CHAPTER - VI

SUMMING UP - A SYNTHESIS

OF VALUES
VI. SUMMING UP: A SYNTHESIS OF VALUES

Bhattacharya, following the tradition of European social realism, is a committed artist. Almost all the six novels of Bhattacharya present some striking similarities in form, technique, characterization and the handling of themes. All the novels have the same narrative technique: that of the omniscient author predominantly in the third person. Following the ‘great tradition’ of Fielding, Scott, Dickens, and Thackeray, Bhattacharya, in his novels, uses his device of an invisible and omniscient narrating author, a sort of disable boiteux, who is able to “unroof all houses and unlock all hearts”. At a slight sacrifice of dramatic force the events of the tale are supplied with a “chorus, and at any time that suits him the author can cast off his invisible cloak and show himself fingering the helpless pieces of the game he plays”. (Quoted in Kenneth Graham, English Criticism of the Novel, p.121)

In each novel there is one ideal character-mostly a male one, and in each novel Bhattacharya uses the contemporary national or social or historical event as a backdrop and turns it into the very stuff of fiction. So Many Hungers and He Who Rides a Tiger draw their themes from two major events of the forties: Quit India Movement (1942) and the famine in Bengal (1943). The harmonious blending of old and new values in Indian life is the predominant note in Music for Mohini. A Goddess named Gold is concerned with the real meaning and significance of
freedom--the liberation of man’s mind and soul. *Shadow from Ladakh* questions the relevance of Gandhian social ethics in the wake of the Chinese aggression in 1962.

**AN EXPERIMENTER**

An experimenter in Western social realism, Bhattacharya, like Mulk Raj Anand, has a keen eye for situations and characters and directs his artistic energies in exposing the various social evils. But by doing so, he is never satisfied with the projection of merely superficial reality. He strives to go deeper into the social and political maladies and views them as “manifestations of certain deep-rooted tendencies”. (Ram Sewak Singh, *Indian Novel in English*, p.116)

**MAJOR CHARACTERS**

The major characters, therefore, Kajoli, Rahoul, Jayadev, Mohini, Kalo, Meera, Satyajit, Suruchi, Bhaskar, Sumita, Harindra and Sudha--all appear to be symbolic of the currents and cross-currents of the contemporary Indian history.

The uniqueness of Bhabani’s fiction lies in his efforts to project in artistic terms the affirmation of life, the brighter aspects of man and society which is baulked at every step by evil forces, such as poverty, corruption, ignorance, superstition, exploitation, greed, sexual perversities etc. Bhattacharya as a novelist always strives to portray the
innate the goodness of man. This is so not because he is a rationalist or a utopian, but because he gives an evidence of his acute awareness of the history of mankind and his unflinching faith in the essential richness and nobility of the human soul.

Bhattacharya’s contribution, as a novelist, lies in his sincere and sensitive interpretation of rural India. As Chekhov and Turgnev have done in Russian literature, Bhattacharya has captured the soul of rural India in his novels. By doing so he has brought himself closer to Premchand and Saratchandra--the truly representative Indian novelists.

A COMMITTED WRITER

Bhattacharya does not believe in Art for Art’s sake, a cult which turns creative artists into more escapists or complacent conformists. He belongs to that class of writers who believe that art is for life’s sake, for the sake of man, for enriching the quality of his life. Such an artist cannot shirk his responsibility to society of which he is an organic part. Bhattacharya believes that he is responsible to society of which he forms an organic part and that literature ought to lead to action aimed at the creation of one world with all men, enjoying social, political and economic equality. That a man’s creative writing is conditioned by the age and milieu of his society is particularly true in the case of Bhattacharya.
Bhattacharya is a committed writer by his conscious intention.

CONTEMPORARY LIFE

The entire bulk of the fiction of Bhattacharya is to be viewed as a corpus of novels and stories whose characters embody in them the passions and the agonies of Indians of the last two generations. The novels of Bhattacharya reflect the contemporary life, comment on it, and also imply in them a message -- in general, the message of love and kindness. Bhattacharya cannot be called ‘propagandist’, because it is difficult to see how any conscientious modern writer can escape being a ‘propagandist’, if the term is attributed to an artist of committed values. Eric Gill says:

.........All art is propaganda, .......... There is no escape from this. The artist cannot escape being a man. He cannot escape responsibility, he cannot escape being a propagandist.

Anand like Maxim Gorky, belongs to that group of writers whose writings are inspired by a mission. The humanity and curiosity of Anand and Bhattacharya place them among the leading novelists of our time. The novels of Anand are illustrative of his human concern for the underdogs whereas those of Bhattacharya are valuable insights into the pathos of economic impoverishment and human degradation caused by political,
social and economic factors. The influence of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Victor Hugo and Gandhi can be seen in Anand’s novels and Anand himself has admitted their influence on him.

Bhattacharya, like Anand, strongly believes that a novel has a social purpose and his novels abound in Gandhian social realism. The novels of Bhattacharya have been translated in many world languages reflecting the world’s admiration for them. It is noteworthy that Bhattacharya’s books have been translated into sixteen European languages. Bhattacharya admits that his disciplines have been based on his personal experiences of life. Without any damage to the meaning and form of art, Bhattacharya artistically delineates morals. Initiated into modern Indo-Anglian fiction by the early novels of Anand many Indo-Anglian novelists including Bhattacharya deal with the problems of contemporary Indian Society and embody the programmes of reform and social criticism.

**SENSITIVITY**

Like Anand, Bhattacharya is very sensitive to the woes and the varied problems and miseries of millions of people. Bhattacharya also used his ideas and the ideologies as raw materials for his art and he writes with a deep intellectual concern for humanity. He deals with the theme of human degradation caused by hunger and misery of the poor and their
struggle for a better life and drive home the plight of the unfortunate and the oppressed whirled round by the wheel of superstition and conventions. Many Indo-Anglian writers were attracted by the theme of Indian Independence and Bhattacharya deals imaginatively with the theme of freedom in *A Goddess Named Gold*. He achieves supreme excellence in making his themes revolve round day-to-day incidents and matters concerning the safety and security of the country. His presentation of the depths of the stark realities of life adds a special significance to the political and the social background of the novels. All his novels express an affirmative vision of life.

**THE PROTAGONISTS**

Bhattacharya presents his protagonists in their novels either as rebells or as passive sufferers. In Anand’s first nine novels one notices a gradual progression in the caste and social standing of his hero-- from a sweeper to a prince. The protagonists are victims either of society’s making or of their own. The realistic portrayal of incidents, situations and characters in the novels of these two writers is the result of their personal experiences; Bakha, Munoo, Ananta, Gauri, Kajoli, Kalo, Meera, Mohini--all these characters coming from the realms of essence have a rich symbolic value as Ahab in Melville’s *Moby Dick*. In a world dominated by social injustices, the hero of Anand is both victim and
rebel; his suffering is inevitable. Gauri in *The Old Woman and the Cow* emerges as an awakened woman liberating herself and her class. The fidelity of *Untouchable* lies in Bakha’s failure to act assertively even in moments of suffering and misery caused by the caste-ridden society. Bhikhu in *The Road* succeeds in attaining his goal of building the road inspite of strong opposition from the high-caste people of his village.

The hero of Anand’s *Coolie* is denied the fundamental right to happiness as he is a member of the oppressed class in a class conscious society. Inspite of odds and difficulties and unexpected turn of events in his life, Munoo wants to live and wants to work. His irrepressible curiosity and his zest for life make him more attractive than Bakha but as a victim of social evils he is not capable of rising to a tragic stature. Gangu representing the coolies in *Two Leaves and a Bud* is presented as one of the under privileged and exploited in the midst of the money-minded, caste conscious exploiters; like Munoo and Bakha, Gangu is also determined to survive even in his struggle to overcome the inevitability of personal doom.

Ananta, the protagonist of *The Big Heart* believes that most of the hardships and sufferings of the poor are caused by some rich men who derive pleasure in causing pain and cruelty in inflicting on other less-privileged members of the society. He also believes that his life will be meaningful only if it is used to serve the noble cause of making his
fellow-men happy and it is with this strong feeling that he literally sacrifices his life for his gospel of concord and amity. Certain contributory causes which spring from the limitations of Ananta’s own character make his rebellion against tradition a tragedy. All Anand’s heroes-Bakha, Bhikhu, Munoo, Gangu, Ananta, Lalu--possess the dignified determination to survive even in their struggle to overcome the inevitability of personal doom.

Gauri, the awakened woman of The Old Woman and the Cow comes out successful in freeing herself from the oppression of her husband and others who consider woman as inferior to man because of their small-mindedness. At the cross-road of her life Gauri takes a firm decision. Her progress signifies a change for her-- from bondage to freedom and from weakness to strength. It is in fact the transformation of a cow into a tigress. Unlike the heroes of Anand’s earlier novels who are not intellectually equipped to think in terms of revolution the hero in the Trillogy has a hope for the future as clearly hinted in the novel. Like Bakha and Munoo, Lalu shares a sense of isolation and experiences a moment of revelation. Throughout his life Lalu suffers so much that he is compelled to think that he was born to suffer.

The blind belief in religion and God is denounced by Anand. Despite all odds Lal Singh’s love for life remains irrepressibly strong and his will to struggle unabated. Religion as practised in India is strongly
condemned by the writer as is evident in Lal singh’s reaction to religion. Lalu forcefully rejects what Bakhs or Munoo passively accepts. Ananta in The Big Heart, Lalu in the Trilogy and Maqbool sherwani in Death of a Hero become prophets of revolution and each of Anand’s novels may be said to end on an optimistic note.

COURAGEOUS FIGHTERS

Rejecting the theory of Art for Art’s sake, Bhattacharya presents his heroes and heroines as champions of good causes and courageous fighters in a society which mercilessly exploits the poor and the oppressed. In So Many Hungers the story of Rahoul presents his optimistic view of life that lies in his faith in the noble values of life founded on the basic human values. Rahoul thinks that there is an inner purpose in the Hindu taboos and it this inner purpose that makes Bhattacharya’s vision of life strikingly affirmative. The sad tale of Kajoli represents the pitiable plight of millions of destitutes suffering from famine in the pre-independent India. Even in the worst predicament Kajoli’s spirit remains unconquered and unconquerable. Bhattacharya conveys a message of confidence and hope that the future of the humanity will not be at stake.

In Music for Mohini Bhattacharya tries to show that even after Independence India could not free itself from the shackles of superstition
and orthodoxy. The novelist is very much concerned with a need for a change of social outlook and reorientation of social values.

The heroine Mohini faces the problem of mental adjustment in her husband’s house; she stands for life and vitality though her husband—at least one side of him—is anti-life.

Rebelling against the coldness and artificiality of the pattern imposed on her, she craves for escape into light and freedom. The simmering of discontent is implicit in the novel and the voice of protest is audible. As a group of young men in Behula decide to make reforms in the existing order, the young people of the village revolt against orthodoxy and conventions. Mohini climbs up a tree in the garden and sits on a branch thus defying the conventions of the Big House; approving the fact of revolt Jayadev also climbs up the same tree and occupies her perch in her absence.

VICTIM

The industrious and ambitious blacksmith Kalo in He who Rides a Tiger becomes a victim of Bengal famine; hunger forces him to steal bananas from a railway carriage during his ticketless train travel. His three months’ jail life for this petty theft as a destitute brings him into contact with another convict, Biten. He understands from Biten that one
of the ways to retaliate the inhuman society is to hit back by getting a fake miracle of a temple. It is when Kalo’s daughter tells him of a city woman who had cheated and led her to a brothel house, Kalo’s anger against the society is roused. He is determined to take revenge upon the society which has hurt him in the soul. Out of necessity Kalo disguises himself as the cheat of society in the nature of a Brahmin and turns a rebel against the oppressive society defying all social oppressiveness.

Bhattacharya realistically presents how a victim of society in his poverty and utter helplessness is made to rage a war and pay back the rich in their own coin. The novelist describes the development of Kalo as a rebel suggesting to the reader that the rebellion in Kalo is a product of the evil system in his society.

**A GODDESS NAMED GOLD**

The women in *A Goddess Named Gold* are portrayed as courageous individuals declaring war on money-lenders and hoarders who are a bane to society and an impediment to the progress and welfare of the country. The rebellious women led by Meera fight against the hardened hoarder and black-marketeer Samsunder against all exploitation of the poor and the oppressed. Meera, the only hope of the village in all difficulties, leads the women against the tyrant and faces any situation courageously without minding the difficulties and danger in her efforts.
Lakshmi, Seth’s wife, does not hesitate to defy the will of her husband if the situation warrants it. It is the courageous deeds of women of Sonamitti that make the Sethji bow down to the will and dictates of women. Bhattacharya displays his optimism and hope in the story because he believes that ultimately it is the fight with the Seths that will save India, not a miracle, not armfuls of gold. In Shadow from Ladakh Bhaskar rebels against many aspects of the convention-bound life of the average Indian and in his rebellion he gets a personal experience of the way in which marriages are arranged in India.

**AFFIRMATIVE VISION OF LIFE**

The heroes and heroines of Bhattacharya do not give up their protest and fight against individual and social evils. The protagonists of his novel are the embodiment of optimism and affirmative vision of life even in the worst sufferings and miseries; the characters of Kajoli, Rahoul, Mohini, Jayadev, Kalo, Lekha, Meera, Gandma, Lakshmi, Sohanlal, Bhaskar and Suruchi illustrate this point very well.

**ROLE OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY**

Regarding the role of women in society Bhattacharya believes that woman is as important as man in the great task of social reconstruction. Anand and Bhattacharya do not fail to picture in their novels the
predicament of woman who is a pitiable prey to the rigid social order. In
the novels of Bhattacharya, the mute suffering of a woman as daughter-
in-law, as a destitute, as a victim of poverty and exploitation and as a
dependent member of the family are depicted with great sympathy and
consideration.

Bhattacharya emphasizes his conviction that woman represents
power and it has been possible for him to spiritualize and intellectualize
women. Anand portrays the problems of marriage and married life of a
woman, the role of woman as mother, sister and daughter, the
nonconformist women and women in private life, British and French
women, and the awakened women like Gauri championing the cause of
liberty; he makes an artistic appeal to society to emancipate woman from
all shackles.

Bhattacharya projects his vision of life not only through his men
but also through his women. The women in his novels are presented as
true fighters, courageous and fearless. Kajoli’s suffering and starvation in
no way affects her nobility and purity. In Music for Mohini,
Bhattacharya presents the social customs and norms of the behaviour
which make women an oppressed class.

Regarding the place of woman in society and in the home,
Bhattacharya’s attitude is not one of radical feminism. He is aware of the
fact that the Hindu woman is willing to offer worship to the husband. Mohini’s life is illustrative of how marriage can change a girl’s attitude fundamentally and how she no longer desires to live for herself and is ready to make the necessary sacrifices and adjustments that her situation demands. Mohini is able to readjust herself to the charged situation in her life.

Widow Remarriage and the prevention of child marriages and the fixing of the lower age limit for a girl to be married at fourteen are the social reforms mentioned in Music for Mohini. In He who Rides a Tiger the ordeals of the women destitutes are more emphatically delineated by the novelist. The principle of ‘bigamy’ and the institution of prostitution are vehemently condemned.

**A GODDESS NAMED GOLD**

In A Goddess Named Gold Bhattacharya artistically touches the evils of dowry and bribery. At a time when a woman’s life is not worth two cow-dung pellets, Meera and the other women show to the money-lending Sethji and the world at large, what they are and what they stand for. Unlike the other women characters in Bhattacharya’s earlier novels, Meera and Lakshmi do not retrace their steps even in the hour of danger and with their faith they can face any challenge.
SHADOW FROM LADAKH

The women in Shadow from Ladakh are neither orthodox nor sulking, but they prove themselves intellectuals. The sincerity, integrity, honesty and consciousness of national interest are presented in some of the women characters for example, Suruchi and Sumita. The heroines of Bhattacharya--Kajoli, Mohini, Meera, Suruchi, Sumita and Lekha, Devjani--convey the novelist’s message and highly idealized, they are characteristic portrayal of Indian woman.

Bhattacharya deals with the theme of the social rigidity of caste system and the tyranny of class system in India. The treatment of these two evils has created in the minds of readers an awareness of the dehumanizing social evils and activizes them to establish a just social order by removing this social evil. As a writer of social novels Bhattacharya has strong beliefs in social, economic, political intellectual and emotional freedom of the people. He believes in the important role of art in the reconstruction of human society; the social evils of caste and class systems and the behaviour of the society in general, and the Hindu community in particular, are vigourously attacked in their fiction.
THE UNTOUCHABLE

The untouchable Bakha suffers a series of insults at the hands of the caste Hindus, though work is a source of pleasure for him. Wherever he goes he is treated as an untouchable and ill-treated as an under-dog of society. This is what makes his plight in society very miserable and pathetic. The inner rebellion in Bakha fails to take the shape of action even when his sister is being molested. The futility of his anger is the result of the social customs and practices. As a part of the society Bakha has to accept his lot with sadness but inevitability. He becomes aware of his lack of identity when he gets slaps for polluting a person in the street and consequently he launches the quest of his identity. Exploring the possibility of inter-personal relations between untouchables and high caste Hindus, Untouchable conveys a message that untouchability cannot possibly be eradicated from India unless the Indians are informed by the philosophy--'man with man'. Ethical socialism of Anand may be expected to offer a possible solution to the problem of untouchability in India.

The impact of class-consciousness on social relations is more damaging to social cohesion than that of caste-consciousness, because class affects all sections of society at the economic, political and cultural levels. Anand artistically portrays the yawning hiatus between the poor
and the rich, the exploiters and the exploited the high-caste people in

Coolie, Untouchable, Two leaves and a Bud and The Big Heart.

SOCIAL PURPOSE

Bhattacharya believes that the creative writers business has a social purpose and so it is natural that they use the medium of their art for the propagation of their views and their philosophy. In a class-ridden society, poverty, corruption, ignorance, superstition, exploitation and dumb suffering of the ‘have-not’s are the social evils as presented by these two novelists. Bhattacharya, without taking up a definitely leftist position like Anand, presents the pathetic study of man’s cruelty in So Many Hungers, Music for Mohini, He who Rides a Tiger, and A Goddess Named Gold. Bhattacharya’s portrayal of the unfortunate victims in So Many Hungers is realistic. The novelist presents how the self-centered rich take it for granted that the poor would not rebel against their atrocities even when their patience is put to test.

In Music for Mohini Bhattacharya presents how the irrational orthodoxy and shackles of superstition have affected the rural society during the period of the post-independent India. Major steps of the removal of the barriers of caste are mentioned in the novel. The visionary and rebel Harindra decides to rebuild Sudha’s life by marrying her without being cowed down by fear of society. He knows that by his
decision he is defying the timeless social practice of marriage within a particular caste which will anger the whole village though he is not sure whether Sudha would accept the challenge of the caste-ridden rural society. The novel also suggests the shape of things to come, for example, the Professor in the novel ridicules the practice of consulting ‘horoscopes in this age of microscopes’.

The protest against the injustices caused by the caste-system in society is presented with great vehemence in He who Rides a Tiger, the main agent of protest against the tyranny of caste-system being Biten, the Brahmin. The inset story of Biten’s sister Purnima, shows how the cruel incident of Purnima’s committing suicide is caused by the hasty arrangement of her marriage with an elderly widower in spite of her wishes. Biten once for all gives up his Brahminhood and throws away his holy thread and never does he mention his caste throughout the story—even at a point of losing the girl whom he loves for not mentioning his caste. The arrogance of higher caste people, the purely personal and selfish motives of their prayers and blind beliefs of the people, the meaningless and the rigidity and tyranny of caste and the meaninglessness of rituals are satirised in He who Rides a Tiger.

The novelist presents the women’s revolt against the Seth’s exploitation of the poor, Seth remaining the symbol of the money-lenders and hoarders. The living monsters of money-lenders like the Sethji who
squeezes the blood of countless millions are called vultures and jackals. It is high time that the country and the people were freed from such wicked men.

The artistic presentation of the social evils in his novels mark Bhattacharya as a novelist of social reformation, trying to find out a salvation to the perennial problems of untouchability and ill-treatment of the coolies, the poor, the suppressed and the most economically backward people of our society.


A critical study of the themes of the novels of Bhattacharya cannot ignore the connection between the socio-political development in India in the thirties and rise or Indo-Anglian fiction because Bhattacharya holds the view that fiction is concerned with social values.
The unified Gandhian thought shaped by the influence of modern thinkers like Ruskin, Tolstoy, Emerson and Thoreau encompassing nearly all aspects of man’s life provided a context to Anand and Bhattacharya. Prem Chand and Jailendra Kumar in Hindi were also influenced by Gandhian thought. The main inspiration of the fictional works of Anand, Raja Rao and Bhattacharya derives from Gandhian way of thinking. Gandhian thought made available a sense of identity to the Indo-Anglian novelists.

Bhattacharya shares important common formative influences and his novels have assimilated Gandhian thought and the assimilation is deeper and subtler in his later novels.

Gandhian humanism stresses the commitment of the individual to embark upon a new life irrespective of his caste and creed and it embraces social, economic, political and personal levels of human existence. The humanism of Gandhian ideas appealed to Anand and it is Gandhian humanism that Anand found artistically liberating. Anand revised his consideration that Marxism is a good historical yardstick; he revised his view and considered Gandhian humanism as the more comprehensive ideology which, unlike Marxist socialism, guarantees individual liberty. R.K.Narayan highlights and endorses Gandhian philosophy in his novels. Bhattacharya describes Gandhi as a “writer’s
writer”, and the most important aspect in Gandhi’s personality was that Gandhi represented the humblest, the lowliest and the lost.

Bhattacharya, like Mulk Raj Anand, writes with a purpose and the themes of his novels relate to the contemporary socio-economic and political issues. His stark realism and the reformative zeal carry the weight of Gandhian protest against all social evils.

Unlike Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan, Anand has actively participated in movements associated with Marxism, Gandhian pacifism and humanism. Critics like Suresht Renjen Bald, Gobinda Prasad Sarma, Margeret Berry, Cowasjee and R.K.Kaushik continue to dub Anand as a Marxist ideologist. The dispassionate approaches of Srinivasa Iyengar, C.D.Narasimhaiah, and M.K.Naik enlighten the fact that in Anand’s novels one can see more of Gandhian humanism and Gandhian moral vision than Marxism.

Anand’s definition of humanism in ‘prolegomena to a New Humanism’ and Apology illustrates this point. His concern with individuals like Bakha in Untouchable and Munoo in Coolie, Bhikhu in The Road, Gangu in Two Leaves and a Bud reveal his unmistakable sympathies with the down-trodden in the Indian Society. The characters who initiate social changes in Anand’s novels approve of only the non-
violent methods. Anand is very close to Tolstoy in deploring the fact that religion is reduced to mere ritual and dead custom.

Bakha in Untouchable does not revolt outright even in moments of insults and humiliations in his struggle against the caste conscious society. Towards the end of the novel, Bakha hears a chorus of voices shouting ‘Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai’, and at this point he is psychologically most amenable to receive Gandhi’s message.

PRINCIPLE OF NON-VIOLENCE

Bhattacharya passionately upholds the principle of non-violence in delineating his characters and situations in the novels. His affirmative vision of life is based on the Gandhian ethical and moral outlook of life. Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and Bhattacharya were exposed to Gandhian ideas initially through Gandhi’s Auto-biography. Gandhi’s attitude to sex is reflected in the characters--Jayadev in Music for Mohini and Satyajit in Shadow from Ladakh. The story of Rahoul in So Many Hungers reveals his development as a freedom fighter on Gandhian lines. The solution offered by the novelist at the end of So Many Hungers suggests the vindication of Gandhian ideas. Rahoul is presented as a western educated, Indian intellectual under the influence of Gandhian ideas.
GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF EVIL

Bhattacharya’s treatment of characters is based on his Gandhian concept of evil. Even the evil characters in his novels are, like Samarendra, victims of an evil social system; they are not evil themselves. As a practical idealist Jayadev in *Music for Mohini* involves himself passionately with the Gandhian constructive programmes in his village Behula. Kalo in *He who Rides a Tiger* is presented as being transformed by the very greed he sought to eradicate. The ruthlessness of the society against the destitutes and the superstitious temperament of the people are reflected in the novel. Bhattacharya illustrates the basic goodness of man in Kalo’s transformation, Lekh’s refusal to transform herself into new strata of society and Biten’s rejection of caste. Meera and the Cow-house Five have been trained in the Gandhian Satyagraha ways and it is the Gandhian way of protest that brings them success against the money-minded Seth.

In almost all his novels, Bhattacharya refers to the Freedom Struggle and Mahatma Gandhi. The minstrel in *A Goddess Named Gold* is an indirect representation of Mahatma Gandhi who is deified by a large number of people. In *Shadow from Ladakh* the crisis is resolved as a result of compromise and readjustment of values of Satyajit and Bhaskar.
Bhattacharya expresses his regret at the hollowness of Indians in not following non-violence, the basic creed of Mahatma Gandhi. Towards the end of the novel the two ideologies—symbolized by Satyajit and Bhaskar—-are reconciled and synthesized.

SUMMING UP

Bhattacharya is a committed artist and he strives to go deeper into the social maladies and direct their artistic energies in exposing the various social evils. A Goddess Named Gold has links with Music for Mohini, Shadow from Ladakh and So Many Hungers in so far as it stresses that individual must alter their servile attitudes and learn how to value themselves and how to use freedom if an independent India is to be capable of handling its new status. Anand’s human concern for the under-dog and Bhattacharya’s valuable insights into the pathos of human degradation make them distinctive novelists. R.K.Narayan, Raja Rao, Anand and Bhattacharya have acquired excellence abroad and they have got a great reading public in America and the West.

A host of Indian novelists have brought into the forum a new technique of expression and idiom. Mulk Raj Anand was the first to make such experiment to adapt English to suit his purpose and this was later followed by Raja Rao and Bhabani Bhattacharya. The literal
translation of Indian proverbs is a common and striking feature among Indo-Anglian writers especially in Anand, Raja Rao and Bhattacharya.

Bhabani Bhattacharya’s novels are full of literal translations of Bengali proverbs like “when an ant grows wings and starts flying in the air, it is not far from its doom” (*A Goddess Named Gold*, p.118) or “one must wear painted plumes in the company of peacocks”. (*Shadow from Ladakh*, p.112)

The distinguishing feature of Bhattacharya’s central ideas and his sense of values are a clear vision of India’s future--a vigorous campaign for a full and joyous life, a passionate plea for the synthesis or integration of values and philosophies. Bhattacharya’s achievement as a novelist lies in his substantial contribution to Indo-Anglian literature. He is a builder of the bridges between the present and the past like his mentors, Tagore and Gandhi.

Bhattacharya humanizes his material and probes spiritual suffering, life, and death. He is firmly and centrally rooted in the Indian tradition of fiction. The influences of Premchand and Rabindranath Tagore are central to his growth and development as a novelist, as also he is powerfully influenced by the novelists of the Western mainstream, Balzac, Tolstoy, and Dickens. In Indo-Anglian fiction, Bhabani Bhattacharya’s style is indeed a distinguished one.
Bhattacharya at times separates the issues of Gandhian values from the overall experience of man in society. However, being the humanistic aspect of Gandhian thought that Bhattacharya has absorbed or the spiritual aspect that Raja Rao assimilated or the social aspect that Narayan found more suitable for his characterization, it is the Gandhian vision of life that ultimately emerges from these novels. The recurrent artistic presentation of the affirmation of life in Bhattacharya’s works is something unique.

In the works of Anand, Raja Rao and Bhattacharya the indictment of social evils is presented from the perspective of the utopia they see in Gandhi’s ideas. The characters in their novels are easily acquitted from the burden of their own share of culpability. The committed point of view of Bhattacharya sets him apart from the non-committed approach of Narayan the comic writer.

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

Indian novel in English is the product of the cultural and national awakening with its origin in the Bengal Renaissance during nineteenth century. Bhattacharya’s thought is similar to that of Mahatma Gandhi, in the sense that his thought is the product of his inner need to act ethically in challenging political and social situations. Bhattacharya directly fell
under Gandhiji’s spell and began writing fiction. Like Gandhi, Bhattacharya’s genius lay in his art of synthesizing the East and the West. Naturally Gandhi’s ideas had an impact on Bhattacharya who became conscious of the social purpose of art very early in his vocation as a novelist. Therefore, contemporary socio-economic and political issues form the themes of Bhattacharya’s novels. Bhattacharya’s attitude to sex as depicted in his novels is quite similar to that of Gandhi. Like Gandhi, Bhattacharya does not believe in the writing for the sake of art.

Characterization in Bhattacharya’s novels is also coloured by the Gandhian idea of good and evil. So Many Hungers give us memorable pictures of the nobility and goodness of the rural people and their simple ways of life. The evil characters in his novels are not always evil in themselves. The protagonist in Music For Mohini is involved in the Gandhian constructive programmes in the rural area. The story of He Who Rides A Tiger is a reflection of the modern life where corruption has entered the root of the body politic and honesty has become unfashionable. The pre-occupation of Bhattacharya in A Goddess Named Gold is the way in which a country should use freedom and what benefits may be derived from freedom. The gift of freedom is the golden key which can open magic doors and enable men think noble thoughts
and do acts of kindness so that human beings may be happy. The crisis of *Shadow From Ladakh* is resolved by way of compromise and re-adjustment of values and relevance of industrialization. The novel ends with a synthesis of two ideologies symbolized by Satyajit and Baskar.

Bhattacharya has a keen eye for situations and characters. He belongs to that group of writers who believe that art is for the sake of man. Bhattacharya’s novels have been translated in many languages reflecting the worldwide admiration for them. Bhattacharya presents his protagonists either as protestors or as passive sufferers. The protagonists of Bhattacharya do not give up their protest and struggle against individual and social events. They are optimistic and affirmative even in the worst miseries. Bhattacharya stresses his conviction that women represent power and the women in his novels are presented as real fighters, courageous and fearless.