

Abstract

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Title of the Thesis: **Constructions of History: A Study of the Novels of A.S.P. Ayyar, Manohar Malgonkar and Bhagwan S. Gidwani**

The thesis *Constructions of History: A Study of the Novels of A.S.P. Ayyar, Manohar Malgonkar and Bhagwan S. Gidwani* undertakes the study of the historical fiction written by three Indian writers in English: A.S.P. Ayyar (1899-1963), Manohar Malgonkar (1913-2010) and Bhagwan S. Gidwani (b.1923). The thesis examines the following fictional texts: *Baladitya* (1930) and *Three Men of Destiny* (1939) by A.S.P. Ayyar; *The Princes* (1963), *A Bend in the Ganges* (1964), *The Devil's Wind* (1972) and *Cactus Country* (1994) by Manohar Malgonkar; as well as *The Sword of Tipu Sultan* (1978) and *Return of the Aryans* (1994) by Bhagwan S. Gidwani. The aim of the thesis is to transfer the marginalized and excluded literary texts to the centre of cultural study so that monoculturalism and the prevailing power dynamics could be transformed.

The thesis adopts a deconstructive approach towards the study of historical knowledge in these historical novels. It views history as a complex chain of literary products which derive their chains of meaning(s) from the nature of narrative structure or forms of representations as well as from other culturally provided ideological factors. The thesis attempts to locate the abovementioned literary texts in their cultural, political and historical milieu. The various concepts in the thesis have been explained on the basis of "Postcolonialism" and "Post-structuralism".

The thesis is divided into six chapters appended with the "**Conclusion**" and the "**Bibliography**". The first chapter of the thesis "**History and the Historical Novel**"

describes the evolution of historical fiction in Europe from history. The second chapter of the thesis **“Historical Novel in India”** describes the transportation of the historical novel from Europe to India, the evolution of the Indian historical fiction in the colonial context, its journey into the postcolonial era and the various aspects of historical fiction as a genre. The third chapter of the thesis **“The Structure of Historical Fiction”** examines the form or structure of the historical novels. The fourth chapter of the thesis **“Nationalism and the Historical Novel”** and the fifth chapter of the thesis **“Constructions of History in Ayyar, Malgonkar and Gidwani”** explore and examine the ideology/ies involved in the representations of the past as undertaken by the Indian historical novelists in writing the abovementioned historical novels. The sixth chapter of the thesis **“Language as a Weapon of Resistance”** explores the role of language in “Indian Writing in English”. The **“Conclusion”** offers a comprehensive conclusion to the thesis. All references to works cited are found in the **“Bibliography”** at the end of the thesis.