in the end. The minor characters such as Santhok, Amro and Dalipjit’s father are not as effective as Khushwant Singh’s minor characters in *Train to Pakistan*.

As the canvas of *Azadi* is wider, it is peopled with a variety of characters. Since the focus of the novel is a small family, the major characters are only two—Lala Kanshi Ram and Arun. Their psychological portrayals come very much alive in the novel. What distinguishes Nahal from other novelists is his deployment of a double point-of-view, in the characterization of Arun and Lala Kanshi Ram. As G.S. Amur points out, “The theme of the transformation of character by political events is shared by (...) Chaman Nahal’s *Azadi* (1975),”20 The transformation in Lala Kanshi Ram is from the physical plane to the spiritual. What Kanshi Ram gains from his physical suffering spiritual dignity. This kind of characterization raises the novel above “the period-piece and achieves a universality (...)”21 Arun is entirely a different character in the fictional world of the Partition. The portrayal of Arun as a pragmatic and mature boy leaves the reader somewhat in doubt, because his manners and maturity of thinking portrayed in him are beyond the level of his age. But in a work of art it is possible if it is made credible. One can recall Thomas Hardy’s portrayal of Little Father Time. Arun here does not seem incredible. The choice of Lala Kanshi Ram and Arun as central characters in the novel, however, seems deliberate. Lala Kanshi Ram
is a middle aged man of the time, a link between the pre-Partition days and the post-Partition days. Arun, who is just exposed to the hard realities of the world, represents the younger generation who have survived the Partition.

A common thing about both these characters is that they affirm life in spite of their traumatic experience of the Partition. The other characters such as Bibi Amarvati, Sardar Jodha Singh, Padmavati, Chandani and Mukunda's mother are all portrayed as persons of the time. Their portraiture is very realistic. Especially, the Muslim characters, such as Chaudhri Barkat Ali, Begum Barkat Ali, Munir Ahmad, Nurul-Nisar, Abdul Ghani, serve the purpose of portraying the communal relations. Sergeant William Davidson is the only British character in the novel. There are thirty-two principal characters in the novel. Nahal draws these characters from various corners of life. Merchants, landlady, charwoman, tenants, sports-goods dealer, medical practitioner, hookah manufacturer, Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police, Inspector of Police, army officers and so on fill the canvas of the novel. Hence, in the opinion of K.C.Belliappa, the novel “achieves a universality because of its essential human centrality and the novelist’s affirmation of life.”

Sharf Mukaddam's *When Freedom Came* contains a number of characters. But the protagonist of the novel Fakir, and his friend Shankar, are the two important characters in the novel. While depicting characters too the novelist employs the technique of contrast. Shankar is a foil to Fakir. Both the characters are always compared and contrasted. If Fakir believes in communal fanaticism, Shankar does in tolerance and co-operation. The world of *When Freedom Came* is peopled with different types. There is uncle Jaffer,
a father figure to Fakir. There are voluptuous women like Gulbadan, and communal fanatics like Inquilab Murdabadi, whose name is inlaid with a mild satire as it literally means a person of anti-independence. Sometimes the novelist dwells at length over the external details of characters. For example, in chapter II the description of Baburao, a minor character, is too long.

Shiv K. Kumar's art of characterization in *A River with Three Banks* suffers from some flaws. The protagonist, Gautam Mehta, serves as a mouthpiece of the novelist. Shiv K. Kumar himself calls him "a liberal humanist; a man with creative sensibility sees no barriers what so ever." But this character fails to be a symbol of "liberal humanism", the attitude seems to have been superimposed upon him. The growth of this character is not natural on its own. The portrayal of Gautam seems uneven as his conversion to Christianity is ridiculous and his so-called communal transcendence is a mere subterfuge for his self-interests. The other characters Berry, Pannalal, Haseena, Sarita, Mohinder, and Gautam's father are portrayed with little depth to them. Hence, Shamala A Narayan remarks that "the characters are poorly realized," rings very true.

**IV THE ROLE OF NARRATORS**

The narrator— the teller of the story— also plays an important role in the novel. According to *The Harper Handbook to Literature*, "The two chief narrative perspectives in space, within the story or outside it, take their names from the grammatical stance employed by the narrator: *first-person narration* for a narrative perspective inside the story, *third-person narration* for one outside." As far as the Partition novels are concerned all the novels, except Attia Hosain’s *Sunlight on a Broken Column*, employ the third-person or
omniscient narrative method. Here "the narrator is someone outside the story proper who refers to all the characters in the story by name, or as “he,” “she,” “they.” And the narrator “is all knowing and god-like (...) selects some areas of knowledge for narration and deselects others, but is always in possession of complete knowledge of the characters, time and space of a narrative." This has been a more convenient method for the novelists as it gives more freedom in their art of narration. As W.J. Harvey thinks, “The advantages of omniscient narration in controlling aesthetic distance are those of economy and flexibility." Khushwant Singh’s *Train to Pakistan* is the only novel here which exploits this kind of advantage.

The narrator in Attia Hosain’s *Sunlight on a Broken Column* is inside the story. In fact, Laila, modeled on the writer herself is the protagonist. It is the only Partition novel in the history of the Indian novel in English so far to employ the first-person narrative method. This kind of narrative “limits the matter of the narrative to what the first-person narrator knows, experiences, infers, or can find out by talking to other characters.” Attia Hosain is, like Bapsi Sidhwa in her *The Ice Candy Man*, successful in her first-person narrative technique. The other novels—*Train to Pakistan, The Dark Dancer, A Bend in the Ganges, The Rape, Azadi, When Freedom Came* and *A River with Three Banks* make use of the third person narrative method.

NARRATIVE MODES

“The novelist can do,” writes T.N.Dhar, “whatever he likes with the past. What is important about it is (...) the different strategies he employs to realize his ends, and the manner in which all these impinge on the shape and style of his novels.” Hence it is important
to know the different narrative strategies and modes the Partition novels employ to realize their ends in the treatment of this theme.

The study of 'narrative strategies' has assumed a greater importance, as 'narrating a nation' has been one of the preoccupations of post-colonial studies, and a lot of work has been done on 'Narratology'. According to Paul Cobley, "Narrative is a representation of events (...)". M. Shivarama Krishna, a noted critic, says, "all constructs of reality are narratives."

The task before the fictionist is not only, like a historian, to document the fact, but also, as an artist, to recreate the human story imaginatively. Hence, the important artistic creeds here discussed are realism, and the romantic, melodramatic, symbolic and mythical modes.

Broadly speaking there are two dominant modes of narration in Indian fiction in English. One, realism, "a recurrent mode, in various eras and literary forms, of representing human life and experience in literature." The other is fantasy or the mode of magic realism, a distinctive strategy employed in the post-modernist novels such as Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and Mukul Kesavan's *Looking Through Glass*, where the "writers interweave, in an ever-shifting pattern, a sharply etched realism in representing ordinary events and descriptive details together with fantastic and dreamlike elements, as well as with materials derived from myth and fairy tales." As far as the theme of the Partition is concerned, no major novel employs the strategy of magic realism. But in the novels of magic realism, such as Rushdie's *Midnight Children*, and Mukul Kesavan's *Looking Through Glass* the theme of the Partition appears marginally. But the major novels, in which the theme of the Partition
of India is central, invariably employ the mode of realism. In their treatment of the theme they are in close affinity with the social realism of the English novel. In the history of Indian literature in English social realism is a dominant stream practised by Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, and Raja Rao, and some others. In realistic fiction the aim of the writer is to bring art close to life—to create a truthful picture of life. However, it must be noted that when the writer wants to depict life as it is it does not mean that it is merely a piece of plain reportage. On the contrary, it is an imaginative apprehension of reality through art, what George Luckács calls, "embody(ing) reality in artistic images."35

In the opinion of Neil Mc Ewan, "almost all novels turn fact into fiction"36 In their attempt to turn fact into fiction the writers need to be true to both fact and fiction. There should be a balance between both. The Partition is a factual event, an event of the recent past. The first task of the novelists is to record factual events faithfully, without distorting historical accuracy and without affecting their credibility. Hence, as an artistic creed realism is the most suitable mode of narration to capture the reality of the traumatic experience called Partition. Most of the Partition novelists portray the picture of the Partition realistically. The political history of the Partition, the milieu, characterization and the creation of atmosphere in these novels are true to both history and art. All characters and situations are 'a slice of life', and achieve verisimilitude without distorting actual events and dates. Khushwant Singh's Train to Pakistan is described by V.A. Shahane as, "one of the finest realistic novels of post World War II Indo-Anglian Fiction," and he calls it a "realistic masterpiece."37 The transformation of Mano Majra, the rural way of life in Punjab, and the description of Hukum Chand's bureaucracy are all
typical of the 40s. Chaman Nahal’s *Azadi*, Manohar Malgonkar’s *A Bend in the Ganges*, B. Rajan’s *The Dark Dancer* are realistic narratives of epic magnitude. What happens to Lala Kanshi Ram’s family in *Azadi* is an artistic reflection of what happened to many families during the holocaust. And Malgonkar as a novelist “is much in the mainstream of the realistic tradition.” His *A Bend in the Ganges* achieves an epic dimension through a realistic portrayal of the political events of the 40s. In B. Rajan’s *The Dark Dancer*, the journey of Krishnan and Kamala from the south to the north is depicted realistically.

Attia Hosain’s *Sunlight on a Broken Column* too offers a faithful picture of the tension in a Muslim family during the Partition. The realistic mode in these novels is employed as an artistic device, not as an exercise in journalism. One can find here the artistic amalgamation of fact and fiction. In capturing the gruesome realities of the Partition the realistic mode in these novels aims not at showing things as they are in low mimetic fashion but “embody reality in artistic images.” Out of the reality of the ordeal these novels create a sense of life. Hence, Juggut Singh, Hukum Chand, Lala Kanshi Ram, Arun, Gian, Debi, Kamala, Haseena, Mamtaz, etc, though belong to the time of the Partition, haunt the present day readers and touch them instantly. Hence, the realism in a work of art must transcend reality.

As George Luckács says, “(...) all great art is realistic.” But some realistic novels fail to achieve the excellence of art. In their attempt at the realistic mode, they often degenerate into documentation and mere reportage. Instead of presenting what Mulk Raj Anand calls, “poetic realism,” they end up as factual
photography. The obvious examples from the Partition novels are Sharf Mukadam's *When Freedom Came* and Raj Gill's *The Rape*. In *The Rape*, the mode of narration is documentary realism. Raj Gill himself is a journalist. The journalist seems to have dominated the novelist in him. The author directly quotes from newspapers. Examples can be had from pages—57, 64, 193 and 194. Also the original speeches of the leaders are quoted verbatim, for example pages, 193 and 194. However, the author's direct comments on the Partition leave the impression that we are reading a polemical writing instead of a work of art. Hence what Saros Cowasjee says, "The human story is lost in a welter of editorializing on the Partition" rings true.

A true work of art cannot be completely realistic. Completest fidelity to reality is impossible. A realistic work of art is like a collage where the dominant mode is realism, and which may be tinged with idealism, sentimentalism or romanticism. When it is said that the Partition novels are realistic narratives, it does not mean that they completely ignore the romantic strain. What Jasbir Jain observes is very significant here:

The Indian idea of 'realism' is at variance with the western idea of realism. Indian realism is not rooted in any empirical tradition and did not have any John Locke to fall back upon. Instead it emerged from a tradition which disbelieved in the empirical. The tendency to exaggerate and romanticise is a part of the Indian imagination.

Though the dominant mode is realistic in the Partition novels, the romantic tone pervades most of the novels. T.N. Dhar writes,
"(...) in the hands of novelists the past takes different shapes and for different reasons. History can be romanticized, sensationalised, interrogated and problematized."\textsuperscript{44} Most of these novels, apart from offering realistic pictures, partly romanticise and sensationalise the event of Partition than interrogating and problematizing it. The theme is romanticized through love-stories and sensationalised through the depiction of violence. The romantic thread in these novels is provided through a Hindu/Sikh man falling in love with a Muslim girl or \textit{vice-versa}. The treatment of these stories has become a proto-type from the first Partition novel \textit{Train to Pakistan} to the most recent one \textit{A River with Three Banks}. The love stories here—Jugga-Nooran in \textit{Train to Pakistan}, Debi-Mamtaz in \textit{A Bend in the Ganges}, Arun-Noor in \textit{Azadi}, Dalipjit-Leila in \textit{The Rape}, Gautam-Haseena in \textit{A River with Three Banks}—are vested with humanism. Because, the pairs belong to opposite communities in the drama of the Partition. In the public story of the Partition Hindus and Muslims are enemies, whereas in the private story they are lovers. Here violence is contrasted with the love and sacrifice of the lovers. In these stories the writers hint at celebrating the values of love and sacrifice as against hate and communal violence. The romantic spirit in a work of art strives to portray life as being "more picturesque, fantastic, adventurous or heroic than actuality."\textsuperscript{45} In this sense \textit{Train to Pakistan}, \textit{The Dark Dancer}, \textit{A Bend in the Ganges} and \textit{A River with Three Banks} are not only realistic narratives of the Partition but also tales embellished with picturesque scenes and adventurous, and heroic acts. The Punjabi way of life in Mano Majra in \textit{Train to Pakistan} is very picturesque. The final act of Juggut Singh's attempt to save the refugee train in \textit{Train to Pakistan}, Kamala scarificing her life to save a Muslim prostitute during the holocaust in \textit{The Dark Dancer},
Debi's death in the hands of fanatics and his struggle to save Mumtaz in *A Bend in the Ganges*, Gautam-Haseena's elopement are all romantic episodes. These novelists romanticise the theme of the Partition. And it is these parts of the novels which save the novels from ending up as mere chronicles.

While portraying the Partition, ignoring violence is to ignore the crux of the Partition. Violence burst on the Partition scene so much so that it becomes inevitable on the part of the writers dealing with the Partition theme to employ the melodramatic mode. In most of the Partition novels the melodramatic approach is employed in such a way that it does not degenerate into a low type of sensationalism. The stories of killing, rape, mutilation, hardly seem nauseating. For example, violent stories in *Train to Pakistan* bring about maturity in Hukumchand. They are witness to the evil in man. In *Azadi* violence makes Lala Kanshi Ram and Arun hard— to live with hard difficulties. Though, as indicated in the author's note, "only the violence in this story happens to be true"46 *A Bend in the Ganges* is not just a story of crime and bloodshed. Violence here comes as part of an artistic representation of the Partition experience.

Thus, most of the Partition novels are in the mainstream of socio-realistic novels. And the realistic art is tinged, at times, with romantic and melodramatic touches.

"Any fiction that claims serious attention," writes R.S. Singh, "cannot but use symbols to enhance the possibility of wider implications. A straight and factual narrative may be delightful for its theme or its facile language, but it cannot linger for long in the readers' mind if it does not use myths and symbols."47 Two other important modes of narration that enhance the literary quality of the work, therefore, are symbolic and mythical modes.
In these novels the Partition itself becomes a symbol of violence of man's brutality and the evil in him. As far as symbolism is concerned, Khushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* stands out as by far the best among these novels. V.A. Shahane identifies three dominant symbols used in the novel— the train, the rain and the Hindu trinity. In the opinion of the critic "the rain is (...) an ambivalent symbol pitch-forked between conflicting forces of life and death, of creation and destruction, of good and evil." And another symbol, namely of the "Hindu triad, or the Trimurti, is composed of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Shiva the destroyer" corresponds to "the three main characters in *Train to Pakistan*, Hukum Chand, the humanistic bureaucrat, is the preserver, whereas Iqbal Singh, the communist, is the destroyer, Juggut Singh plays a dual role of creator and destroyer."49

However, the image of the train is the dominant symbol in the novel. The train played an important role in the great mass-migration during the Partition. Most of the Partition fiction depicts the movement of the train, but no piece of work makes use of it as a powerful and effective symbol as does the Khushwant Singh novel, *Train to Pakistan*. The most important aspect of the representation of the train is that it is woven into the life-pattern of Mano-Majrans.

Their activity is governed by the movement of the train:

All this has made Mano Majra very conscious of trains. Before daybreak, the mail train rushes (...) all Mano Majra comes awake (...)

By the time the 10.30 morning passenger train from Delhi comes in, life in Mano Majra has settled down to its dull daily routine (...).
As the midday express goes by, Mano Majra stops to rest (...).

When the evening passenger from Lahore comes in, everyone gets to work again. (...) when the goods train steams in, they say to each other, “there is the goods train.” It is like saying good night. (...) The goods train takes a long time at the station, with the engine running up and down sidings exchanging wagons. By the time it leaves, the children are asleep. The older people wait for its rumble over the bridge to lull them to slumber. Then life in Mano Majra is stilled, save for the dogs barking at the trains that pass in the night. (12-14)

If this shows the daily life of the village before 1947, the irregularity of the trains suggests the forthcoming holocaust:

Early in September the time schedule in Mano Majra started going wrong. Trains became less punctual than ever before and many more started to run through at night. Some days it seemed as though the alarm clock had been set for the wrong hour. (...) People stayed in bed late without realising that times had changed and the mail train might not run through at all. (...) Goods trains had stopped running altogether, so there was no lullaby to lull them to sleep. Instead, ghost trains went past at odd hours between midnight and dawn, disturbing the dreams of Mano Majra. (92-93)

Apart from this the train acts as a connecting link between India and Pakistan and the plan of subotaging the train and the train
successfully going to Pakistan not only adds to the final denouement of the action but also gives an optimistic ending to the novel. Thus, the train occupies such an important place in the novel that Khushwant Singh changed the earlier title *Mano Majra* into *Train to Pakistan*. As V.A. Sahane rightly observes:

The change in the title seems almost an outcome of deep thinking, and is not a matter of mere chance or casual choice. The change is from the static to the dynamic: Mano Majra, the name of a village, is a fixed point in space, whereas the train is a symbol of movement.50

Another important novel to use symbolism is Shiv K. Kumar’s *A River with Three Banks*. The image of the river is a central symbol in this novel. The protagonist himself says; “In any case, rivers fascinate me— any river anywhere” (102). Obviously, in the novel there are references to the Jordan river in the *Bible*, and the Triveni— the confluence of the Ganga, the Jamuna and the Saraswati. The title— *A River with Three Banks*— suggests three religions; Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. Ganutam’s secular journey is a sort of river, which flows beside these three banks. As Shiv K. Kumar himself says:

What I had in mind three religions. The relationship between Gautam and Haseena was consummated through three religions. Gautam, a Hindu becomes a Christian in order to get his divorce and then accepts Islam to marry Haseena. So three religions in a sense are the three banks of the river— a sort of confluence that brings Gautam and Haseena together.51
In other novels, though there are no dominant symbols, at times, some characters and events do acquire symbolic overtones. For example, in *Azadi* Lala Kanshi Ram's migration from Pakistan to India is the symbolic journey of a Hindu. It is both an outer and an inner journey of a man. In the case of Attia Hosain's *Sunlight on a Broken Column*, as Mulk Raj Anand notes, "most of the characters from the old land lord, the European educated rakish uncle, the aunts, the cousins, the female servant, the poor relations and the husbands preferred for the girls, the English governess, the Anglo-Indian college fellows, approximate to the intersection of a personal and type behaviour which makes them all symbolic— albeit concretely symbolic." The novel also uses the *taluqdhar* family as a metaphor. The unity of the house 'Ashiana' symbolises the unity of India and its disintegration the division of the subcontinent. On another level, the disintegration of 'Ashiana' suggests the decay of the old feudal order and the independent choices of its members suggest the democratic process. The separation of the brothers is a sad metaphor for the division between Hindus and Muslims who had lived together as brothers.

Likewise in B. Rajan's *The Dark Dancer* the communal war between the Hindus and Muslims refers to the mythical war between the Kauravas and Pandavas in the *Mahabharat*. As Cynthia, one of the characters in the novel, comments:

"(...) The sons of Kunti fought a war of fratricide. It was a war of annihilation to finally settle a gambling debt. (...) Brother against brother. The battle of inheritance once again." (127)

As Meenakshi Mukherjee identifies there are two ways of using myths in an Indian novel in English: one, "as a part of a digressional
technique, of which Raja Rao is the most outstanding exponent'', two, ``as structure parallels.''
And she further comments about the use of myth in *The Dark Dancer* as follows:

(...) using myth as a structural parallel is sometimes used consistently throughout a novel (as in Narayan's *The Maneater of Malgudi* or Anands's *The old Woman and the Cow*) but more often it is done in a fragmentary way, illuminating a character here or enriching a situation there. For example, B. Rajan in his novel *The Dark Dancer* identifies his hero with the *Mahabharat* character Karna, because Karna could not belong anywhere. But the analogy is not extended far enough to become significant. In the same novel the post-partition Hindu-Muslim riots are seen as a re-enactment of the fratricidal battle of Kurukshetra.53

Manohar Malgonkar's *A Bend in the Ganges* also refers to the *Ramayan*. As R.S. Singh notes:

*A Bend in the Ganges* (1964) derives its little from a sentence used in the *Ramayana*: ``At a Bend in the Ganges they paused to take a look at the land they were leaving.'' Debi-dayal and Gian also paused and longingly looked at their country which they were leaving for fourteen years to live in the cellular Jail of the Andamans. In the same way, while trying to escape with the convoy from his home his home in Pakistan to land in India Sundari's father, Teckchand, also looked feeling fully at the house in which his wounded wife was left behind to groan and eventually die.54
Thus, the use of myth and symbols, allusively or as parallels lends a deeper meaning to the theme of Partition and lends a literary dimension to the novels.

**VI. LANGUAGE**

One of the problems of Indian writers in English is to express the indigenous experience in an alien language. As David Abercrombie opines, "A language is not only a part of the cultural achievement of a people, it also transmits the rest of their culture system, and English words such as gentleman, respectable, genteel, shy, whimsical . . . are only intelligible in their social setting . . . Apparent equivalents in other languages are almost always misleading. But it is interesting to note that most of the commonwealth countries have made use of the English language for creative purposes. In fact most of the present-day writers in England are not natives, but foreigners to the language. In his Foreword to *Kanthapura* (1938) Raja Rao throws light upon the problem:

The telling has not been easy. One has to convey in a language that is not one's own. One has to convey the various shades and omission of a certain thought movement that looks maltreated in an alien language. I use the words 'alien' yet English is not really an alien language to us. It is the language of our intellectual make-up—like Sanskrit or Persian was before—but not of our emotional make-up. We are all instinctively bilingual, many of us writing in our own language and in English. We cannot write like the English. We should not. We can not write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as part of us. Our
method of expression therefore had to be a dialect which will some day prove to be as distinctive and colourful as the Irish or the American. Time alone will justify it.56

What another Indian novelist in English, R.K.Narayan, thinks about the use of the English language in India is equally worth noting:

English has proved that if a language has flexibility any experience can be communicated through it, even if it has to be paraphrased rather than conveyed, and even if the factual detail (...), is only partially understood. In order not to lose the excellence of this medium a few writers in India took to writing in English and produced a literature that was perhaps not first rate; often the writing seemed imitative, halting, inept or an awkward translation of a vernacular rhetoric, mode or idiom, but occasionally it was brilliant. We are still experimentalists. I may straight-way explain what we do not attempt to do. We are not attempting to write Anglo-Saxon English. The English language, through sheer resilience and mobility, is now undergoing a process of Indianization in the same manner as it adopted U.S. citizenship over a century ago, with the difference that it is the major language there but here one of the fifteen. I cannot say whether this process of transmutation is to be viewed as an enrichment of the English language or a debasement of it. All that I am able to confirm, after nearly thirty years of writing, is that it has served my purpose admirably, of conveying unambiguously the thoughts and acts of a set of
personalities, who flourish in a small town named Malgudi supposed to be located in a corner of south India.\textsuperscript{57}

These observations made by the two important novelists show that the English language can serve a creative purpose in India; they also emphasise the need to crystallise the possibilities in the English language or to create an Indian idiom of English to suit the native experience. Let us see how the Partition novelists make use of the English language and their distinctive style.

The hallmark of Khushwant Singh’s style in \textit{Train to Pakistan} is its biting economy. He is sometimes racy. His language is lucid and simple without ambiguity. Like Mulk Raj Anand he too makes use of Indianisms to give it a tinge of Indianess to the novel. Like Anand he literally translates Indian phrases and sentences into English. For example, “Have you not mother or sister?” (22), “Cherisher of the poor” (27). Sometimes he directly uses Indian words and phrases, such as \textit{naradmi}, \textit{Kirpan}, \textit{Paan}, \textit{Sat Sri Akal} etc.

The style of B. Rajan seems slightly cryptic and too intellectualized. His sentences are, at places, too long. For example;

And now even in the capital, where the call to order was issued, it was no longer safe to walk in the streets, and the Muslim houses with their constricted entrances, huddled together in the clenched city’s heart, shuttered their windows and waited for the assault, while the home-made, petrol-soaked incendiaries were flung in primitive but deadly in that murderous congestion. (162)

As pointed out by R.S. Singh Rajan’s style “is sophisticated and highly cultivated.” \textsuperscript{58}
Commenting upon Attia Hosain’s language Mulk Raj Anand says, “The language of this novel then rises from mere communication to become the instrument of expression.” Her language is marked by poetic flavour:

My eyes saw with the complex vision of my nostalgia and sadness the loved arches and domes and finials, the curve of the river, the branches of the roads, the unfamiliar names and changed lettering of the road signs, the ruined Residency on its green elevation without its flag, the proud club that had been a palace and now a Research Institute, the pedestal without its marble Empress (...). (270)

Many times she directly uses Urdu words such as Betay, Piaray, Angarkha, Tazias. Nikah etc. Mulk Raj Anand hits the mark when he says about Attia Hosain’s language, “One of the important features which distinguishes this novel is the effortless ease with which Attia Hosain has evolved an emergent Indian-English style in which reflect her bilingual inheritance—dreaming in Hindustani and transcreating her characters in an English warmer than that of the natives of Great Britain.”

Malgonkar’s language is as readable as that of native writers. In the opinion of Meenakshi Mukherjee he is one of a few writers “with sauve and competent styles whose English neither betrays their own origin nor gives any indication of the regional identity of characters they create.” And she further adds, “The style of all these writers (Santha Rama Ram, Kamala Markandaya, and Manohar Malgonkar) has the smooth, uniform ease of public school English.” Like Khushwant Singh he too uses Indian words and phrases directly.
For example, *Ahimsa, Shaitan, Mahapooja, Go-mata, Avatar* etc. Sometimes he creates an Indian English phrase, with a mixed flavour such as, *black Shaitan, cooking sari, Tulsi-leaves, Thanks giving pooja* etc.

Raj Gill's prose is austere. His style is more that of a journalist. It is as flat and direct as the language of dailies and weeklies. For instance,

Partition was a no more disputed reality and the Punjab had decided in favour of internal Partition. The decision in Bengal was reached smoothly without any physical outburst of communal sentiments. It was different in the Punjab. The opinion was against division in districts with a Muslim majority. But the non-Muslims had strongly favoured division. Both the opinions were backed by a sufficient quantum of violence. Lahore the state capital, and Amritsar the forte of the Sikhs were the ghastly scenes of human brutality. Meanwhile the British Parliament had passed the Indian Independence Bill with remarkable speed. Lord Mountbatten was already heading committees to divide the armed forces, civil services and sterling credit. Sir Cyril Radcliffe was flown from England to head the partition commission with the rest of the members from the Indian judiciary representing both Congress and Muslim League interests. (128)

Chaman Nahal's language is simple without ambiguity. There is a clarity of expression. He uses both descriptive narrative and dialogues according to the context. He offers graphic descriptions of men and manners:
The girls sat huddled closely. Madhu invariably sat in the centre. A few of the girls would have their arms around her neck, the others sat half leaning against her. They also were leaning on each other, to get their mouths close enough to each other to whisper. If Madhu decided to take them to the roof, they scrambled up the stairs in a rush. They came down the stairs in a rush too, their feet thudding. And they giggled and prodded each other in the side, until they were seated and the secret conversation was resumed. (195)

However, the language of Sharf Mukaddam in *When Freedom Came* lacks distinction and poetic flavour, but there is a simplicity of expression about it. It makes good reading without requiring much effort on the part of the reader, unlike as in the case of B. Rajan. But Mukaddam does not charge his language with emotion.

Though Shiv K. Kumar is essentially a poet, unlike Attia Hosain he is un-poetic in *A River with Three Banks*. As Shamala A Narayan comments that sometimes the language of the novel "lacks distinction." But his style is lucid and, at places, it does glow with fragrance and colour" (as the Blurb claims). See for example:

The sky was now covered with mountains of clouds—white, inky blue and grey. They assumed all sorts of fantastic shapes—of giant dinosaurs, their long necks craning forward, of the skeletal remains of an army of soldiers on the rout. Ceaselessly, they sailed across the bridge, from India to Pakistan, casting fugitive reflections in the tawny waters of the river.
Suddenly, a flock of birds shot into the sky, and began to circle joyously over the maize fields on either side, as though scornful of the happenings on the earth below. Their spangled wings, poised securely against the wind, glimmered in the morning sun. Their puny belly tanks charged with some inexhaustible fuel, they flew round and round, up and down and warbled. (214)

VII CONCLUSION

As far as fictional technique is concerned these novels are much closer to the nineteenth century English novels of social realism. It is also important to note that most of these novels are of epic dimension. Narrators in these novels, except Atti Hosain's novel, are third-person narrators. Though they are very much in the mainstream of realism, they are sometimes streaked with romantic and melodramatic flourishes. Khushwant Singh's Train to Pakistan and Shiv K. Kumar's A River with Three Banks consciously make use of symbolism and B. Rajan's novel makes use of the mythical mode. And these writers have successfully made use of the English language for their creative purpose. Especially the efforts of Khushwant Singh, Attia Hosain and Malgonkar are a pointer towards the evolving idiom of Indian English.
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