CHAPTER I

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Indian writing in English catapults crossroads of cultures into one common cistern for amalgamated thinking in terms of Indianness to create an awareness that emotional exuberances can be communicated to people of different languages in one common link language which is Indian English. This is the basis for its birth and growth. During the years, with the pioneering attempts of various kinds, themes and techniques, literary stalwarts with their spirit of assertiveness had strengthened the roots of this native kind of writing firmly, by being themselves roots, whose branches like a banyan tree reach the ground to grow again. Indian English Literature has an identity of its own. It is necessary to recapitulate the contribution made by writers who have created various landmarks.

We have Raja Ram Mohan Roy, beginning the Indian Renaissance, followed by Henry Derozio instilling romantic sensibility and patriotic sentiments through his verses, thereby creating the spirit to challenge Western forces, which spirit gained momentum with the entry of national leaders who incidentally were creative writers too. When there was national awakening in India, Jawaharlal Nehru observed that "she [India] looked to the West and, at
the same time, she looked at herself and her own past” (330-31). Tagore, Aurobindo and a host of others wrote for humanity in general. In Sarojini Naidu, the Nightingale of India, are found, to quote Srinivasa Iyengar, “the vision of faith, the vision of the mother, the vision of patriotism, the vision of India the mother” (209). Gandhiji, Nehru and Rajaji proved through their writings that effective thoughts even to change the destiny of a nation could be expressed in a simple style. Their prose writings have been landmarks to reveal the strength of Indian English writing.

Except for Tagore, dramatic writing in English has not much of a contribution to make until recent years.

The novel as a literary form has been introduced in India as a result of the Western influence on Indian thought and culture, and the first novels written in the vernacular also found their English translations. The pioneering works of this kind can be traced back to Bankim Chandra Chatterjee of Bengal whose novels written in Bengali came out in English versions also. Srinivasa Iyengar states that “It was in Bengal that the ‘literary renaissance’ first manifested itself” (315).

Rabindranath Tagore has also written novels. One marked difference is that Tagore’s novels dealt with the minds of the individuals. His novels mostly were psychological novels.
Mahatama Gandhi's formative influence on the creative writers requires due consideration. Gandhiji through his peaceful non-violent non-co-operative policies had brought about a new re-awakening in the minds of the Indians and as Srinivasa Iyengar rightly puts it, “Life could not be the same as before and every segment of our national life - politics, economics, education, religion, social life, language and literature - acquired a more or less pronounced Gandhian hue” (248) to the point of calling the period the Gandhian Age.

The greatness of Gandhiji as a writer rests on what ideas he expressed because what he expressed always related to his religion of Truth which he sincerely practised in real life. There was oneto one correspondence between what he preached and what he practised. He was verily a Mahatma because to him religion and politics were one. He advocated simple living and high thinking. He did not differentiate between private morality and public policy. He believed in the efficacy of spiritual force. He was an apostle of love and understanding. He professed human association in a spirit of mutual recognition irrespective of class and caste differences to sort out the evils of the society. His book the Story of My Experiments with Truth is recognised as a great classic, where one finds the unfoldment of his true self. It is because of its authenticity that it has won world acclaim. His entry into politics
revolutionized the ways of life and thought of the people. The greatest achievement of the Mahatma was to liberate people from a sense of fear. What demoralized people was fear according to Gandhiji. He instructed the people to develop moral courage because he knew that with undaunted moral strength insurmountable obstacles could be easily overcome. Referring to the way shown by Gandhiji Srinivasa Iyengar remarks:

The way of ‘An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth’ cannot lead to a lasting harmony, for what is gained through force is constantly in danger of being lost through even greater force. The way of salvation would therefore be to meet the menace of evil, not with the weapon of Duragraha, but with Satyagraha, the force of Love and Truth. (257)

Gandhiji was a humanist. He detested the British System and not the British. He worked constantly to initiate a revolution in the economic, social and political life of the people, which would bring unity among the people. The important values that he cherished most and advocated to the people to adopt were non-violence, tolerance, spirituality and truth. Where these values were adhered to, there would be love and peace thought the Mahatma. Even though he was not able to completely succeed in bringing about the unity of the
people, he had been the beacon to show the right directions to the people towards right living.

Gandhian revolution in public life also led to a revolution in Indian writing in English. Clarity, brevity and openness marked the writings of the creative writers in English. The influence of Gandhiji is well marked even in the choice of themes and characters. Srinivasa Iyengar states that the emphasis appears to have been shifted from the city to the village.

Notable among the early writers who had come under the influence of Gandhiji is the novelist K.S. Venkataramani, who, through his novels Murugan, The Tiller and Kandan, The Patriot, created two characters who are exponents of Gandhian economics and Gandhian politics respectively.

Following Venkataramani, many writers had started working on themes dealing with national problems. But these writers move one step further in introducing Gandhiji as one of the characters in their novels. The novels thus written blend the imaginative and the real. Mention can be made of many writers, who, endowed with national perspectives, have brought about a close association between Art and Life.

In this sense, it is undoubtedly true that the novel as a creative art form really begins with the writings of Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao.
who appeared as new off-shoots in the literary arena in the thirties, and paved the way for new possibilities in Indian English fiction.

With the attainment of Independence in 1947, sweeping changes in the political and economic spheres were visible, and these had their influences on the social scene too. As a result of these transformations, the novel grew in variety and stature. The climate was now favourable for writers to analyse contemporary life with its complex problems awaiting redressal. The novelists now realised the need for writing novels based on social realism. Problems relating to untouchability, exploitation of the poor, class-consciousness, communal frenzy, atrocities on women in the name of patriarchy are some of the very serious problems that are dealt with in these realistic novels.

Commenting on the novels of Mulk Raj Anand, K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar remarks: “As a novelist addressing himself to the task of exposing certain evils, Anand (it must be conceded) has been as effective almost as Dickens himself” (339).

Mulk Raj Anand has been acknowledged as a very prolific writer. As a novelist his views do not confine him to his country alone. He wants to see the liberation of the poor all over the world. He is thus a Gandhian in the true sense of the term because he shows himself to be a universalist. The influence of Marx and Lenin is noticeable in his writings and in spite of his deep respect
for the Mahatma, Anand wants the ideologies of Lenin and Marx to be practised to change the face of the society.

Anand’s novels reveal the social reformer in him. All his novels are written with an effort to evolve a new strategy for a better and happier society for his country men. While referring to Anand as a social reformer G.P.Sarma remarks:

Anand is pre-occupied mainly with three problems of oppression and exploitation of the lowest classes by the upper classes; the tyranny and torture by the higher castes of the lower castes of the Hindu society, and the ignorance and superstition of the people caused by illiteracy and orthodoxy that are hurdles to the progress of the society. (103)

Untouchability forms the crux of the problem in the novel **Untouchable** (1935). Oppression of the poor is the main theme of Anand’s next novel **Coolie** (1936). The suffering of men in terms of class struggle finds an indepth analysis by the writer in this novel. It is the oppression of the bourgeoisie to the proletariat that is highlighted, and also reveals in its course the humanistic aspects in the nature of Anand. The novel **Two Leaves and A Bud** (1937) is a novel dealing with oppression but with a difference. Here it deals with the
exploitation of the working class at the hands of tea-planters. The novel thus does not refer to any nationality. It is oppression of a general kind. Havre, the European doctor in the novel has been depicted as a humanist. The novelist makes mention of him thus:

The doctor has resisted Anglo-India's belief of British greatness ever since his arrival in this country. At first, perhaps it had been from an instinct to be different from everyone else, an individual. Then he had given up the Imperial Medical Service, because the sentimental romantic in him wanted to make a brave gesture to convince himself that he had really come to regard Indians as human beings and to believe that they had a right not only to rule themselves, but to rule themselves' justly by destroying the inequalities of caste, class and creed. (30)

Anand's other three novels which form a trilogy, namely, The Village (1939), Across the Black Waters (1940) and The Sword and the Sickle (1942) also deal with the themes of oppression and exploitation in wider perspectives. Anand distinguishes himself as a great writer as Srinivasa Iyengar remarks because of "... the vitality of his creations, the variegated ... richness of his total comprehension and the purposive energy of his narratives..." (357).
These social realists expose the ills of the society for the intelligentsia to perceive them. In an article, 'the Fiction Writer in India' (quoted by K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar, 1962), R.K.Narayan says:

[a writer in India] hopes to express through his novels and stories the way of life of the group of people with whose psychology and background he is most familiar, and he hopes that the picture will not only apply to his own circle but also to a larger audience outside. (360)

A remarkable writer and a contemporary of Mulk Raj Anand is R.K.Narayan who doesn’t seem to have written with any definite social purpose. He reveals, through his writings, to be a keen observer of life in its variety. A reformer’s purpose and zeal are totally lacking in Narayan. His novels clearly depict the life of the Indian people with their middle class limitations and mannerisms because the characters he portrays are middle class people.

A Schoolboy’s life is what one finds in his novels Swami and his friends (1935). His next novel The Bachelor of Arts (1937) deals with the life of a youth in college. The Dark Room (1938) is the portrayal of an unhappy conjugal life of a woman with three children. The English Teacher (1949) is a powerful story of conjugal love and spiritual reunion. In Narayan’s
novel one perceives the renewal of life, love, beauty and peace. His outstanding achievement in Indian writing in English as a novelist has to be duly acknowledged and appreciated.

According to Srinivasa Iyengar, in Raja Rao one finds “his sensitive awareness of the forces let loose by the Gandhian Revolution as also of the thwarting or steadying pulls of past tradition” (386).

As a noteworthy writer, he has added a new dimension to Indo-Anglian fiction. In the choice of themes he strikes similarities with Mulk Raj Anand and R.K.Narayan. As a child of the Gandhian Age, Raja Rao also makes use of national struggle as a major theme for his novel. Kanthapura (1938), his first novel, in the form of memories narrated by an old woman, reveals the impact of Gandhiji on a South Indian village during the National struggle. Adopting the form of dramatic monologue with a poetic sensibility, the story treats the various aspects of the freedom struggle.

Srinivasa Iyengar comments that the novel has in it, “the same mixture of fact and fancy, poetry, and whimsy, history and legend” (390), and adds:

The villagers in India is an inveterate myth - maker, and he has not lost his links with the gods of tradition: the heroes and
heroines of epics jostle with historic personalities and time
past and time present are both projected into time future.
Gandhi Mahatma is Rama, the red-foreigner or the brown
inspector of police who flourishes a lathi is but soldier in ten-
headed Ravana's army of occupation and oppression. (390)

One is able to find in Kanthapura Gandhiji's all pervading
influence on the nation. The novel reflects the true spirit of the Gandhian Age.
The novel has a distinction of its own because it appears to be more real than
any other novel that deals with the Gandhian movement for India's freedom.
Srinivasa Iyengar sums up the greatness of the novel as "a veritable Grammar
of the Gandhian Myth - the myth that is but a poetic translation of the reality"
(396). His next novel The Serpent and the Rope, published in 1960, has been
given an epic treatment. It is considered to be his Mahabharatha. Raja Rao
manages to achieve a total projection of India in a fictional narrative. The
novel is an impressive undertaking of the novelist. His next novel The Cat
and Shakespeare (1965) is thought of as 'a metaphysical comedy' by the
writer himself and is written as a sequel to The Serpent and the Rope and in
the pattern of an Upanishad. It directs a spiritual aspirant towards self-
realization. The spiritual implications of Raja Rao's novels are highlighted by
Srinivasa Iyengar thus:
If Raja Rao has moved from the Puranic ‘forum’ to the ithihasic, and from the ithihasic to the Upanishads there has been a parallel movement too: from Karma in *Kanthapura* to jnana in *The Serpent and the Rope* and on to bhakti-prapatti in the *Cat and Shakespeare*. (410)

Raja Rao is thus a novelist par excellence not only because of his themes but also because of his art as a novelist.

In the fifties and sixties we have writers like Bhabani Bhattacharya and Manohar Malgonkar continuing the tradition of social realism established by the major triad, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan, and Raja Rao. Bhabani Bhattacharya remarks that the social purpose of a novel is to present before the reader the society’s point of view. The greatness of his creative output is pointed out by M.K.Naik thus:

His [Bhattacharya’s] sense of situation and mastery of the narrative mode, the realism of his locale, his judicious use of Indianisms (never overdone as in the case of Anand) and his easily identifiable character types have perhaps created a picture of India which fits in admirably with pre-conceived foreign notions about this country. (216)
Bhabani Bhattacharaya's literary outputs have been so very impressive that they have won him the Sahitya Akademy award in 1967. Realistic portrayal of the life that he sees and experiences is what marks his novels great. His first novel *So Many Hungers* (1947) is a story of suffering caused by war, and in it one finds the agonies, cruelties, disillusionment experienced by two families affected by the war and the famine which follows it. It points out man’s inhumanity to man, and sets out to describe the miseries and the tragic predicament of human beings.

In his second novel *Music for Mohini* (1952), Bhattacharya narrates the story of Mohini, a radio artiste, in whose life, ironically, there is no harmony because of the misguided mother-in-law who has caught the wrong side of tradition. It is only in the end that Mohini listens to the vibrant music which ushers in reconciliation and happiness.

Bhattacharya's third novel, *He who rides a Tiger* (1954), is another significant novel which returns to the theme of the Bengali famine. His next novel *A Goddess named Gold* (1960) is considered a fable with a cathartic effect because, apart from narrating a story, it also provides a great lesson regarding the future of the people. Hoarding wealth and commodities are responsible for the death of millions and millions of people and if they are not
contained, they may dry up the sap of humanity. What we are going to do with the wealth will decide the future of mankind according to the writer.

**Shadow from Ladakh** (1966) deals with the Chinese invasion of 1962. The Characters are all treated as shadows chasing shadows. Images and symbols abound in the novel. It is altogether an interesting novel with a challenging theme which questions the possibilities of opposites coming together to reenact fellowship and harmony.

Manohar Malgonkar displays ability in the organisation of the plot and in the powerful narrative technique that he adopts to force recognition on the part of the reading public.

His major novels were written in quick succession. His first novel, **Distant drum** (1960), deals with the army life during the transition period ranging from the departure of the British and the emergence of Congress rule. The central character is a symbol of the army and its code. It is an indictment of the political bosses of the country and the civilian code. Many critics praise the novel for its form and atmosphere.

His second novel, **Combat of Shadows** (1962), is a well constructed novel with two major themes relating to sexual passion and hunting by game. The success of the novel lies in the writer's skill in evoking appropriate situations and atmosphere to represent racial antagonism and the holocaust of
A panoramic view of the life of the people is presented artistically by Malgonkar in this novel. In his next novel *the Prince* (1963) Malgonkar narrates the story of an Indian prince and his traumatic experiences after the princely states being merged with the Indian union through the rules imposed by the careerist politicians and the nostalgic wishes of the prince to go back to the days when princely states were in vogue. At the political level the novel presents the conflict between the old princes and the new bureaucrats.

Malgonkar's fourth novel, *a Bend in the Ganges* (1964), is the most important of all his novels. It captures the flux of life in its variety and richness. The action of the novel extends to a period of seventeen years comprising the national struggle for independence, the World War and the partition of India. The major issues handled deftly by the artist in the novel concern Indian nationalism and British colonialism and also the communal clashes between the Hindus and the Muslims continuing even at the time of the partition. The title is taken from the Ramayana. Srinivasa Iyengar rightly points out, thus:

The shame and the agony of the partition, the glory and the defeat of the hour of freedom: the "tryst with destiny" that was also the death trap fashioned by the malignant time spirit: the
horror and the humiliation the terror and the pity of it all, are
the themes Malgonkar's novel. (432)

Manohar Malgonkar's novels exemplify the novelist's concern to bring
about changes in the lives of the people belonging to all walks of life. He
vouchsafes for a life of decency, straightforwardness, self respect and a moral
code of conduct. In all his novels, he also reveals a sound historic sense.
While treating history in a fictional mode, it is evident that he tries to project
the condition of man beset by conflicting values both external and internal but
who tries to emerge as a regenerated individual in the course of his life.

Of the women novelists who belong to this period, the most significant
who compel attention are Kamala Markandeya and Ruth Prawer Jhabvala.
They deal with problems relating to East-West encounter.

Kamala Markandaya's first novel, Nectar in a Sieve (1954), is a
remarkable achievement of the writer since it presents a true to life picture of a
remote South Indian Village which has witnessed industrial and technological
invasion without bringing about any changes in the villagers' life of utter
poverty and misery. Their work is like a nectar in a sieve not bringing any
hope of a bright future, and therefore the villagers are without any zest for life
but in spite of their suffering, they, like the hero of Hemingway, are not ready
to accept defeat. This novel recalls K.S.Venkataraman's novel Murugan the
Markandaya’s second novel, *Some Inner Fury* (1957), exploits the freedom of reverie to explicate the tragedy that strikes the characters and which is engineered by politics. Her third novel, *A Silence of Desire* (1961), concentrates on spiritual realities, and captures the vacillation in the minds of the character regarding matter and spirit doubt and faith.

*Possession* (1963) is Markandaya’s fourth novel, and is a sequel to *A Silence of Desire* because the Swamy figures again in this novel, but appears as a modern Swamy. In both the novels the Swami dominates, and his antagonists suffer discomfiture. The truth that is advocated through the novel is that losing and not possessing paves the way to fulfilment in life.

*A Handful of Rice* (1966), Markandaya’s fifth novel, deals with urban economics. It has a pointed reference to the rise in the price of the grains owing to unfavourable monsoons which cause great havoc in the lives of millions of people. When food is wanting, ‘a handful of rice’ can make all the difference between life and death. But the redeeming factor lies in the silent suffering and patient endurance of the women folk who are embodiments of love and tenderness.

Her novel *The Coffer Dams* (1969) reverts to the theme of her first
novel **Nectar in a Sieve** which strives to bring about the conflict between material and human values asserting the greatness of the latter.

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala has a few major novels to her credit. Mention can be made of *To Whom She Will* (1955), *The Nature of Passion* (1956), *Esmond in India* (1958), *The Householder* (1960) and *Heat and Dust* (1975). She is an outsider settled in India and endowed with an endless curiosity to study the sweeping changes that come over the city Delhi. In such an atmosphere, an individual is at a loss to find his true identity. What one finds in her novel is very clearly described by Srinivasa Iyengar thus:

Mrs. Jhabvala looks at life in modern Delhi with amused, yet detached, interest, and she lights upon what is bizarre, what is knotted with self-deception and contradiction, what is ludicrous, what is fantastic, and occasionally - even what is perilously close to tragedy. (452)

*To Whom She Will* is Jhabvala’s first exercise in fiction. Her second novel, *The Nature of Passion*, is a type of social documentation involving two men Dev Raj and Lalaji.

The conjugal incompatibility of the married couples deserving to seek liberation but caged by circumstances forms the major subject of her novels like, *The Householder* and *Get Ready for Battle*. 
Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's achievement as a writer of novels rests on her keen power of observation of men and manners and her capacity to describe domestic scenes in a charming style. Srinivasa Iyengar sums up the characteristic features of her novels thus:

The pathetic ruthlessness of the foreigner in India and the tragicomic ruthlessness of the Indian who has become too Westernized to feel at home with his own people, the singular drama of confrontation between the old and the new, the alien and the native, the national habit of constant glorification of our Great culture, our Beautiful Culture, our Great History, and our sustained denigration of the present, all invite Mrs. Jhabvala's amused attention and precise observation but there is no malice or even deliberate distortion in the portraiture, and there is the touch of compassion that humanizes even the most ironic situation on the most satire portraits. (460)

Though regarded as a writer of political novels, Nayantara Sahgal has also written novels whose main pre-occupation is the search for women's freedom. Anita Desai, to quote M.K. Naik, "is more interested in the interior landscape of the mind than in political and social realities" (241).
Anita Desai's literary career begins with *Cry The Peacock* (1963). She is a notable writer who has added a new dimension to women writers in English with her feminine sensibility which attempts to open up women's issues with the right sociological perspectives. Referring to the association of art and life, Anita Desai remarks: "literature cannot be torn away from the fabric of life as though it were a decoration or an excrescence - it is woven into it inextricably" (56).

In her novels the inner sensibility of women is more compelling than the outer world of action. She is preoccupied with the presentation of the feelings, emotions and the sensibilities of women folk who face opposition from the domineering men folk. *Cry the Peacock* is a story about a woman who strives to find a meaning in her life. Her husband is unable to come to her rescue when she is obsessed with the thought of fate continuously pursuing her. One of the causes of her tragedy relates to the myth surrounding the peacock's cry. The peacocks are aware of death while living, and they are in love with life while they are dying. *Voices in the City* also depicts the fate of miserable people who largely move from failure to failure and who are condemned to a life of defeat and disaster. Her novel *Bye-Bye Black bind* (1971) vividly portrays the prison - physical and mental.
Nayantara Sahgal’s novel *A time to be Happy* (1957) is the story of a Zamindar’s son who experiences the best of what life could afford him before and after his country’s freedom from the British domination.

*This Time of Morning* (1965) is a more mature novel, and it draws its inspiration from the lives of politically influential people, the knowledge of whom Nayantara Sahgal had acquired because of her personal relationships with such personalities for she is the niece of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and the daughter of Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit. Some of the characters in the novel bear marked resemblance to a few historical figures. It can be considered a great political novel.

The novel *Storm in Chandigarh* (1969) deals with the conflict between the Punjabis and the Hindus after the Partition of the Punjab into the Sikh-dominated Punjab and the Hindu dominated Hariyana. Nayantara Sahgal’s interest in politics is once again revealed in her novel *The Day in Shadow* (1971) and as Srinivasa Iyengar remarks, “the pace of change, the passing of Gandhism, the defiant amorality of the Jet set, the new style of politics, the chronic sense of uncertainty, all may be inferred from the pages of the novel” (747). A situation in New Delhi (1977) has a political background. The power of the novel lies in Sahgal’s knowledge of the undercurrents of politics. This novel can claim to be one of the best political novels of Sahgal.
One marked difference that is noted in the writers of novels, in the sixties and the seventies, is that, in them is found the directions to sort out the ills of the society. The most significant are Arun Joshi and Chaman Nahal.

Arun Joshi is one of the remarkable writers of the seventies. His four Novels - The Foreigner (1968), The Strong Case of Billy Biswas (1971), The Apprentice (1974) and The Last Labyrinth (1981) - have won him a permanent position among the 'established' writers. His novels are different from the novels written by other novelist of the same period since they deal with existential problems and their consequences. Ruthlessness, detachment, quest for better alternatives and self-realization are some of the themes highlighted in his novels.

The Foreigner, a maiden novel of Joshi, contains existentialism as a major theme. While attempting an in-depth analysis of this novel, Devinder Mohan Writes:

Within the possibilities of the fictional craft of human consciousness, Arun Joshi succeeds in making this image articulate by situating the protagonist, Sindi Oberoi, as both the object and metaphor of man's unnamable madness, a kind of magnifier who stays unformed beneath the difference of man's corporeality, his economical needs and his urgency to
express, all of which, enable him to maintain what Michael Foucault calls 'finitude'. (174)

His second novel, The Strange Case of Billy Biswas, explores the consequences in the life of the protagonist after his retreat from civilization to a life among the tribals. Ironically enough, Biswas, the central character of the novel, finds humanism in the jungle.

The Apprentice is a novel that satirises corruption that exists in the country. According to Srinivasa Iyengar, The Last Labyrinth touches upon the lack of poise in the spirit of man. He further adds:

The Last Labyrinth is almost a paradigm of contemporary diseased world where discontents grow their own pestilential vapours and self-doomed humanity - lacking faith lacking Grace is tragically resigned to being suffocated by them in 'the last labyrinth'. (750)

Chaman Nahal is one among the fictional writers who has been labelled as an 'established' writer. The authenticity, literary excellence and credibility of his novels have won him this enviable position. His publications, besides a few critical pieces, and a collection of stories, include a few novels like My True Faces (1973), Azadi (1975), Into Another Dawn (1977), The English Queens (1979) and The Crown and the Loincloth (1981). His achievement
in creative writing, particularly his novel **Azadi**, has won him the Sahitya Akademi Award for Literature in 1977. The noted critic of Indian English Literature, K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar makes the following remarks regarding his novels:

> Of these, (Chaman Nahal’s novels) **My True Faces** located in Delhi, concerns Kamal and Malti, and unfolds an intensive quarrel between two families. **Into Another Dawn** swings between India and U.S.A. between - Ravi Sharma’s tradition-bound Brahmin household in Haridwar and a similar household in U.S.A. Ravi meets Irene and as the scene shifts the narrative achieves an evocation of diverse places (Long Island, Princeton, New York, Spring field, Woodstock) and after a brief interim of felicity with Irene, Ravi returns home. Dear India is India, and exotic America is America; and yet human beings everywhere are the same in the raw and in their souls. While indicating the differences, Chaman Nahal hints also at the possibilities of transcendence “into another Dawn”.

**The English Queens** is another kind of novel altogether observant, ironic, satirical, a brilliantly engineered expose of the urban-centred upper middle class (the ‘UM’ class) Indians,
who still ape the speech and mores, of the sometime ruling English class in India. What Nirad Chaudhuri has done in the withering prose of the Continent of Circe, Chaman Nahal has done no less devastatingly through the medium of fiction.(751)

Azadi, his second novel, re-enacts the human drama at the time of partition and presents a nightmarish description of the aftermath of partition when people, compelled to leave their country of birth and up-bringing, became forced exiles. Through the impact of the partition on the members of the family of Kanshi Ram, a Sialkot merchant, Nahal seems to impart the greatest truth that, to quote the expression used by O.P.Mathur, “freedom of the spirit and the mind”(6), alone can reveal the real meaning of political freedom. The novel also points out the facts that war and blood are a prelude to the birth of a new life. Man’s life is a Kurushethra; he has to strike out his own destiny.

Referring to the similarities that are struck between T.S.Eliot’s ‘The Wasteland’ and Into Another Dawn of Chaman Nahal, Dr. K.C.Bhatnagar says, “the central theme of T.S.Eliot’s” ‘The Wasteland’, ‘Birth, Copulation and Death’ is repeated in C.Nahal’s novel through “Ganges, Irene and this Black Doctor” (100).
But Ganges symbolises life in Death which truth is realised by Ravi at the end of the novel.

Chaman Nahal’s crowning glory, the novel The Crown and the Loincloth (1981) is a part of the trilogy Chaman Nahal had originally planned to publish. As in Azadi, Chaman Nahal uses a few historical incidents covering three phases of Gandhian struggle for freedom, politically and spiritually. The novelist’s purpose, according to K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar, is “to fasten upon the microcosm and convincingly suggest the infinitudes of the macrocosm, thereby, fusing the personal (or human), the heroic (or Gandhian) and the wider national perspectives into a unified whole” (753). Madhusudan Prasad remarks:

these novelists [novelists like Chaman Nahal] not only happily demonstrate a thematic and technical maturity but also effectively evince an intensely felt Indian sensibility and a new consciousness, offering remarkable interpretations of imperishable Indian values as well as highlighting our cultural heritage sometimes in sharp contrast with Western values. Each one of these novelists has added a new, significant depth to Indian English Fiction. In fact, they all hold out plenty of
promise and potentiality that we have got to reckon with in all critical fairness. (VI)

Therefore, the need is felt to take up the novels of Chaman Nahal for critical analysis and study. Five novels of Chaman Nahal that have been published so far, namely, My True Faces (1973), Azadi (1975), Into Another Dawn (1977), The English Queens (1979) and the Crown and the Loincloth (1981) are taken into consideration for the present study.

The second chapter, ‘Dharma as a Way of Life’, deals with the relevance of the cardinal principle “Dharma”, which is interpreted as a way of life and which is realised variously as ‘virtue’, ‘religious’, ‘piety’, ‘morality’, ‘right conduct’ etc. and its impact on the fictional characters who represent the general humanity. Based on their reaction to the Dharmic codes, they are perceived to belong to two categories. The first group represents those who adhere to the strict rules totally neglecting the authenticity of these principles in relation to real life. Failure to stick to them would bring retribution according to the orthodox diehards who mostly represent the elders in the families not allowing any flexibility suiting the temperament and environment. The second group comprises the younger generation who are flexible but an understanding sort of life’s problems and the ways to overcome them. Incompatibility in conjugal relationship, conflicts arising out of parental
authority and adult indulgence, convictional hiatus between the illiterate and the educated are the result of these diverging approaches to the same principle. But compromise, compassion, understanding and love seem to assert the power over conflicting forces, and assert the validity of life giving principles, in consequence of the realisation, of the self and the eternal reality, on the part of the protagonists.

The second chapter also makes an observation of the protagonists’ hazardous journey through life with a display of their heroic courage of epic magnitude recalling to memory the classical heroes of the yester years depicted in religious, mythological and heroic narratives. An amalgamation of Promethean efforts, Odyssean perseverance and Herculean strength is to be perceived in a spiritual aspirant whose real search in life is after self-realisation. The individual efforts undertaken by every protagonist in his journey through life, projected in the novels of Chaman Nahal, point out to the fact that they are studies of life-asserting individualism. The chapter also highlights the significance of familial and social forces in shaping and motivating the individual into a perfect being. Referring to the hero of My True Faces, Kamal’s final movement away from the temple into the baptismal rain, O.P.Mathur says, “his [Kamal’s] dissent is a part of universal affirmation for Hinduism and is an all embracing philosophy of life which allows every
individual to discover his own path to fulfilment and salvation without sacrificing his authentic identity...” (89).

In Azadi, the protagonist Lala Kanshi Ram's moving out from individual consciousness to national consciousness against all odds is yet another proof to establish the truth that only forces of life remain. Universal love, transcending individual and national consciousness in the life of the one central character in the novel Into Another Dawn, is another evidence to the transcending capacity of the limitless soul if only it realises its potentiality.

Love's permanence can be established only through sacrificing oneself. This is the core of Hindu philosophy. This truth is demonstrated in Gandhiji's life in real history and in the life of Sunil, the hero of the Crown and the Loincloth who comes under the influence of Gandhiji, who is introduced as a character in the novel. The positive moral values are proved meaningful through the felt experiences of the chief characters of Chaman Nahal's novels. An attempt is made to validate the statement of K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar regarding the novel the Crown and the Loincloth.

The whole strategy of the novel, then, is to link the ordinary and the extraordinary and from the clearly etched foreground to the infinitely suggestive vistas in the background.
Altogether, the variety of character and action, the weighing of the historical with the fictional, the play of the tragic, ironic and the farcical and the moving multiplicity of scene and incident, all succeed in making the novel a forceful recordation of the first of the three great phases of the age of Gandhi. (753)

The third chapter entitled, 'Non-Violence and Spirituality in Social and Political Fields', examines the part the individuals have to undertake collectively, in shaping the society into an organised whole. Eternal values, to propagate continuity of life on earth, like for instance, values like temperance, non-violence, truth and spirituality, as experienced by the Mahatma in his life, are adopted by the chief characters to prove that followers practising such principles are certain to transcend petty feelings of vindictiveness and hatred and bring about the transformation of the people and the society. Ideologies of Gandhiji are emphasised by Chaman Nahal by making Gandhiji one of his characters in his novels Azadi and the Crown and the Loincloth. Other fictional characters are made to directly come under his influence and are forced to accomplish difficult tasks by the sheer force of the magnetic personality of Gandhiji. Chaman Nahal's conviction is that it was Gandhiji
who showed the right direction to live as human beings without losing one's honour and individuality.

All the central characters of Chaman Nahal's novels explicate the truth that love, truth, compassion and spirituality are harbingers of meaningful political freedom. Illustrative examples are taken from *Azadi* and *the Crown and the Loincloth*, because these novels are demonstrative proofs of the successful treatment of historical events involving Gandhiji and other national leaders with a spirit of dedication and sacrifice. An unbiased estimation of the Mahatma, who shaped the destiny of the nation and its people and who gave the clarion call to the people to hate only the system but not the propagators of it thereby stressing the value of human life on earth, is made with reference to the historical novels of Chaman Nahal which convey not only socio-political truths but also positive directions towards a life based on affirmative principles for the attainment of a composite life on earth. The chapter also tests the feasibility of communal amity, amidst diversity because Gandhiji's ideology affirms the triumph of the moral and the spiritual over the physical and the material. Gandhiji stood for affirmation of life and his introduction as a character in the novels justifies the thematic significance. To prove that Gandhian principles can become practical realities, a survey of his personal life is made. By making Gandhiji a character, Nahal achieves a fusion of the real
and the ideal as seen in Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*. An attempt is also made to vindicate the application of positive and perennial principles to affirm life at the international level, by taking into consideration Chaman Nahal's novel *Into Another Dawn* where the confluence of the East and the West ensures cosmopolitanism. Dr. Radhakrishnan says that a true patriot's attachment is "not local, social or national but human" (17). Universal love shatters economic, social and national barriers, and takes the whole world for family. Ravi, the protagonist of *Into Another Dawn*, realises that freedom belongs only to the living, and, therefore, feels the need for total identification with every being. The significant aspect of Chaman Nahal's characters is that even while attempting to validate the worth of affirmative principles and fostering universal love and brotherhood, they continue to preserve their cultural identities. Courageous expressions of convictions and determined self-sacrifice unmindful of class, creed or nationality are the prerequisites for the survival of mankind is what is ascertained by Chaman Nahal. To instil the feeling of togetherness among the peoples of the world is the quintessence of Chaman Nahal's philosophy, which is advocated through his novels. An attempt is made to arrive at this truth through a detailed analysis of his novels.

The possibility of a classless society finds explication in the novel *the English Queens*. But this is done only with the help of an avatar, who
monitors the actions of the individuals and points out their mistakes in the guise of Pradeep, the persona of the novel, the English Queens. A study of the novel as a satire directed against the artificial life-style of the upper middle class society whose representatives are the six English Queens who are spiritually colonized without being aware of the truth is also analysed. The intention of the satire is to set the cultural values straight and wipe out class-consciousness. This purpose of the author recalls Mahatma Gandhi’s dream of an ideal state where a perfect social order would be created by harnessing the forces of love against hatred. In this ideal state the Marxian concept of ‘the typical’ gets transmuted into the ‘universal’.

Chaman Nahal’s greatness as a writer rests not only on the powerful and inspiring themes of his novels, but also on his technical innovations.

K.S.Ramamurthi states that “Chaman Nahal’s novel (Azadi) would have turned out to be yet one more stale addition to that class of novels had it not been for the technique that has gone into it” (131).

Since the importance of techniques with reference to Chaman Nahal’s novels is realised, a separate chapter is devoted to an analysis of the structure of each novel and the effective techniques that go with them. Keen observation of life’s experiences, organisation of his materials after a thorough exploration of various techniques that could be utilised for developing the subject matter is
what a creative writer aims at achieving because he is a moralist who is bound
by his commitment to society and its people. Apart from a balanced structure,
Chaman Nahal adopts suitable techniques to make his story effective. A
reconsideration of the novels from the point of view of technique is made in
the fourth chapter entitled, ‘Structure and Technique-Mode of Affirmation of
Life’.

The first novel of Chaman Nahal My True Faces employs the stream of
consciousness technique because it is through the consciousness of Kamal, the
hero, that events are narrated, and readers have an insight into the other
characters who are directly related to him and stand as direct contrast to him.
Alongside the effective techniques, the structure of My True Faces deals with
the four phases of the development of the protagonist through life.

Chaman Nahal employs point of view as technique in his second novel,
which is a magnum opus, namely, Azadi. A contrastive study of two centres
of consciousness who are responsible for the development of the plot is made
possible by the adoption of this technique. Another advantage of this
technique is to study the inner personality of the central characters who tower
above individual consciousness to attain national consciousness. Adoption of
the form of the dramatic monologue helps in the analysis of the characters
associated with the central characters and while arriving at certain truths regarding the related characters, avenues open themselves to comprehend the nature of the main characters.

Reverie is yet another powerful device utilised by the novelist to foster nostalgic remembrances which are placed in juxtaposition with the present situations either to relieve the tension or to enhance it.

Azadi adopts a three-part structure to symbolically represent the main character's disillusionment, his action, and re-affirmation of his faith in the forces of life, and these are represented by the three stages of the partition namely the 'Lull', 'the Storm' and 'the Aftermath'.

An attempt is also made to describe the association between the perception of life as a wheel, and the cyclic movement embodied in the cyclic movement of Ravi's (the protagonist of Into Another Dawn) journey through life. Ravi, like the sun, moves from one dawn into another, but comes back to the original point, but by which time he has realised the truth about life. Life is a cyclic movement which promulgates the ever-lasting principle that in death, there is life. Man dies to be born again which truth is proved through Christ's Crucifixion and Resurrection, in spite of Christianity's negation of the concept of rebirth. Ravi is made to realise that beyond all seeming differences all belong to one family.
Unlike the other novels, Chaman Nahal uses first person narration in *Into Another Dawn* because of the novelist's belief that there is greater fidelity to truth in what is expressed by the protagonist and also because this technique makes it possible to lay out the soul of the chief character before the reader.

All the techniques one perceives in a satirical novel are employed by Chaman Nahal in *the English Queens*. As a Satire aims at directness, Nahal too addresses the reader directly, and wins his confidence even at the outset. A description of the employment of this technique is made in this chapter. One other modern technique used by Chaman Nahal is freezing of characters as in a photo frame.

Irony is yet another powerful technique effectively handled by Chaman Nahal in all his novels. It is really ironical that the English Queens who take pride in the fact that they are the proud possessors of the Royal Charter do no realise that they are spiritually colonized.

Nahal’s *The Crown and the Loincloth* also depicts a well-balanced structure coinciding with a well-matched technique. A symbolical representation of the spiritual journey undertaken by an aspirant of truth is found in the employment of a three part structure, in *the Crown and the*
Loincloth, namely, 'Love', 'Perspective' and 'Affirmation'. The title is suggestive of the battle between unequal forces; Gandhiji represented by 'Loincloth' and the mighty British force by the 'Crown'. Since it is a moral struggle, it is the loincloth that wins is what is anticipated by Chaman Nahal. The novel ends in a note of affirmation. In affirmation, a new life springs, and the sun shines for a longer period.

The final chapter, which is the concluding chapter, briefly recapitulates Chaman Nahal’s main purpose, namely, demonstrating the power of the affirmative forces through selective themes, which stand as fitting illustration of this philosophy. The chapter also makes a careful study of the structure and technique with respect to the novels of the creative writer. The chapter also makes a reference to the use of excessive sex in Chaman Nahal’s novels and attempts a justification of its use and then concentrates on the use of effective language by Chaman Nahal to preserve the native sensibility.

The chapter, then, concludes with a note of promise to the future generation that Nahal’s works offer effective remedies to many ills that confront people and the society owing to the negation of life promoting principles, and values resulting in the threat posed of the disappearance of Indian culture. A study of Chaman Nahal’s novels is sure to offer positive solutions since Chaman Nahal is a staunch believer in the affirmation of life.