CHAPTER ONE

IDEOLOGY AND POLITICAL NOVEL: CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

Before getting into an understanding of what is ideology, and what is a political novel, it is important to understand the nature of politics itself. The word 'politics' has been in currency ever since Aristotle, the father of this discipline, brought out in his *Politics*. Aristotle regards politics as power seen at different levels of society. That is, in his view politics is basically associated with power. Max Webner, a great sociologist says, "Politics is nothing but implementation of orders in a fixed geographical area."¹ In the twentieth century the great political scientist Harold Lasswell considers, "Politics as an inter-relationship between power control and laws."²

The term 'politics' is derived from Greek words 'polis' 'pality' and 'politeia'. The Greeks considered the activities of city-states as politics. The system that managed all activities of city-states was referred to as 'politica' by Greeks. The term refers to a particular kind of activity, called political activity, and places it into the category of an art.

². Ibid.
Politics has been variously defined as the art of governance of a nation. Broadly, it is understood to be something that is related to nation building. However, in the recent years, the term ‘politics’ has also come to acquire many other shades of meanings. ‘Politics’ is also used to indicate a ‘power struggle’. But here, in this thesis the term ‘politics’ is understood in the traditional way, that is, politics is the art of nation building and governance. Naturally, political ideology here is implied to mean the ideology that is overtly political.

A. The Meaning of Ideology:

No definition of the term ‘ideology’ can hope to provide a single and unambiguous meaning; instead it indicates a cluster of related meanings. The term refers to a system of ideas, looking at and interpretation of ‘living’ in the world. A further point of agreement is that ideologies are collectively held; a purely personal system of ideas would not normally be called an ideology.

The word ‘ideology’ was first used on May 23, 1797 by a French theorist, Destutt de Tracy, a founding member of the Institute Nationale, who introduced this term as a newly conceived science in opposition to the subject of metaphysics. By ideology he meant the ‘science of ideas’—a fresh discipline intended to be the basis of an entirely new social and political order. He says, “It is an appropriate name, because it does not
hint of anything doubtful of unknown; it does not bring to my mind any idea of cause."³ Its meaning is very clear to all, if only that of the French word ‘idea’ is considered, for everyone knows what he means by an ‘idea’.

The term ‘ideology’ has come to have a significance of its own ever since Karl Marx denounced it as ‘false consciousnesses’. Even the Marxist tradition here failed to chart out a single and unambiguous usage of ideology. Because in Marxism individualism is absent; whereas in democracy it is amply present. Raymond Williams points out that at the time that Marx and Engels wrote their The German Ideology, the term was generally taken to mean “abstract, impractical or fanatical theory.”⁴ Today, ideology “is a type of political theory which upholds a certain political system (in its broadest sense) and the values and ideals that sustain it, as the final proximation of the human mind to an ideal arrangement and, therefore, claiming this finality seeks to realize it.”⁵

In its broad sense, the term ‘ideology’ signifies a set of ideas ranging from one desiring no change in the prevailing order to another, crying for a total transformation of society. Moreover, it includes the

³. Ibid., p.460.
refutation of one and the justification of another set of ideals irrespective of the fact that a critic may call a particular ideology as a 'utopia' or a 'false consciousness'. The ideas may also be in the form of an explanation of some fact, or a justification of some claim or a quest for some truth, or a manifestation of some conviction. Ideology is more or less a systematic set of ideas about man's place in nature, in society, and in history, i.e., in relation to particular societies, which can elicit the commitment of significant numbers of people to (or against) political change. In this regard, Liberalism, Conservatism, Democracy, Marxism, Gandhism, etc., are all ideologies.

However, the most important thing about ideology is its action-oriented character. The test of ideology "lies in its applications." In other words, ideology refers to an 'action-related system' of political ideas in the sense that these are sets of ideas concerning the change or defence of the existing political structures and relationships. Ideology involves commitment and action as a part of the political process. It may, or may not, possess a logical or philosophical character at all; but it must possess a political character, i.e., a content without which it cannot be described an ideology—a guide to direct political action.

In the present age of democracy and socialism, the ideology plays a crucial role. Whether it is a curse or a blessing, it has to survive in the midst of different belief systems and the patterning of political systems according to them. Thus, ideology has become a key feature of the present political world. Both ideology and politics cannot be separated. As a matter of fact, it is the war of ideas that contributes to the material of politics.

B. The Concept of Political Ideology:

If an ideology is a system of thought which has been intellectually worked out and organized usually in written form by scholars and intellectuals, political ideology is more likely to imply commitment and action.

'Political ideology' is a certain ethical set of ideals, principles, doctrines, myths or symbols of a social movement, institution, class or large group that explains how society should work, and offers some political and cultural blueprint for a certain social order. Perhaps, it is the most accessible source for the original meaning of 'ideology'.

The main purpose behind a political ideology is to offer change in society through a normative thought process. Political ideologies are systems of abstract thought applied to public matters and thus, make this
concept central to politics. It is a set of rules or principles that works as a guiding force for the political operation and makes it literary.

Political ideologies are concerned with many different aspects of a society, some of which are: the economy, education, health care, labour law, criminal law, the justice system, the provision of social security and social welfare, trade, the environment, minors, immigration, race, use of military, patriotism and established religion. Political ideologies have two dimensions:

1. Goals: How society should work or be arranged.
2. Methods: The most appropriate ways to achieve the ideal Arrangement.

Typically, each political ideology contains certain ideas on which it is determined to be the best form of government (e.g. democracy, theocracy, etc.), and the best economic system (e.g. capitalism, socialism, etc.). Political ideologies also identify themselves by their position on the political spectrum such as the left, the center or the right.

When an ideology is presented effectively in a novel through the political operations of a character or institution, or when a political milieu is created by the political personalities in it, that particular novel is said to be a political fiction.
C. **The Idea of Political Novel:**

'Political Novel' is a sub-genre of fiction that deals with political affairs. The idea of 'Political Novel' has been interpreted to include all works of fiction encompassing political propaganda or ideology, lives of political leaders, political movements, satires on contemporary politics or any work which has some direct or tangential relationship with politics in any of its connotations. It has often used in the narrative to provide commentary on political events, systems, and thoughts. Works of political fiction often directly criticize an existing society or present an alternative, sometimes fantastic reality. The political novel is, undoubtedly, a powerful medium for exploring the convergence of politics and human experience.

Yet, it is not easy to define precisely the political novel as a genre, because the idea of 'political novel' remains vague and amorphous. Many a critic is perplexed by the range and variety of novels that have come to constitute the body of political novel. Although some critics have tried to define the term 'political novel' as novel or fiction dealing with political ideology or, at any rate, the novel in which political events are acting as a backdrop against which literary characters are developed, the problem of defining the term has not been brought within any definitive way as in the
case of the other sub-genres of prose fiction. Irwing Howe defines ‘Political Novel’,

"By political novel I mean a novel in which political ideas play a dominant role or in which political milieu is the dominant setting. Perhaps, it would be better to say: A novel in which we take to be dominant political ideas or the political milieu, a novel which permits this assumption without thereby suffering any radical distortion and it follows, with the possibility some analytical profit."  

Howe, however, doesn’t compromise on the quality of the political novels. The standards for a political novel are the same as for any other novel. He says further, “How much of our life does it illuminate? How ample a moral vision does it suggest?” Howe clearly suggests that it is not enough for a political novel to deal with politics. It must be an art in the final analysis.

**D. Broad Division of the Political Novels:**

There may be two broad categories of political novels:

1. Ideological

2. Non-ideological

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8. Ibid.
The ideologically oriented group consists of those novels which have been written to propagate certain “Specific” political ideas, with a view to using them as vehicles of political propaganda. The characters are mainly used as instruments of ideological goals. In these novels, the novelists interpret the political events on the basis of their own value systems; they do not depict political reality, objectively; they distort it and propagate it to reinforce a modern ideology.

On the other hand, the non-ideological novelists are solely concerned with depicting political conditions and do not aim at propagating any specific political values. Their works have artistic objectivity. If there are expressions of certain political values in their novels, they can be attributed to their personal opinions on the current politics rather than propagandize an ‘ism’.

"What was the political novel as Benjamin Disraeli fashioned it? Out of what
traditions it was born? To what social theories and political movements did it
lend itself? What use have the novelists of the 19th centuries, both in England
and America made of it? In this time of our own and for the writer of
tomorrow, what does it offer to the reading public?"9

Speare tries to answer with the sources, these questions in the later
parts of his analysis. Even if his explanations do not answer all the
questions, it is certain that they together determine the vastness, range,
and incisiveness of political fiction. He traces the genesis of the modern
political novel in the mind of the Victorian novelist, Benjamin Disraeli –
particularly, in his The Young England Trilogy. Speare unconsciously
drifts into a full fledged definition of political novel. He sees the political
novel as "a work of fiction, which leans rather to 'ideas' than to
'emotion'- where the main purpose of the writer is partially propaganda,
public reform or exposition of the lives of personages....."10

Speare's definition brings into focus several important features of
political novel. The emphasis on the word 'ideas' implies the presence of
political theory or ideology. The other important feature of his definition

Oxford University Press, 1924, p.3.

10. Ibid., p.ix.
is his noticing of a political commitment on the part of the writer as implied in the words ‘propaganda’ and ‘public reform’.

H.A.L. Fisher, another American critic, tries to enlarge the definition of Speare by adding very significant dimensions. He defines a political novel as “that which concerns itself with men and women engaged in contemporary life and discussing contemporary ideas”. 11

Broadly, Fisher’s definition is a confirmation of Spear’s views. But his definition makes important breaks by his choice of the term ‘contemporary’ to explain the political behavior of a character. Thereby he brings out the subtle but important distinction between a political novel and a historical novel. He emphasizes the contemporariness of politics in his definition.

Joseph Blotner’s The Political Novel (1955) is another major landmark in the understanding of the genre of political novel. As Richard Synder, in his foreword to the classic novel says, “This essay represents an attempt to establish the durable bases for the probing of the nature of the political novel.” 12 Blotner discusses the subject with elaborate details with definitions and criteria of identification, classification of functions,


and annotations. Hundreds of English and American novels are studied here with a view to establishing a sound footing for the genre.

In the beginning of his study, Blotner attempts to formulate an idea of politics expansive enough for fictionalization. Blotner feels,

"the prime material is the politician at work: legislating, campaigning, mending political fences, building his career. Also relevant are the people who influence him; his parents, his wife, his mistress, the girl who jilted him the lobbyist who courted his favour."

Blotner also includes the public political acts of the private citizens into this category. He, conscious of the problems inbuilt in the discourse on a political novel, tries to confront the problems by highlighting the gamut of political behaviour. Blotner’s definition of political novel follows his attempts at evolving a comprehensive and flexible concept of political process and behaviour. For Blotner, “a political novel is ... a book which directly describes, interprets or analyses political phenomenon.” He adds footnotes to his definition by saying that “they (the characters) must carry out political acts or move in a political environment.”

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14. Ibid.
Blotner takes a lofty view of the art of political fiction saying, "It has described and interpreted human experience, selectively taking the facts of existence and imposing order and form upon them in an aesthetic pattern to make them meaningful."^{16}

Blotner's definition and observations add very significant and hitherto unnoticed dimensions to the study of political fiction. By using the term 'Political phenomena', Blotner keeps the range of political behaviour flexible and elastic to cover the whole canvass of political activities. The choice of the term further helps to keep the content of the novel deliberately vague, so as to suit the needs of the fictional art.

Another significant aspect of political novel is highlighted by Blotner's use of the term directly to suggest the level of the fictional treatment of politics. Blotner suggests that the directness of treatment tends to make politics the primary concern in the fiction. Politics, in a political fiction, according to Blotner, does not remain a passive element, sharing its space with the other elements like economic, social or utopian. Thus, emphasizing the 'directness' in the treatment of politics in fiction, Blotner is able to distinguish a political novel from social, economic or utopian novels. This drawing of subtle lines between the varieties of fiction is a cardinal critical achievement of Blotner. Though the terms

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“analyze” and “interpret” uphold the tradition of Speare highlighting the intellectual qualities of political novel, the term ‘describe’ suggests the possibilities of the narrative transgressing the limits of mere intellectuality. Blotner, in his later and more extensive work, *The Modern American Political Novel* (1955), discusses several novels from these points of view.

After discussing hundreds of novels with the help of the parameters mentioned, Blotner moves on to intensive studies in the area of classifying the political fiction into five sub categories:

1. The Novel as a Political instrument
2. The Novelist as a Political Historian
3. The Novel as a Mirror of National Character
4. The Novelist as an Analyst of Group Behaviour
5. The Novelist as an Analyst of Individual Behaviour

By ‘Political instrument’, Blotner means, a novel which serves a political purpose, mainly as a tool of political propaganda for a particular ideology or individual or a party. It could also have been written favouring a particular political faction. He includes Disraeli’s *Conningsby* (1844), Henry James’ *The Princess Cassumassima* (1886)
and Joseph Conrad’s *The Secret Agent* (1907) and several other novels in this category.

The novels like Arthur Koestler’s *The Age of Longing* (1951) and George Eliot’s *Felix Holt* (1866) which are narratives of the political history of a particular period in the second category of ‘The Novelist as a Political Historian’. The difference between the first and second category is that in the second type of novels, the emphasis is on the objective, impartial portrayal of history.

Political novels, like Kipling’s imperialist novel *Kim* (1901) or Forster’s *A Passage to India* (1924) reveal the attitude of the author towards the national groups, are included in the third category.

The novel, grouped under political behavior is based on economic, cultural or social areas like in Upton Sinclair’s *Oil* (1926). This is put in the fourth category.

The study of a single towering character and consequently individual political behaviour as in Wilder’s *The Ideas of March* (1948) and Koestler’s *Darkness at Noon*, which have a thing disguised portrait of Stalin are categorized into fifth group.
Blotner's studies bring significant insights into the study of Political fiction, discussing the form 'threadbare'. His interpretations are path breaking studies into the art and craft of Political fiction.

Irwing Howe's *Politics and the Novel* (1957) remains a 'locus classicus' on the subject. He begins his analysis by fully acknowledging all the complications of defining an elusive genre as political fiction. However, he leaves the judgment to the readers, to discern the meaning and scope of the political novel. He opines, "I mean by a Political Novel any novel I wished to treat as if it were a political novel."\(^{17}\)

Howe's recognition of the immensely vast connotations of the term 'Politics' is implicit in the statement referred to. He elaborates this observation later, cautiously saying that "the term 'Political Novel' is used here as a convenient shorthand to suggest the kind of novel in which this relation (between politics and literature) is interesting enough to warrant investigation."\(^{18}\)

Probably, Howe uses the term 'interesting' to mean 'rewarding' – rewarding for both branches of study – politics and literature, as if complementing each other.

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18. Ibid., p.18.
Harish Trivedi in his brilliant essay, “Defining the Political Novel”, rightly notices the significant developments in Howe’s discussions on political novel. He focuses his attention on the ‘dominance’ of political ideas in a novel as suitable for his purpose, as much as the dominant political milieu or political saga; he refuses to discuss any work which mechanically fulfills the requirements; he makes the possibility of some ‘analytical profit’ a virtual pre-condition for the discussion of any novel.

Thus, Howe’s definition rules out non-serious, non-fictional, writings from the domain of political novel. Howe’s definition also implies that in a political novel, it is not enough to have politics; but an open welcome for a synthesis of politics into art. Harish Trivedi rightly points out, “Howe established the important principle that a political novel (unlike a historical or picaresque novel) didn’t come pre-packaged, labelled to the reader as political novel.”19 It has to be discerned on the basis of its “organic emphasis.”20 The other key aspect of Howe’s definition is the inclusion of ‘milieu’ as a parameter for identifying scope of a political novel. Fictionalization of political material in a manner ‘beneficial’ is the primary concern of his observation. The ‘beneficial’ is, surely, the political paradigm.


20. Ibid.
Gordon Milne’s *The American Political Novel* (1966) focuses on the historical development of political fiction. He rightly ascribes its beginnings to the political parodies and satires of the early nineteenth century. Milne’s enumeration seems to add previously unnoticed dimensions:

“One might include in the genre let us say, novels illustrating a conflict between two ideologies such as communism and democracy or novels examining the connection between the political figure and the body politic, indicating the degree to which he is independent of; and yet a part of this body. One might also demonstrably include fiction with the political scene as background and books which offer accounts of politicians and political careers.” 21

Milne’s definition broadly echoes the explanations of the political novel made already. However, Milne’s recognition of the ‘clash of ideologies’ as political material is an important viewpoint. In the course of his discussion, Milne notices how, many of the political novels, “run the risk of being inartistic, structurally discursive, rhetorical in tone, too manipulative.” 22

The implicit in his observations are the challenges for a writer; handling a subject as ‘unromantic’, as politics and then blending it into


22. Ibid. p.6.
the art of fiction. However, he concedes that in the best of the novels characters are life-like. Milne suggests, “transformation of raw political material into an organic fiction is the art of political novel.”

Robert Boyers in his *Atrocity and Amnesia: The Political Novel Since 1945* (New York: Oxford) says, “if its determinate goal toward which the various elements tend will have something to do with ideas about community, collective action, and the distribution of power.”

This definition offers a more comprehensive notion of the range and scope of the ‘political novel’ than any other quoted above.

S.F. Davidson, another American critic, in his article ‘Political Science and Political fiction’ offers another point of view:

“By political fiction is meant novels, stories or plays, where political processes or views are reasonably close to the surface, and where the pearls, if need be, do not have to be dredged from the vastly deeps.”

Davidson emphasizes the closeness of political processes to the “surface” in contrast with ‘deeps’ as an inevitable feature of political novel. Such novels cannot be metaphorical but merely metonymical. However,
Stephen Spender, critic and a radical thinker, belonging to the English school of poetry of 1930’s contests this view in this way:

“What an English or American writer may do with politics, if he is not to be labeled as a journalist is to cultivate convictions which show through his works, attitudes basically political, but implicit, not vulgarly declared.”

Obviously Spender holds an artist’s view of a Political Novel. Spender suggests in clear terms that political fiction is a ‘fictionalizing’ of politics. Politics in the novel is bound by the rules of art (if not of constitution).

Townsend Ludington, another important critic supports Spender’s views by saying, “mere fact presented through fiction is rapid.” He further argues that any political novel which attempts such a presentation lacks the “truth of fact or the interpretative value of fiction.”

Edwin Muir forays into political fiction, and draws the critical attention. He classifies the human race into “natural’ and ‘political’ beings. He says, “A natural man becomes a political man when he strives

28. Ibid.
to remove the conditions in society, which frustrates the development of his own personality through political action."\(^{29}\)

In his subsequent explanations, Muir implicitly suggests that the literary form which intends to portray this struggle for a better life is a political novel. Muir's concept of the genre does provide some basic tenets of political fiction, and it doesn't go beyond the depiction of 'struggle'.

There are other voices, though minor, subscribing to any one of the theories discussed above. For instance, there is the view of G.D.H.Cole, who in his book, *Politics and Literature* (1929) says, that much of political literature is "concerned with the stating of a case".\(^{30}\) Noticeably Cole's theory has been elaborated by Morris Speare, in his view of a political novel as an instrument of political propaganda.

Major critical studies have been conducted in Indian critical circles seeking to enquire into the nature, extent, and possibility of interaction between politics and literature; the theoretical and applied levels as in *Novelists and Political Consciousness* (1983) of Suresht Ranjan Bald, and *Politics, Aesthetics and Culture* (1988) of Asha Kaushik are instances.


Though these studies are conducted using the methods of social science, they are very important contributions in the studies of this area also.

Particularly Kaushik's study of the nature of political novel and its relation with the social sciences like History and Political Science shows fresh insights. Kaushik links the 'Political content' in a novel to the entire political process. Political fiction here is defined as "a corpus of novels which offers a direct treatment of political process, inclusive of political incidents and traditions, institutions, practices and formations of change." Kaushik notices many criteria by which a novel can become 'political': by the explicit intention of the author, by the selection of characters who move in a political setting, or by description and projection of political events. Her study is a seminal contribution in understanding and explaining the contour and content of the political novel.

Recent critical theory as presented in Michael Wilding's, *Political Fictions* (1980), suggests radical shifts in the understanding of 'Political novel'. Challenging all literary theories of the past he suggests "criticism must reckon with radicalism of form as well as content." He sees the emergence of vernacular picaresque, dream or vision, utopian projection,
dystopian fable, neo-classicism, etc., as alternatives to realism. His adoption of a “particular fictional mode to be as fully political, an authorial act as the choice of theme or subject”\textsuperscript{33} has opened fresh controversies. His study represents a necessary recognition of the wide formal range of the political novel.

Any attempt to define the ‘political novel’ in generic terms poses problems that defy a plausible explanation, especially because the line of demarcation between art and politics has become usually thin in the twentieth century.

In view of comparing the opinions referred to, it may be relevant to quote the words of Dr. M.K.Naik, a leading critic on the ‘political fiction’. Discussing the elements of Political Novel, he comes to the conclusion that the term, “political novel, may denote either a piece of fiction devoted to a presentation of political ideas, or a species of fiction in which action, characters and setting are all firmly grounded in politics.”\textsuperscript{34}

Analyzing these several definitions by various eminent authorities one can conclude that the term “political novel” signifies a novel which,

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., p.21.
directly or indirectly, expresses and indicates certain ideological preferences or describes and analyses existing political conditions.

But Mahadev L. Apte strongly pleads that a political novel is quite different from a novel which includes politics in one form or another. According to him, "any novel containing descriptions of political actions, events, ideologies, or whatever, is not necessarily a political novel." He incorporates the following essential ingredients into Political Novel:

1. The plot, if any, should be based on, or should include extensive political events;

2. The principal characters in the novel should be directly involved with political activities in various capacities or should themselves play some political roles alternatively; the consequences of any political event should directly affect the lives of the principal characters;

3. The actions of the various characters in the novel should be the direct results of, and be consistent with, their personalities, which should be so depicted as to suggest strong influences of various political ideologies;

4. If political events are used as a background for a variety of non-political actions and events, such background should be used throughout the novel either to support or to contrast the actions and events; furthermore, it should not be superseded by sociological or economic elements.

In short, the characters, the interaction between them, the events, all should be interwoven in a political milieu; political phenomena should be directly described, interpreted or analyzed, and yet should be an integral part of the novel.

An observation of these several definitions and established theories about 'political novel' of various authorities and critics shows that a novel, if it is to be a political novel, should, at least, deal with a political ideology or should have a political setting against which fictional characters are seen to develop. Sometimes, social problems have political dimensions. On this point Velcheru Narayan Rao rightly remarks:

"On the one hand, a novel about a social evil like untouchability becomes inevitably political in the context of Gandhiji's movement to eradicate untouchability. On the other hand, there are novels that have used a political movement only as a means of projecting the personal situation of the
characters. Moreover, there are novels with no significant reference to any political situation but which nevertheless have a strong political message.\(^{36}\)

It can be inferred that a "political novel" is first and foremost a critique of economic, social or cultural happenings in the fictional mode. A novel could be political by imaginatively handling a political event, or characters of political significance, thereby enlarging the contours of human vision. Politics in these novels provides a thick backdrop or context for probing human actions and their motives. Politics, being at the core of social dynamics, occupies the centre of human behaviour. Undoubtedly, there is a literal flood of political novels in the Twentieth Century.

In Indian English literature, politics is such a haunting theme that almost every novel deals with political themes. It may also be added that in a segmented society like India, where different linguistic, cultural, and ethnic groups maintain autonomous status, novels describing their inter-relationships shall also be considered as political.

\(^{36}\) Ibid., p.94.
E. **Types of Political Novels:**

Many classifications of political novels have been attempted. Apart from Blotner’s classifications mentioned already, political novels can further be classified under three broad types:

1. **Novel of Political character:**

   In this type of political novel, there will be a major political character that dominates the entire novel. Actually, the novel of this type deals with the politics of a party or organization in which the candidate or an individual who performs the political acts. For instance, in K.Nagarajan’s *Chronicles of Kedaram* (1961), Mahatma Gandhi is a major political character who intervenes directly to reconcile feud between two Iyengar families and brings a spiritual solace.

2. **Novel of Political Ambience:**

   In this type of novel, there is no political character, but there is only a political atmosphere. For example, in Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura*, there is overall Gandhian political ambience. There is no major political personality who performs the political acts directly. Same thing happens in Khushwant Singh’s *Train to Pakistan*. There is no major political character. Even the strong presence of political ideology could also be missing. Sometimes it is there; sometimes it is not there.
3. **Novel of Political Ideology**:

In this type of novel, generation of political ideas and a commitment towards a political ideology is the most important part of the novel. For example, in Mulk Raj Anand's *Sword and the Sickle*, the characters are shaped by the political ideologies like Gandhian ideology, Tilak's ideology and communist ideology.

In the conclusion, it can be said that the definitions, interpretations and analyses of 'political novel' made by eminent scholars like Morris E. Speare, H. A. L. Fisher, Joseph L. Blotner, Irving Howe, etc. point out the concept of the term ‘political novel’ as a novel expressing certain ideological preferences or describing existing political conditions. Any novel which deals with a political ideology or has a political setting against which fictional characters are developed, can be called a ‘political novel’. The yardsticks for measuring the artistic excellence of political fiction are no way different from the general standards set for fiction. The treatment of politics under the fire of creative imagination is the testing criteria for the success of a political novel. Howe draws the final line saying "the richness of the absorbed life, the complex interaction between emotion and ideology" ³⁷ are the hallmarks of a truly great political fiction.