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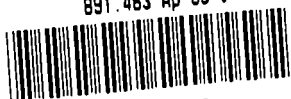
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MAKERS OF INDIAN LITERATURE

H. N. APTE

by

R. B. JOSHI

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CHAPTER ONE

The Man and the Milieu

Hari Narayan Apte, popularly known as Haribhau Apte, is acknowledged, by common consent, to be the founder of the modern Marathi novel. His very first novel *Madhli Sthiti* (The Middle State) which was published in 1885 took the readers by storm. But actually it was being published serially since 1883 in *Pune Vaibhav*, a Marathi Weekly of Poona. As soon as the first one or two instalments had been published, letters began to pour in asking who the writer was, for the novel was being published anonymously. Among those who wrote praising it were eminent persons in public life and in literary circles. At this time Haribhau was only nineteen years old and studying in the First Year Class in Deccan College, Poona.

Before we proceed to discuss his novels and his place as a novelist, it would be advisable to see what kind of family he was born in, what education he had received, what circles he moved in, and how he had equipped himself for a literary career.

Haribhau Apte was born on 8 March, 1864, in a middle-class family which was respectable but not very rich. It was reduced to straitened circumstances by the death of his grand-father when his father was only

sixteen, and, married and there were three uncles and two aunts still younger. His father Narayanrao Apte was compelled to give up his studies and accept an humble job in the Postal Department in Bombay. It was on his meagre earning that the entire family comprising some ten or twelve people depended. Haribhau's uncle Madhavrao was married at fourteen. He had a brilliant academic career and in time established a lucrative practice as a lawyer in Bombay. Haribhau had his education in Bombay, first at a primary school in Thakurdwar, later at a mission school. But his education in the true sense began in Poona, in 1878, when he joined the Poona High School. It was here and at the New English School, which he joined in 1880 and where he studied till 1882, that he came under the influence of the leading thinkers of Maharashtra and it was during this period that his intellect and character was moulded. At the New English School he had for his teachers such eminent persons as Vishnushastri Chiplunkar, Gopal Ganesh Agarkar and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The influence of the writings of these luminaries was powerful in those days and it is felt even today in Maharashtra. Haribhau was an avid reader and his reading during his school days was wide and varied, and went much beyond the requirements of the curriculum. While still at school he had read and re-read all the important Sanskrit plays and Kavyas, Bana's *Kadambari* and Dandi's *Dashakumaracharita*. Between 1881 and 1886 he had read Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* eleven times. Of the European writers he had read Shakespeare, Milton, Scott, Shelley, Keats, Moliere, Thackeray, Dickens, Jane Austen, etc. At about the age of eighteen, even before he had passed the Matriculation Examination, he wrote a 72-page review of Agarkar's translation of Shakespeare's Hamlet (under the title *Vikaravilasit*) and criticised it adversely and Agarkar was generous enough to recognize his young student's merit. Often in the class Haribhau would suggest alternative meanings of

Sanskrit and English texts, and again his teachers would accept them unreservedly.

During his earlier student days, he was very much under the influence of Vishnushastri Chiplunkar. The last quarter of the nineteenth century was one of great intellectual and emotional ferment in Maharashtra. The first fruits of western education were just becoming visible and they were not all agreeable. Some of the newly educated men had taken to the western ways of living, with some of its undesirable aspects like drinking. Some had become irresponsible to their social responsibilities and some were entirely absorbed in improving their fortunes. These might be described as the blind, passive and unthinking imitators of the west. But the positive reaction of the intellectuals to the changing situation was of two kinds. One section welcomed the western education and its accompanying advantages but did not think it necessary to re-evaluate the prevalent Indian social system and religious beliefs. This section was led by Vishnushastri Chiplunkar. He had a forceful and pungent pen, which he used to ridicule the protagonists of social and religious reform and make them look either foolish and ignorant, or unpatriotic and hypocritical sycophants of the Government. He himself had been in government service as a teacher in the Poona High School. And it was as a student here that Haribhau first met him. In 1880, at the age of thirty, Vishnushastri resigned from government service and founded a private school of his own *viz.* the New English School. Vishnushastri laid the foundation of many other institutions also. For instance, he founded two weekly newspapers, *Kesari* in Marathi and *Maratha* in English for the propagation of his nationalistic views and for giving independent expression to the views of the educated Indians on questions of public interest.

Vishnushastri was thus an inspiring force and had drawn many young educated persons round him. It was

quite natural, therefore, that a young, intelligent and susceptible mind like Haribhau's should be influenced by Vishnushastri Chiplunkar.

At the same time another current of thought had been making its appearance. The followers of this thought current were of the opinion that our subjection to foreign domination was itself due to certain evils and drawbacks in our traditional beliefs and ways of life. And unless these were discarded we would not be a strong, healthy and progressive people. Rationalism and the spirit of enquiry that accompanied it were welcomed by these people. The most forceful protagonist of this section was Gopal Ganesh Agarkar.

There was a third section which preferred to take the middle position. This school, led by Justice Mahadeo Govind Ranade, regarded the British rule and the educational system introduced by it as a blessing in disguise and believed that the British rule was liberal in spirit and, on the whole, benevolent and beneficial to the country. This does not mean that they were unaware that the foreign rule was in many ways callous and indifferent to the needs and demands of the Indian people. In matters of social and religious reforms this section could be described as being "cautiously progressive".

Vishnushastri Chiplunkar died in 1882 at the young age of thirtytwo. In his earlier years Haribhau was much under his influence. He was so deeply moved that he wrote an elegiac poem under the title *Shishyajana-Vilap* of which one thousand copies were sold in two days.

Though Agarkar was his teacher at the New English School, Haribhau was not very favourably impressed by his literary opinions or by his reformist views during these years. Mention has already been made of his criticism of Agarkar's *Vikaravilasit*. But a year before that, too, he had crossed swords with Agarkar on the comparative merits of Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti. Agarkar had placed

Kalidasa above Bhavabhuti and Haribhau placed Bhavabhuti above Kalidasa. He could do this with confidence because he was very well read in Sanskrit Literature.

But gradually a change began to take place in his attitude towards Agarkar. This was due to his introduction to Govind Vasudeo Kanitkar sometime in 1882 and, a little later, to his wife Smt. Kashibai Kanitkar, Mr. Kanitkar was in judicial service. He had read widely, thought deeply and had a progressive outlook and a balanced mind. He had given education to his wife also and, considering the difficulties women had to face in those days in learning even to read and write, it must be said to her credit that she fully responded to her husband's efforts and soon became an accomplished lady. Haribhau held her in very high regard and respected her views although, on occasions, when he differed from her he did not hesitate to state his views. Mr. Kanitkar introduced Haribhau to the writings of J.S. Mill and more particularly to his *Subjection of Women*. Haribhau read the book again and again several times and was so much influenced by it, and by the writings of Herbert Spencer, and later of Morley, that he gradually came to appreciate the views of Agarkar and ultimately to admire him. So much so that when, in 1888, Agarkar decided upon starting his own paper to propagate his views Haribhau called Agarkar a great man and a worthy Professor and was ready to assist him gladly and enthusiastically in exposing the reactionaries.

In the meantime Gopal Krishna Gokhale had joined the Deccan Education Society and Fergusson College and Haribhau was drawn close to him and to the moderates in politics and to reformers in social matters. Later, they became close friends and with Gokhale he became a close associate of Ranade. So much so that during Gokhale's absence from India he worked as the joint secretary of the Deccan Sabha which was founded by Ranade for the

study of matters of public interest and for giving expression to the grievances of the public.

Haribhau had been a voracious reader since his school days and his fondness for reading and studies continued throughout his life. Mention has been made above of his having read Mill's "*Subjection of Women*" many times over. Similarly he once said that there was not a line of Morley which he had not read. Among the Indian languages, besides Marathi, which was his mother tongue and Sanskrit, he knew Bengali so well as to be able to hold a discussion in it with a Bengali and defeat him. Of the European languages, besides English, he knew French and German. There is mention in his correspondence of his having ordered a book in German and reading it. By his vast and varied reading and close study of important works he more than made good his lack of a University degree. But it is true, that for a long time he felt very sad that he could not get a University degree. But this, too, was more than compensated for when, later, he was appointed an examiner in Marathi at the M.A. Examination of the University of Bombay.

But Haribhau was not a book-worm nor an ivory tower novelist. He took active part in public life. During the years when Poona was visited by the plague epidemic from time to time he worked as a volunteer, often at great risk to his person. He was appointed a member of the Poona Municipality for many years and for one term he was the President also. He founded, in 1890, and edited his own paper *Karamanuk* and after that, to the end of his life, all that he wrote was published only in *Karamanuk*. Besides this he helped in editing Agarkar's *Sudharak* after the latter's death and also *Dnyanprakash*, a liberal daily. So he lived a full and active life. He had a large circle of friends and enjoyed their company.

It has been said above that the last quarter of the nineteenth century was of great social and intellectual

ferment in Maharashtra. But of these twenty-five years the ten between 1885 and 1895 were the most stormy ones. A few issues that came up during these ten years roused passions to such an extent that close friends became bitter enemies, those who had pledged to work together for life separated from each other and public controversy through newspapers and meetings descended from arguments to abuses. It appeared as if the whole of the educated section of Maharashtra was divided into two opposing camps viz. the advocates of social reforms and the opponents of these. The question of social reforms in those days centred round two or three issues and these were, child marriage, enforced widowhood and education of women. Ultimately, these could be reduced to one issue, the rights and status of women in Hindu Society.

In 1884-85, Byramji Malabari published pamphlets on child marriage and enforced widowhood and started stirring public opinion against them. Not being content with appealing to Indian leaders he sent these pamphlets and appealed to the leaders of opinion in England too. This raised a storm in the orthodox circles in Maharashtra. Malabari's bonafides and his right to meddle in the affairs of Hindus was questioned. The controversy reached its climax towards the end of the eighteen eighties when it was proposed to raise the age of consent by resorting to legislation. Meetings were held, signatures collected and appeals addressed for and against the step, opinions were sharply divided and in the controversy, decorum and decency were thrown overboard. Ultimately, the Bill for raising the age of consent was passed and it became an Act in 1891. The age was raised to twelve which had been ten since 1866 under the I.P.C.

There were two issues involved in this controversy. One was whether such a reform was necessary at all, the second was even if it was considered advisable or necessary, should it be enforced by a law made by a foreign govern-

ment. The controversy died down after the passage of the Bill.

Another issue of this time was really a personal one but came to have wider implications. In 1884, one Dadaji went to court demanding that his wife, Rakhmabai, be ordered to go and live with him. Putting forward several grounds Rakhmabai refused. The lower court decreed against Dadaji. But the High Court, in appeal, reversed the judgment and Rakhmabai was ordered to go and live with her husband or else suffer imprisonment. Rakhmabai preferred to go to prison rather to her husband. The issue in this case was not what the law was and whether the decree of the Court was in keeping with the law. It was whether it was right and proper that a wife should be forced to live with her husband against her wishes. This case also led to much mud-slinging on both sides and acrimonious debates, in which eminent leaders were involved. Ultimately, Dadaji himself decided not to enforce the decree and his supporters too felt that forcing Rakhmabai to go to her husband would do good to neither. So the matter ended.

The third controversy arose around Sharada Sadan. This Sadan was founded in Bombay, in 1889, by Pandita Ramabai, primarily as a home for young Hindu widows where they were to be given education. But other unmarried girls were also admitted. Pandita Ramabai was a highly intelligent and capable lady, learned and well versed in Shastras. She had married a Brahmo but was widowed at a young age. She knew how miserable the plight of young Hindu widows was. She was helped in the founding and running of the Sadan by those Hindus who were in favour of social reforms and women's education. But the financial support came mainly from Christian Missions abroad because earlier, while abroad, Ramabai had embraced Christianity. There was an understanding that although she was a Christian she would not induce the

inmates of the Sadan to embrace the Christian religion. For certain reasons, the headquarters of the Sadan were transferred to Poona in 1890 and soon after reports began to spread that some girls in the Sadan were converted to Christianity. Ramabai's stand was that she would not ask any girl to become Christian but would not prevent any girl from doing so, if she wished to. Ultimately, Hindu Sympathizers withdrew support from the Sadan and it became entirely a Christian Sadan and was shifted to Kedgaon, under the name Mukti Sadan. The controversy then ceased.

During the whole of this period and in all these controversies, Haribhau's heart and sympathies lay with the reformers but he was not actively involved in them. The reason lies in his personal life and domestic conditions. They were such that they made him very unhappy and miserable. His mother died when he was four years old and his father took a second wife. Haribhau was taken care of by his paternal aunt viz. his uncle Madhavrao's wife. But she too died in 1872 when he was eight years old. So he was petted by the older members of the family. The whole family depended upon Haribhau's father who worked in the postal department and was liable to transfer. Some help was also given by his uncle, Mahadeo Chimnaji Apte, who had a lucrative practice as a lawyer in Bombay. After being widowed Madhavrao did not marry but took to drinking and brought in a woman to live with him. All these things somewhat estranged him from the rest of the family. Other members of the family had their establishment in Poona and Haribhau went to Poona in 1878 to live with the family. He was married in 1879 when he was only fifteen years old.

Haribhau passed the matriculation examination in 1883, but even after five years of study he could not pass the Previous Examination because of his aversion to Mathematics. So ultimately in 1888 he gave up studies.

He was now twenty-four, had published two novels and earned reputation as a writer. But this did not bring him much money and not having passed any examination he was not employed and had no independent means of livelihood. Besides, he was married, had developed reformist tendencies and made an attempt to teach his wife to read and write. He wanted her to follow the example of Kashi-bai Kanitkar who was his ideal of a married and educated lady. But there was stiff opposition in the family to these reformist attempts and his wife herself was none too willing to learn. Thus he was very much disappointed in her. He was the youngest of the family and not in a position to assert himself. So he felt frustrated and helpless. His uncle who had laid great hopes on him and wanted him to take a degree in law and work under his guidance was also despaired of him.

By 1888 this uncle had made a volte - face and from a social reformer had turned into a staunch supporter of the orthodox section. He founded an institution in Poona, called Anandashram, and created a Trust to run it. The object was to collect, preserve, edit and publish classical Sanskrit works and to entertain learned Brahmins, Sadhus and Sanyasis. There was a Shiva temple where worship was to be performed according to sacred rites.

Madhavrao put Haribhau in charge of the institution and allowed him to draw a certain amount for the maintenance of himself and his family. This gave Haribhau some financial stability, but at the same time it put him in an awkward position. Whereas by conviction he was a reformer, as the manager of the Trust he had to follow and support an orthodox way of life. This must have irked him. But he had no escape. He alone lived in the Ashram. His wife lived with the rest of the family as before.

In 1891 his wife died. He was now twenty-seven and young enough to marry again. As a reformer it would have

been proper for him to marry a widow or not to marry at all. He had before him the case of Justice M. G. Ranade who on being widowed, in 1873, at the age of fortyone had married a girl of eleven under pressure of his father. As a consequence, Ranade had drawn on himself bitter criticism from both the reformist and the orthodox sections. Haribhau also had disapproved of Ranade's action. It was a time of trial for him now. Considering his position in the family, marrying a widow was out of the question. So he decided not to marry at all. And made this known to the family. But talks about his second marriage had already started and search for a bride was on. Because he said he would not marry the household adopted an attitude of stern and hostile silence towards him. This made him all the more unhappy. He was a great favourite of his grandmother who was still alive and he too was deeply attached to her. She succeeded in extracting a promise from him that he would marry again, for if he did not, she said, she would not die a peaceful death.

Haribhau's second marriage took place in 1892. He was now twenty-eight and his new bride eleven, a difference of seventeen years. He was forced to do exactly what he had blamed Ranade for doing. As this marriage was almost imposed on him, he behaved as if it had not taken place. He continued to live at the Ashram his wife with the rest of the family. He came to the family only for his meals. This was, in a way, unfair to his wife.

Ultimately, his wife made him realize his conjugal responsibilities and prevailed upon him to take her to Anandashram to live with him. But this was in 1903, eleven years after the marriage. Haribhau did not ill-treat his wife nor was he unkind to her, but the eleven years were years of mental torture both for him and his wife. However, their life together at Anandashram was a happy one for, by nature, Haribhau was very kind-hearted and

sympathetic to women. His wife had had some education and he encouraged her to read more.

In the meantime, his uncle had died in 1894 and his father had come to Poona to live with the family after retirement in 1896. He lived upto 1915. Like most other people, he was staunchly orthodox. He did not approve of Haribhau's views but he did not actively oppose him either. Nor could he do so, for Haribhau had by this time grown in stature, had acquired high reputation as a writer and was prominent in public life as well.

A daughter was born in 1906, whom Haribhau naturally loved intensely, but unfortunately she died in 1913 leaving a void in his life.

This somewhat detailed account of his personal life is of relevance to his career as a novelist. His reformist views and association with reformers and his position in his family, his attachment to it and his dependence on his uncle pulled him in opposite directions, and this put him under great mental strain. This is reflected in his letters to Mr. & Mrs. Kanitkar. That he had no home of his own was a matter about which he felt very much. But he was not broken under this strain. He was neither estranged from one nor embittered against the other. He bore it all with equanimity and did not allow it to warp his mind.

He was not by nature an agitator or propagandist. Reading was his hobby and writing his passion. The aim of the periodical *Karamanuk* which he founded in 1890, and in which he published all his subsequent novels was to inform, educate and entertain the reader. Controversy was kept out. But the milieu in which he lived and his experience of public life gave him ample opportunity to study human mind closely and observe the cross currents of thought. This experience was of great use to him in his writing. Haribhau died on 3 March, 1919.

CHAPTER TWO

Marathi Novel Before Haribhau Apte

Fiction was not altogether unknown in Marathi even in the old days. Fables and illustrative moral tales are to be found in Mahanubhav literature of the thirteenth century. Stories extolling the merit attendant upon the observance of religious practices were current among women. Stories eulogising the greatness of different gods and goddesses were told and retold by propagandists of religious sects. There were stories of ghosts, goblins and fairies told by grandmothers to their grandchildren. Besides these, there were stories from *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana* and *Bhagawata* also. But there being no printed books these stories were preserved only in oral tradition.

Fiction as we understand it today appeared for the first time after the establishment of the British rule when printing presses were installed, educational institutions were founded both by the government and by the Christian Missions and printed books — text-books as well as others — began to be published. In the beginning fables and stories for the instruction and edification of school children were published. Entertainment had little place in them. The first novel to be published in Marathi was a translation of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* under the title

Yatrik Kraman, by Hari Keshavji Pathare in 1841. But this can hardly be called a novel in the proper sense of the term. As is well-known it is an allegory based on the teaching of the Bible.

As the number of those who had received education at these institutions grew, there gradually emerged a class of readers which demanded reading material for improvement, instruction and entertainment. This demand was met by writers who themselves were inspired by the desire to meet these needs. With the establishment of the University of Bombay in 1856, graduates began to come out and this gave an impetus to writing in different fields with different motives. A more or less educated and more or less leisured class of readers began to come up. Among these could be counted the ruling princes who were taught by tutors, well-to-do landlords, government servants and married young women who had attended schools or were taught to read and write by their husbands or by tutors engaged for the purpose.

As people began to receive education and to get acquainted with the political and cultural history of the European and other countries, and of India as well, they began to be aware of the causes of the political subordination of India and of the backwardness and stagnation of the Indian society. This gave rise to an urge for religious and social reform. At the same time some of the educated men were prompted to look for revitalizing forces in ancient Indian culture and traditions. Thus two conflicting schools of thought emerged in course of time. There was an all around intellectual ferment. Daily papers, weeklies and monthlies were founded by those who were alive to the changing conditions and needs of the time. Novels, plays and articles were written, reflecting these different trends of thought, and a variety of literature was produced to meet the emerging demands of the reading public. This is reflected also in the novels

which were published during the period with which this chapter is concerned viz. the period from 1830 to 1885, when Haribhau Apte's first novel was published.

Between 1857 and 1879 novel in Marathi had established itself as an important form of literature and had become very popular with the readers. But these popular novels were extravagant romances influenced, on the one hand, by Sanskrit works like *Kadambari* and *Dashakumara-charita* and, on the other, by Arabian and Persian romances, including the *Arabian Nights Entertainments* through their English translations which had been published between 1861 and 1873. The heroes and heroines of these novels belonged to princely families and their friends and associates to the aristocracy. The hero invariably was a replica of the god of love, Madana, and bravery incarnate. The heroine was like Rati. The main characters, settings situations, descriptions of nature and seasons, the disasters and calamities that befell the characters were all stereotyped and their escapes miraculous or contrived. The language was artificial and florid. As the object of these novels was to provide exciting entertainment to the readers, (who comprised mainly the leisured class and literate women) and at the same time to impress upon them the evil effects of immoral behaviour and the good that resulted from leading a virtuous life they ended on a happy note, the good being rewarded and the wicked punished.

As typical of these we shall give here, in brief outline, the plot of one novel, viz. *Muktamala* (1861) by Lakshmashastri Halbe. It has all the characteristics of the romantic novel described above and is considered to be a landmark. *Muktamala*, after whom the novel is named, is the daughter of Shantavarma, a Jagirdar of Irawati. She is married to Dhanashankara, who is the deputy minister of king Bhayanaka. This king is a wicked and unscrupulous ruler and is surrounded by equally wicked and unscrupulous counsels and aides. Among them is

one Shuklaksha who is the nephew of Shantavarma and had been admitted to the entourage of Bhayanaka on the recommendation of Dhanashankara.

Shuklaksha's ambition was to have Dhanashankara and Muktamala killed so that he could inherit the jagir of Shantavarma to which he would be entitled, as the latter's nephew, in the absence of other heirs. All the incidents of the novel follow from this ambition. He puts Dhanashankara into prison. Later on, he has him sewn in a sack and thrown into the river. Luckily he is rescued by some fishermen who recognize him and nurse back to health. Then he disguises himself as a *bairagi* and sets out on a pilgrimage.

Unaware of all this Muktamala, who is desirous of meeting her husband in the prison, engages the services of a sorcerer for this purpose. This man has been secretly commissioned by Shuklaksha to behead Muktamala and fetch her head to him as proof of her death. But the sorcerer is bewitched by Muktamala's beauty. So instead of beheading her he shuts her up in a cave, hacks her maid-servant to death and produces her legs and arms before Shuklaksha. The latter knows that the limbs do not belong to Muktamala. So he punishes the sorcerer and sets out in pursuit of Muktamala.

In the meantime, she had escaped from the cave by way of a tunnel which she had discovered accidentally, and proceeded to Ujjain with the help of her faithful servant Gulalsingh. But she is pursued by Shuklaksha, is locked up in a deserted house on an island in the river near Ujjain, and is rescued from there accidentally by her childhood companion Somadatta who had left home in despair. He, too, had been imprisoned in Ujjain but had effected his escape by bribing the jailor.

Thinking that both Dhanashankara and Muktamala were dead Shantavarma had proceeded on a long journey of pilgrimage with his wife and a large retinue.

In the end accidents bring all these wanderers together again and there is happiness. When they all return to Jaipur they discover that the people had risen in revolt against Bhayanaka and his counsellors, punished them and put his good-natured brother Vishalaksha on the throne. The old and faithful minister had also been reinstated in his old position. Now Dhanashankara, too, was given his old position. Thus there is double happiness for all.

This plot will give an idea of the kind of romantic novels which were being published at the time. *Manjughosha* (1867) by N. S. Risbud surpasses *Muktamala* in the invention of unbelievable calamitous situations and lucky escapes. The hero of the novel uses an aeroplane which has been paid for in currency and can be folded and packed in a box and carried by one person. It can pass through the window of the heroine's mansion and yet it can accommodate four persons comfortably. It flies four thousand miles to the north-east of India but the country is not mentioned.

As a novel *Manjughosha* is much inferior to *Muktamala*. But such novels were very popular with the reading public of the time. So much so that between 1861 and 1876 fourteen such novels were published.

Some of the new ideas that were taking root in the minds of the educated persons in those days, such as the necessity of giving education to girls, allowing the remarriage of young widows, abolishing the custom of shaving the heads of young widows and so on, found place in some of these romantic novels also. For instance, in *Muktamala*, there arises the occasion of having Muktamala's head shaved because her husband was believed to be dead. (That the husband was later discovered to be alive and the ritual did not take place is a different matter). This question had acquired such serious aspects in those days that bitter controversies were ranged round it. In Hari-

bhau's magnum opus *Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetu?* it proves to be the decisive event in the story. The question of remarriage of widows comes up in *Ratnaprabha* (1866), another novel by Lakshmanshastri Halbe. And the importance of educating girls is stressed in *Vichitrapuri* (1870) which, otherwise, is a curious jumble of incongruous elements in which hideous superstitions, gross misrule and modern ideas rub shoulders.

Some of these novels are still popular and are re-issued from time to time, but they are not in the mainstream of the Marathi novel.

The first realistic novel to appear in Marathi was *Yamunaparyatan* (1857) by Baba Padmanji who had embraced Christianity in 1854. The sub-title of the novel is "A Description of the Condition of Hindu Widows". The object of the novel was to describe the condition of Hindu widows in general and of the Brahman widows of Maharashtra in particular and to help in the work that was being done to improve their lot. The author makes this very clear in the introduction to the second edition of the novel published in 1882.

It is the story of a young educated middle class Hindu couple, Vinayak and Yamuna. The husband and wife go on a long journey and, in the course, meet with Hindu widows who have been cheated, driven to beggary, or to an immoral life. They are distressed at their miserable condition. On their way back home Vinayak is badly injured in an accident. His condition takes a serious turn and he dies. Both he and his wife had accepted Christ secretly. When he felt that the end was near he advised Yamuna to baptize him, which she did. After Vinayak's death Yamuna, too, embraced Christianity and remarried as she was advised to do by Vinayak.

The description of the condition of Hindu widows in the several episodes included in the novel is vivid and

excites sympathy and it is safe to conjecture that when the novel was published it must have drawn the readers' attention to the seriousness of the problem. But the episodes merely come serially and do not get built up into a plot. There are conflicts and clashes of views between individuals but they do not constitute a fabric of tensions. Moreover, the Christian element is extraneous to the novel though it is close to the hearts of the two main characters. The story was capable of being developed into a full-bodied novel, but Baba Padmanji did not have the making of a novelist in him. Consequently the novel reads more like a tract.

It must be said, however, that this novel is a precursor of the realistic novel which was to follow later. The character of Yamuna is delicately delineated. She is sensitive, sensible, kind-hearted, deeply religious and has a sense of social responsibility. Vinayak, is a loving husband, generous and kind-hearted and has progressive views. Both the characters come alive. But Baba Padmanji is primarily a writer of tracts and not a novelist. That is why the book marks a starting point in the development of the Marathi novel but does not itself develop into one.

The second realistic novel, which is rather neglected, is *Shirastedar* by Vinayak Konddeo Oka. Although it was published in 1881 it had actually been written in 1872. Like *Yamunaparyatan*, *Shirastedar*, too, is written with a specific social purpose. This purpose, as stated by the author himself, is to lay bare the corruption and dishonesty of some of the Shirastedars, Karkuns, etc. employed in Kutcheries, under European gentlemen; to show how they abuse what little power they have to the oppression and ruin of the poor people, and also to suggest to Government some means by which this wholesale system of oppression may be considerably prevented, if not altogether stopped.

The story is narrated in the form of the confession of a Shirastedar, a senior clerk, attached to a Revenue Court. The narrator starts on a low salary of Rs. 10/- per month. On joining service he soon learns how money was made on the sly and, in course of time, starts accepting bribes. In the end, through the jealousy of a subordinate clerk, evidence of bribery is planted on him, he is tried and sentenced to suffer rigorous imprisonment.

While counting his days in the prison the ex-Shirastedar recalls his past life, confesses his evil and immoral deeds, repents and prays to God to forgive him. This confession is the story of *Shirastedar*.

In some ways this is a better executed work than *Yamunaparyatan*. The story advances step by step until it reaches the climax when the corrupt person is sent to prison. The character of the protagonist unfolds gradually and, in the process, becomes more complex and reveals different facets. There are contrasts and conflicts between different persons and these, too, throw light on human nature. The story is told simply without any literary flourishes and there is no attempt at exaggeration. There is an undercurrent of self-criticism as is natural in the case of a confession. The goings on in government offices are vividly described. This novel thus is a step forward in the development of the realistic novel in Marathi.

It is interesting to note that the author of *Shirastedar* has hit upon the autobiographical form for his novel. This form is most suited for the unfoldment of the character of the narrator from the inside. It required great skill, insight and restraint on the part of the writer. Considering that the author of *Shirastedar* was not by temperament a novelist it is to his great credit that he has succeeded in his attempt.

Neither of the writers of these two novels was conscious that he was paving the way for the realistic novel which was to appear later.

Historians of Marathi novel have not only taken notice of *Yamunaparyatan* but also described it as the first realistic novel in Marathi, but they have not taken serious notice of *Shirastedar* although, in some ways, it is a better executed work than the former, except for the fact that towards the end it is loaded with sermonizing. The reason probably is that between 1857 and 1881 many romantic novels had been published and some of them had become very popular. Had *Shirastedar* been published at the time it was written it would perhaps have received its due.

The author of the novel which we are now going to consider was very conscious of what he was writing and why he was writing as he did. This novel is *Narayanrao and Godavari* published in 1879.

This novel was written as a protest against the romances that were being published at the time and with the sole purpose of producing a work of literary art. It is about the life of the middle and poor classes of Maharashtra and not that of the rich and princely classes. Moreover, it does not end on a happy note as romantic novels invariably did. The author makes his intention and plan very clear in the preface. He says, "If we want to present, through the novels, a picture of the events occurring in every day life then we must present them as they are. We must show how good persons are made to face calamities and in the end ruined as a result of false accusations. I have written this novel from this point of view..... Moreover, our plays and novels usually have a happy ending. Contrary to this practice I have given this novel an unhappy ending. So far as I know this is the first novel of its kind in Marathi."

The locale of the novel is Vasai near Bombay, and the story is that of a couple, Narayanrao and Godavari,

happily married by mutual consent but led to a tragic end by the intrigues of a set of wicked persons. The tragedy starts within a short time after the couple is married.

A gang of wicked persons has designs on Godavari. Narayanrao is got out of the way by being transferred to a distant place. There he is led to believe that his wife has turned unfaithful to him. He wants to see for himself and be convinced. So he is brought back to Vasai and things are so manipulated that he feels no doubt about his wife's infidelity. He then kills her by poisoning her food unknown to her. Soon after, he discovers that he has been the victim of a most rascally plot. In the end he kills all the members of the gang and puts an end to his own life too.

The plot is very complicated and there are some weak links in it. And the influence of *Othello* is very obvious. However, considering that this was the author's first attempt at writing a novel it must be said that he has succeeded in doing what he had set about to do. He had wanted to write a realistic tragic story about persons belonging to the middle class and he has done it. The novel thus is an important landmark in the history of the realistic Marathi novel.

Some of the features of this story are found to recur, off and on, in later novels including those of Haribhau Apte and in some plays too. A poor man has a good-looking daughter who is about to reach the age of puberty and must be married without delay. He has no money (or is avaricious) and so he is on the lookout for someone who would pay him a substantial amount. As girls were married at the early age of six or seven in those days and boys at the age of fourteen or fifteen the prospective bridegroom for such a grown up girl could only be a rich widower, young or old, a Jagirdar or the son of a rich, dead, miser. This son usually has a friend who leads him to a life of drinking and debauchery. He induces the rich

heir to marry a beautiful girl whom he hopes to have, later, for himself. There are women who act as procuresses, corrupt government officers, stepmothers who ill-treat their step-daughters and thus drive them to suicide or to marry anyone who makes an offer or contract a runaway marriage.

Before concluding this chapter it would be advisable to consider one other genre of novel writing, viz. the historical novel. Just as the above-mentioned realistic novels were the precursors of the realistic novels which Haribhau wrote later, so there was one historical novel which can be said to be the precursor of the historical novels which he wrote. This novel was *Mochangad* by R. B. Gunjikar. It was published serially between 1867 and 1970 and in book form in 1871.

Mochangad is considered to be a model of a historical novel. Historical novels in Indian languages have been written from different motives. One of these is to provide entertainment by romanticizing the historical past. Another is to use it from political motives. In a politically subjugated country history is used for rousing patriotic and nationalistic sentiments of the readers, thus preparing the ground for revolting against foreign domination. Interest in Maratha history had been roused with the publication of Grant Duffs *History of the Marathas*. Tod's *Annals of Rajasthan* had roused interest in the history of the Rajputs. Some Maratha and Rajput heroes and incidents from Maratha and Rajput history easily lent themselves to this second kind of use. The third motive in writing historical novels is to reconstruct the past and to recapture the spirit and atmosphere of the period with the help of the historical material available. *Mochangad* comes under this category. The novel is placed in the time of Shivaji. Shivaji and a few of his companions are mentioned and people's feelings about Shivaji's character and actions are also described. But the novel is not about

Shivaji and the author succeeds in recapturing the spirit and atmosphere of the time.

This genre soon became popular and historical novels began to appear one after another. Historical novels comprise nearly half of Haribhau's literary work and he made the same so popular that series of novels on Maratha History were written later and continue to be written to this day.

This was the literary atmosphere of Maharashtra when Haribhau began writing. Of the three main currents in novel-writing viz. the romantic, the realistic and historical it was the last two to which Haribhau not only contributed substantially but which he carried to high peaks of achievement.

CHAPTER THREE

Haribhau Apte's Novels : Social

Haribhau Apte began writing his first novel in 1883 and finished his last in 1917. During these thirty-four years he wrote twenty-two novels. Of these, eleven are social novels and eleven historical. Of the social novels ten are about the contemporary social life of Maharashtra, but more particularly of Poona, and one is a translation of an English adaptation of a French novel. Of the eleven historical novels, too, one is a translation of a novel by Col. Meadows Taylor. Four of the social novels and four of the historical are incomplete.

This chapter is about the social novels of Haribhau. These novels deal with the life of the middle classes of Maharashtra educated, partly educated and uneducated. Education or lack of it is invariably mentioned in the novels. This was considered important in describing a character, because in those days few were educated and the effects of English education were being keenly watched by those who were for or against it. Maharashtra had no big landlords as some other parts of India had. At the top of the social spectrum dealt with in these novels are to be found money-lenders, lawyers, government officers and impoverished jagirdars. Ruling Princes and

British officers occasionally occur but do not play an important part. At the bottom will be found poor Brahmans following the priestly profession, indigent widows dependent on relatives, persons eking out a living by doing odd jobs and so on. There are also some rogues and cheats. Haribhau's earlier novels deal mostly with the condition of Hindu women. They were married early, sometimes at the age of six or seven, to boys of twelve or thirteen. (Haribhau himself was married at the age of fifteen). Some of them were widowed while they were still in their early teens and if they did not happen to be in an enlightened family their life was one of unending misery and slogging and slaving. Some of them were ill-treated, beaten, and driven out by their husbands who were given to drinking and debauchery. The remedy suggested was educating the girls and inculcation of an enlightened attitude in men. In the matter of improving the lot of women Haribhau was very much influenced by the enlightened friendship of Govindrao and his wife Mrs. Kashibai Kanitkar and by his reading of Mill and Spencer.

It has been said in an earlier chapter that Haribhau was well-read in English and European literature. He had not only read and re-read Shakespeare but had also studied the works of Moliere, Zola, Thackeray, Dickens, Scott, Jane Austin and George Eliot. But strangely enough, he began writing his first novel under the influence of G.W.M. Reynolds. The reason for this may have to be found in the literary milieu in which he began writing. Those who had received university education and had the leisure and inclination to read usually went to English novels. The less educated, the literate women and the leisured classes, who read only for entertainment, read Marathi romantic novels which were very popular but unrelated to contemporary social life. Novels like *Yamunaparyatan* and *Shirastedar* which sought to enlighten

and edify the readers and were realistic were not sufficiently entertaining and did not have much meat in them. Haribhau had to cultivate both a new kind of novel and a new kind of readership. He was a man with an enlightened social consciousness and a story writer. He had to wean the readers away from the kind of novels that were popular at the time and also to find better educated readers for the novel. This was not an easy task. The fantastic romantic novels provided both excitement and entertainment to the readers. This was probably the reason why in some of Haribhau's novels there is an element of mystery and adventure which does not fit in with the normal realistic social novel. When Dickens and Thackeray began to publish their work the English novel was more than a hundred years old. When Haribhau began writing, the Marathi novel was just about twenty-five years old. He, therefore, probably thought that he must first entertain his readers by describing the seamy side of life and the doings of the middle classes and through entertainment enlighten them. Perhaps Reynolds was a good starting point because he provided good entertainment. It should also be recalled here that at that time Reynolds was very popular with the English educated reading public of Maharashtra. Haribhau was not alone in resorting to Reynolds. Vishnushastri Chiplunkar whom Haribhau held in high regard was very fond of reading Reynolds.

So when he decided to write his first novel *Madhli Sthiti* in 1883 his plan was to adapt Reynolds' *The Mysteries of Old London*. But as soon as he had done with the first chapter he felt that it would be better to write an independent novel than to adapt one. For in an adaptation the ideas and thoughts, as well as the manners and customs, of the characters of the original foreign novel would get mixed up with those of the Indian characters. This would make the novel a hotchpotch. So he gave up the idea of

adapting Reynolds and proceeded to write independently. But he says in the preface that as he had already thought deeply on the original novel traces of its influence could be seen on the first three or four chapters of *Madhli Sthiti*. It was intended to be the first of a series of novels to be published under the general title *Ajkalchya Goshti* (Stories of Contemporary life). It was his intention to depict, in these stories, the social life of contemporary Maharashtra. The individuals and situations have some basis in real life but are not intended to represent any particular individual or situation.

The novel was published serially in *Pune Vaibhav*. When only a few instalments had appeared letters in high praise and appreciation of the novel began to pour into the editor's office. Among the letter writers were learned men and wellknown critics. The novel was published in book form in 1888.

The novel was so different from those that were being written at the time that it was felt to be a new type of novel. The language was direct, simple and colloquial. It was the language which the readers spoke every day. There were no literary flourishes or embellishments of style. Places and persons were described with such care and with such attention to detail that the reader could easily visualize them. There was no hero or heroine in it answering to a standardized description. The world of the novel was the world in which the reader lived and moved. With this novel Haribhau established a close relationship between the novel and the reader.

Attempts have been made to explain the title *Madhli Sthiti*. Literally it would mean 'middle position' or 'middle state'. The author himself explains it this way. '*Ajkalchya Goshti*' are stories descriptive of contemporary life. The present story is the story of persons of middle status. Therefore it has been called *Madhli Sthiti*. The next story in the series *Ajkalchya Goshti* will be *Ganapatrao*. In it

I am going to describe the condition of those who have attained a higher status through education and who think constantly about the betterment of our society. I have shown in *Ganapatrao* that Vishnu and Yamuna of *Madhli Sthiti* have risen to higher status through good education and their thoughts are also of a higher order.

"I next want to write a third story describing the life of persons belonging to the low status. I want to show that Ganya and Nanya of *Madhli Sthiti* have descended to a low status because of bad education. Low status means persons of low status. That is my general scheme."

Haribhau did not write a novel about Ganya and Nanya.

Others have tried to explain the title in terms of the effect of Western education on the society in Maharashtra. The first phase was the one in which western education had not yet been introduced in Maharashtra. The second or middle phase was the one in which the people of Maharashtra had begun to receive western education and the effect was that they were blinded by it. They condemned every thing Indian and adopted western ways of living and western vices also. The third phase was the one in which the enlightening effects of western education had begun to show themselves. *Madhli Sthiti*, according to this explanation, represents the middle phase.

Both these explanations have an element of truth in them. *Madhli Sthiti* depicts the life and activities of a particular section of the middle class of Poona of those days. The canvas is not very large but there are half a dozen families and more than fifty characters in it. The novel describes the nefarious activities of three persons viz., Govindrao, who is the arch villain of the piece and two women Kakubai and Thamabai, who are his accomplices. Govindrao directs his activities against Vinayakrao, the only son of a rich moneylender, who has died recently. The family comprises of Vinayakrao's mother and his

young and virtuous wife Saraswati. As soon as Govindrao knows that Vinayakrao is his own master he begins to cast his net. He introduces Vinayakrao to a social club whose members represent a cross section of the educated middle class. The main activity of the club is to meet in the evenings and drink and gossip. Occasionally prostitutes are invited to sing. Vinayakrao renovated and re-furnished his house and from time to time drinking and singing parties were held at his house too.

In course of time Vinayakrao drives away his mother and begins to ill-treat his wife and beats her mercilessly. On the one hand Govindrao tries to sow seeds of suspicion in the mind of Vinayakrao about his wife's faithfulness and on the other he tries to win over Saraswati by criticising before her Vinayakrao's drunkenness and debauchery. As she does not fall a prey to his tricks or respond to his overtures, he eggs on her husband to further torture her and ultimately so manages things that Vinayakrao suspects her of theft and she is driven out.

By this time Govindrao has fleeced Vinayakrao completely and nothing more can be got out of him, so he is thinking of running away with Kakubai, Thamabai and two young girls whom they have kidnapped. But as the three are about to leave Poona by a train a man who has known Govindrao's past and is on his tract arrives at the station with a police party and has them arrested. Subsequently they are tried and convicted by a magistrate. Vinayakrao gets back the money which Govindrao had robbed him of. He is convinced of the innocence of his wife. So he brings her back and his mother too.

This is a very bare and inevitably somewhat unsatisfactory outline of the story which covers nearly five hundred pages. There are three or four other families which are affected by Govindrao's wicked activities. But all ends well.

Madhli Sthiti has some obvious defects. Haribhau is still finding his way. Descriptions and analyses are unnecessarily long. Events are separated by so many intervening chapters that the reader has to be reminded of the connection. There are many apostrophes, some of them addressed to the characters, some to the readers and some to no one in particular but are in the nature of exclamations. One might consider it a drawback that the novel describes the lives and activities of the undesirable and depraved elements of the middle class society and entirely leaves out the good or the enlightened elements. But that was the intention of the author. However, there is an exception. It is of a family which comprises Naropant, Radhabai, their daughter Yamuna and Vishnu who is being supported and educated by Naropant. This family deserves special mention because Vishnu and Yamuna of this family appear as grown up persons in Haribhau's next novel *Ganpatrao*.

In spite of its shortcomings, however, the novel makes interesting reading even today. Although limited in range and onesided, the novel presents an authentic picture of one section of the society of the period, the description of persons and places is accurate and significant, the language is simple and direct, and the dialogues, unlike those of earlier novels are colloquial, natural and skilfully handled.

Before *Madhli Sthiti* appeared in book form Haribhau had started publishing his second novel *Ganpatrao* (in 1886) which, has remained incomplete. The people and the setting of this novel are entirely of a different class and calibre from those in *Madhli Sthiti*. Ganpatrao, after whom the novel is named, is the son of a government officer and a student at the Deccan College in Poona, reading for B.A. He is about twenty years of age and married. His friend Nana is his class-mate and of the same age but unmarried. Nana lost his father when he was about four years old, and he and his mother are being

supported by his uncle. Nana's sister Godavari is married to a priest's son and is treated very cruelly by her husband and mother-in-law.

Naropant and Radhabai whom we have met in *Madhli Shiti* are to be met with in this novel also. Their daughter Yamuna is now married to Vishnu and renamed Lakshmi. Vishnu is also at the College with Ganpatrao and Nana but is their junior by one year.

Ganpatrao himself is very sensitive and impatient in the matter of social reform. He is well-read in English and Sanskrit literature and swears by Mill and Spencer in matters of social reform. Ganpatrao and Nana have struck acquaintance with a very cultured family and they are frequent visitors there. This family comprises Krishnarao, his wife Ramabai and their daughter Dwaraka. It is tacitly understood that Nana and Dwaraka will marry in due course.

Not much, however, happens in this novel. Nana's uncle arranges his marriage with an ugly, uneducated, girl for reasons of money but Nana refuses to comply. So his mother is turned out by the uncle and the doors of the uncle's house are closed to her and her son. The ill treatment of Godavari reaches such limits that Ganpatrao and Nana decide to bring her away. It is at this point that the novel abruptly stops. This was in the beginning of 1893. It stopped because the monthly magazine in which it was being printed serially ceased to be published. Although Haribhau wrote many novels after this, he never completed this novel and one can only guess how it would have ended if it had been completed.

The dominant theme of the novel in its present form is the lot of Hindu women in those days and the ways to improve it. The novel is full of discussions and dialogues on this question. Educating women, raising the age of their marriage, and removing the ban on the remarriage of widows are the remedies suggested. Ganpatrao in his

enthusiasm dreams of a society in which women will have received higher education, will read and enjoy literature, will be able to participate in discussions with men as their equals. This is the first of Haribhau's novels to be occupied with the discussion of serious social problems. It will be seen that this dream comes true to some extent in his next novel.

So far as the writing of the novel is concerned we see that Haribhau is now a maturer artist. In *Madhli Sthiti* he was trying to find his way. In *Ganpatrao* he has found it. The characters are many-faceted and have acquired a certain degree of roundness. Special mention must be made of his description of Nana's aunt. She is a domineering, self-willed woman and is in the habit of lording it over her husband. And yet she is attractive. Her complexion, her well defined features and particularly her eyes and her manner of speech have a compelling influence. All this is graphically described by Haribhau. It is a pity that he did not complete the novel.

At the same time as he was writing *Ganpatrao*, he was also writing his next and third novel, his magnum opus, *Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetto?* (But Who Cares?) for his own weekly *Karamanuk* which he had founded in 1890.

Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetto? is in many ways the most representative of Haribhau's social novels and the one which leaves the deepest impression on the reader's mind. It also presents an authentic picture of the life in large middle class Hindu joint families, the clash between the orthodox and the reformist views, between the younger and older generations and the condition of women in these families. For this and other reasons it deserves to be considered in some detail.

The novel is written in the form of an autobiography and purports to be the life-story of a young woman of some education. This is not an uncommon literary device, but Haribhau introduces the story so ingeniously that the

boundary lines between the world of reality and of imagination get blurred.

He makes it appear that he came by the manuscript of the novel through the good offices of a friend who knew about it. He introduces Haribhau to Ganpatrao, the brother of the young woman who is no more. The brother hands over the MS to Haribhau who likes it so much that he wants to publish it in *Karamanuk*. But the story, naturally, was incomplete and Haribhau wanted to have it rounded off. So he requested Ganpatrao to write a concluding chapter, which he did. Ganpatrao also gave a few pieces of paper which contained information not included in the main body of the MS.

Haribhau says the MS, with the material supplied by Ganpatrao, is the novel *Pan Lakshyart Kon Gheto?* It is the story principally of two families and incidentally of some others. It is narrated by Yamu and begins at a point when she is about eight or nine years old. In her family, living in Poona, there are her parents, her elder brother, Dada, who is about twelve and a younger sister, Sundari. Her father's parents are also living, but they are in a village at some distance where they have a house and farm land. It is a well-to-do family. Yamu's father is a Head Clerk in the Collector's office. His relations with his father are not very happy. In his own family the children are afraid of him and, as far as possible, keep away from him. The mother is intelligent, wise and tactful. The children have great respect and love for her and it is she who had moulded their character.

When the story begins a doll's marriage is being celebrated. Yamu, her brother Dada, and her neighbour friend Thaki are all engrossed in celebrating the wedding with all the pomp and noise and quarrel that are natural among children on such occasions, when, suddenly, their father who is back from office shouts at them angrily. The wedding is interrupted and the children scatter away like

frightened birds. For the children, perhaps, there is nothing unusual in this. For such things happen in every family and Yamu too, describes this incident very casually. But from the reader's point of view this has a symbolical import. It is indicative of how Fate strikes at human beings when they are in good spirit and enjoying life heartily.

A few months later Yamu was married to Raghunath, who went to the same school as Dada, was his senior by three years, and about to take the matriculation examination. He had lost his father while young and, with his mother, was being supported by his maternal uncles. He was very intelligent, very kind and considerate, straight forward and firm of mind.

In her husband's family there were about a dozen persons including her mother-in-law, two maternal uncles-in-law, their wives, and an old maternal grandmother-in-law.

The elder maternal uncle-in-law Shankar Mamaji, is the arch villain of the novel and the cause of the final tragedy. He was a debauchee and drunkard. But he pretended to be a very religious man. He was not only unfaithful to his wife but cruel too. He abused her in the presence of his children and encouraged them to do the same.

In this family Yamu was harassed and ill-treated by all except her mother-in-law who, being docile by nature and also dependent on the family, was a silent and helpless witness to her ill-treatment. Her only succour and solace was her husband. But he could do little as he was only a boy and, as the custom was, husband and wife were not supposed to meet in private or even talk with each other until the wife attained puberty. So Yamu had to bear all this patiently.

Back in her father's house her mother, who had begun to lose in health after her fourth confinement, died within a month of Yamu's marriage. Her father soon married again and although the second wife was younger than her

stepson, i.e. Yamu's elder brother, she began to behave in an overbearing manner. She was a sneaky type and whenever Yamu went there for a few days she kept a watch over every movement of Yamu and Dada. Thus it became difficult for them to have a tete-a-tete for any length of time.

Soon Dada was married. Yamu had hoped that in this young girl she would find a friend in whom she could confide. But these hopes were dashed to the ground. The girl was ignorant, illiterate, unwilling to learn, jealous, obstinate and querulous. She defeated all attempts of Yamuna to befriend her. This not only disappointed her but she discovered that her brother's life was becoming unbearable to him. So she was doubly unhappy.

In due course Raghunath passed his first degree examination and then, with his wife and mother, he went to Bombay for studying law. His friends Vishnupant and Nanasaheb and their wives had already preceded them there and were living in a bungalow in which they found accommodation for Raghunath and his family. The wives of Vishnupant and Nanasaheb befriended Yamu immediately on her arrival and made her feel perfectly at ease. Yamu was a little shy in the beginning and reluctant to sit in company with men as the other two ladies did. But with the loving encouragement of her husband and the coaxing of the two ladies she soon overcame her shyness and became a willing member of the group.

The years Yamu spent in Bombay were the happiest in her life. But this kind of life was perhaps too good to last for long and once when all of them had planned to go on an excursion to the Elephanta Caves, Raghunath was suddenly taken ill and died in less than twelve hours. This was a bolt from the blue and all of Yamu's dreams of a happy life were shattered to pieces. One is reminded here of how, at the opening of the novel, Yamu's father had interrupted the happy marriage of dolls. But worse

was to follow. Had she been left alone she would perhaps have overcome the grief caused by the sudden death of her husband and, with the help of her brother and the encouragement of her husband's friends, she would have led a useful life if not an entirely happy one.

But she had to return to Poona and there, through deceit, she was forced to have her head shaved. This was against the wish and conviction of herself, her late husband and her brother. The shock, of this event was too great for her. Her health to suffer and she was persuaded to write an account of her life as a means of relieving the tension. But her health deteriorated very fast and she died soon after.

Running parallel to Yamu's story is that of her friend Durgi. Durgi's husband was a rascal. He had dropped out of school, had taken to smoking, stealing and gambling and wanted his wife only to satisfy his lust. He beat her if she did not bring money from her father when he demanded it. Durgi had a child by him but she was so disgusted with her life that she wanted to kill herself and her child by taking opium.

Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetu? appears to be the tragedy of a young, hopeful and forward-looking life sacrificed at the altar of hypocrisy, callousness and bigotry. But in a wider context it is the story of the life of women in general in those days. Women were treated like domesticated beasts as Yamu herself says in one place. They were petted or punished, fed or starved, beaten and belaboured according to the whims of men. They were things to be used and not persons to be treated as equals. Nobody cared about what they felt or wished for. That is what the title means: "But Who Cares?"

At the same time the novel shows how crafty, cruel and callous women can be. How they can ruin the life of other women and make it unbearable even for men. Yamu's aunts-in-law and sister-in-law in her husband's

house, and her step-mother and her brother's wife are examples of this. The characters of these different women are so sharply and finely etched by Haribhau that one is astonished at his powers of observation. Another point worth noting is Haribhau's skill in using women's language. There is a variety of women characters in this novel and in each case Haribhau uses language which exactly fits the character. This novel is supposed to have been written by a young woman, innocent, sensitive and loving by nature and the language she uses is entirely in keeping with her character and temperament.

In this novel Haribhau has reached his full stature as a novelist. There are altogether about three dozen characters in it and each one of them is distinguishable from the other and all of them are alive and pulsating. The canvas of the novel is not big but it is very rich in its contents and Haribhau has done full justice to them.

The next novel *Yashwantrao Khare* (1892-95) is again an incomplete one like *Ganpatrao*. However, in some ways it could be said that it is complete so far as it goes. The theme and line of thinking of this novel is entirely opposed to that of *Ganpatrao*. *Ganpatrao* is a grown-up young man, reading for the B.A. Degree Examination and is married. His views are formed, mind made up and he knows what he wants to do after completing his education. Moreover *Ganpatrao* is the son of a well-to-do government servant. On the other hand, *Yashwantrao* belongs to a poor family. He is twelve years old when the novel begins. He has lost his father and his mother is compelled to do ill-paid domestic work to support her family consisting of herself, *Yashwantrao* and a younger brother and sister.

The emphasis in *Ganpatrao* is on social reform, primarily on educating young girls, raising their age of marriage, and encouraging the re-marriage of widows. On the other hand, the emphasis in *Yashwantrao Khare* is

on political reform as opposed to social reform. In fact, social reform is derided in this novel and protagonists of social reform are described as enemies of society.

Young Yashwantrao, who is studying in a school, is obliged to seek the support of well-to-do patrons in order to be able to prosecute his studies. At first he is under the patronage of a Rao Bahadur who calls himself a social reformer and is a supporter of the British rule. But he and his family, including the womenfolk and sons, are so proud of their position and prestige, and so callous and conceited that they insult and ill-treat Yashwantrao. The sensitive young boy not only feels hurt but also begins to dislike social reform and turns a misogynist. He also begins to feel that his mother does not love him and he is gradually alienated from her and the family, and feels lonely.

At this critical stage in his life he happens to meet Shridharpant who is a well-read man and a staunch nationalist. He is very sympathetic to Yashwantrao and the latter soon comes under his protection and care. Thereafter, to the end of Yashwantrao's college career, Shridharpant is his guide and mentor. He moulds Yashwantrao's character, personality and ideas. Yashwantrao is the product of Shridharpant's tutelage. Like his mentor he too becomes a staunch advocate of political reform and bitter opponent of social reform.

In *Ganpatrao* Ganpatrao swears by Mill's *Subjection of Women*. In *Yashwantrao Khare* Yashwantrao swears by Mazzini, the great Italian patriot.

The novel stops here. It covers eight years of the formative period of Yashwantrao's life from twelve to twenty. In the depiction of the development of character and personality *Yashwantrao Khare* is a great improvement on the three earlier novels. In *Madhli Sthiti*, the first novel, there is not much of development of characters. They were fixed though not life-less. In *Ganpatrao*, charac-

ter-sketching is much better than in *Madhli Sthiti*. The character sketch of Sitabai, Kashinathpant's wife is very impressive. "*Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetu?*" is a step further. We see Yamu developing gradually from a young girl into a young woman like a bud blooming into a beautiful flower, and Haribhau has shown us this development without making any verbal statement to that effect. But in *Yashwantrao Khare*, the whole novel of about five hundred pages is devoted to describing the development and formation of one single personality. How the development of a man's personality depends upon the interaction of his inherent propensities and potentialities on the one hand and, on the other, on the conditions and circumstances in which he is placed is shown in this novel in full detail. The depiction of some secondary characters, too, is effective.

We find in this novel a fuller description of the clash of ideas and ideologies which was a characteristic of contemporary Maharashtra. An idea of this has been given in the first chapter of this book. Shridharpant is a representative of those who laid greater stress on political demands and relegated social reforms to a secondary place. Some even went to the extent of saying that there was no necessity of social reforms.

What Yashwantrao would have done to propagate his views and what kind of life he would have led, whether he would have been compelled to modify his views, the reader can only guess.

In his next novel *Mee* (Myself), 1893-1895, Haribhau reverts to the autobiographical form of writing. But the writer in this case is Bhau who later becomes a sanyasi and adopts the name Bhavanand. This novel can be compared and contrasted with all the three previous ones. The main theme of *Ganpatrao* and *Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetu?* is educating women and improving their status and condition. The content is social. The emphasis

in *Yashwantrao Khare* is on political reform as opposed and in preference to social reform. In *Mee* we find that equal importance is given to both, and whether one should work in one field or in the other is left to the choice and ability of the person concerned. If one is confident of being able to work in both the fields one should. *Ganpatrao* and *Yashwantrao Khare* are both incomplete novels. So we do not know what Ganpatrao or Yashwantrao Khare would have done to propagate their ideas, although from a much later novel *Karmayoga* we see that Ganpatrao has become a highly paid government officer and continues to hold reformist views.

On the other hand in *Mee* the narrator Bhau completes his education, takes his first degree in Arts and a degree in law, and then decides to spend his life in serving the people. He delivers speeches, publishes a paper for propagating his views and establishes a 'Muth' where devoted men and women work in a spirit of dedication. He becomes a sanyasi so that he may be able to give all his time and energy to his work. He dies of exhaustion due to overwork and, as in the case of "*Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetto?*", a chapter by Bhavananda's disciple Ramananda is appended to complete the story.

The gradual development of the character and personality of Yashwantrao from boyhood to youth, under the influence of Shridharpant, in *Yashwantrao Khare* is described by the author in the third person. In *Mee* more or less the same period of life is covered but it is narrated in the first person by Bhau the principal character of the novel. Both Yashwantrao and Bhau come under the guidance and influence of two elderly persons. Shridharpant who influences Yashwantrao is an aggressive, strong-willed person who has no respect for others, especially for those who hold views other than his own. On the other hand Shivrampant, who is the mentor and guide of Bhau, is perhaps not as impressive a person as Shridharpant.

but he is very liberal-minded and balanced in his views. And at the same time firm of opinion and ready to act according to it. He thinks both social and political reforms to be of equal importance and urgency. He not only gives education to his daughter Sundari but allows her to remain unmarried and dedicate her life to the service of the society. It could be said that Shivrampant is very much the kind of person Haribhau would consider ideal.

In *Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetto?* we see the development and unfolding of the character of two persons viz. Yamu and her brother Dada, as described by Yamu herself. In *Mee* we see the development and unfolding of the character of three persons viz. Bhau himself, his sister Tai and Shivrampant's daughter Sundari, the narrator being Bhau. A woman's world and, consequently, her field of observation and experience is limited. And her interests also naturally limited to her family and close relations. A man's world, on the other hand, and his field of observation and experience and of interests, too, is much wider. This difference is well maintained and clearly seen in the two novels. This not only shows Haribhau's capacity to observe life but also his ability to enter into the minds of his characters.

Tai, in *Mee*, is quite a different person as compared to Yamu. Yamu is a loving and lovable young woman and her life in Bombay with her husband was very happy although short. And she did not survive him long after his death. The earlier career of Tai is one of struggle against adversity and she is made of sterner stuff. She is spirited, strongwilled and self-reliant. But she is also considerate and has a keen sense of duty and responsibility. The father of Bhau and Tai is an irresponsible braggart who has left home and gone away leaving his family to be supported by his wife's brother. He returns off and on for a short stay and goes away again leaving

a bitter taste behind and making life more miserable for all. Tai's mother is very independent-minded, self-willed and obstinate to the extent of being harsh to her children and reckless about the consequences of her action. While still young Tai is married to a man of sixty as his third wife. He is a drunken and debaucherous person, and finding life with him unbearable, Tai returns home and begins to educate herself with the encouragement of her brother and the help of Shivrampant. She has to do this against the wishes of her mother and maternal uncle. What she does is against all norms of accepted behaviour and she has to face criticism, slanderous rumours and social harassment. But she is unshaken by these. All the same, during the last illness of her husband she goes to him and nurses him. After completing her education she joins her brother's 'Muth' and devotes herself to social work. It was the first time that a woman of this type appeared in the Marathi novel. Had it not been for women like Rakhmabai and Pandita Ramabai Tai would have been considered an unreal character.

Sundari is another such unusual character. She and Bhau grow and develop together under the gentle and persuasive guidance of her father Shivrampant. As they grow into youth their liking and attraction for each other undergoes a subtle change in keeping with the growing age.

It is Shivrampant's intention that like Tai Sundari, too, should get herself educated, live unmarried and work for the society. But temperamentally, Sundari is unlike Tai. She is more like Yamu, sensitive, tender-hearted, loving and lovable. Shivrampant is somewhat disappointed but he puts aside his own ideas and proposes to Bhau that he marry Sundari. The two are ideally suited to each other and the marriage would be a happy one. But the proposal comes a little too late. For Bhau has already made up his mind to remain single and devote his life to

the service of society. Shivrampant is disappointed a second time but being considerate he takes it uncomplainingly.

Whether the author was right in giving the story this turn might be debatable. But there is no doubt that he has handled all these developments and delicate situations very skilfully.

As compared to *Pan Lakshyant Kon Gheto?* the emotional tone of *Mee* is sterner and harsher. Sense of duty and discipline take precedence over sentiment and emotion. That Haribhau should have been able to maintain this under-tone throughout the novel speaks for his developing abilities as a novelist. Also the social content of this work is more comprehensive and inclusive. It takes into account almost all the problems that engaged the minds of the socially conscious educated middle class of those years.

We shall now take up three novels together *Jag Hen Ase Ahe* (The World is Like This) 1897-99; *Bhayan'kar Divya* (A Horrible Ordeal) 1901-1903 and *Mayecha Bazar* (A World of Illusion) 1910-1912. In doing so we have skipped over *Ajach* (1904) which will be taken together with Haribhau's last social novel *Karmayoga* because they are both incomplete and go together.

These three novels are not only different from Haribhau's other novels but somewhat less satisfying too. *Jag Hen Ase Ahe* is the story of Radhabai and her son Sitaram. Radhabai is widowed and after her husband's death she is harassed, ill-treated and insulted by her stepson (the son by the first wife of her husband) and by his wife. Ultimately she is driven away by this stepson and daughter-in-law and has to return to her father's house. Her father soon dies and she finds that her father's house is mortgaged to her dead husband, that is, in effect, to her stepson. Thereafter she is subjected to all kinds of sufferings by the stepson and daughter-in-law

and their friends. But she is steady and virtuous and so is her son. In the end, however the tables turn against the evildoers and Radhabai and her son get what is due to them and are happy. So good triumphs over evil. The events in the novel take place in two different locales. In the earlier part the locale is Sadashiv Peth, Poona, with which Haribhau is very familiar. In the later part of the novel the locale is the imaginary native state of Khubkhabad (the name itself is suggestive of corruption). Radhabai's stepson Chintopant has got himself appointed Dewan of the State and it is from there that all the machinations and plots against Radhabai and her son are manipulated. Haribhau is not familiar with such atmosphere and its depiction is not effective. The story begins to lose interest, characters begin to turn into stereotypes, situations are contrived, there is more dependence on accidental occurrences and the novel becomes no more than a moral tale. Only a few characters are depicted effectively.

Bhayankar Divya (1901-1903) and *Mayecha Bazar* (1910-1912) may be considered together as there are certain points of similarity between them. They indicate some progress in the social reform movement in Maharashtra, but not necessarily in Haribhau's performance as a novelist.

Bhayankar Divya is the story of Kamala who is the daughter of Balwantrao and Dwarakabai. Dwarakabai had been widowed before she was married to Balwantrao. This shows that Balwantrao is a social reformer. He has let his daughter Kamala remain unmarried until she is fourteen or fifteen, and in the meantime has given her good education. More than this, he has allowed two young boys, Prabhakar and Padmakar, to visit his house and meet and talk freely with her. In course of time Padmakar seeks Balwantrao's permission to marry Kamala and gets it. His father Dadasaheb, a retired government officer, is an anti-reformist and does not approve of this marriage. But the

marriage takes place inspite of his opposition and he disowns his son.

Soon, however, troubles begin to arise. One would have expected them to arise from the tension between the reformist and antireformist sections. But the novel does not develop along these lines. It turns into a "mystery" tale. The cause of the troubles that follow is one Rajaram, a rogue, cheat and forger. He poisons the mind of Padmakar against Prabhakar and Kamala and leads him to believe that Kamala is unfaithful to him. He writes abusive letters to Kamala forging the handwriting of Padmakar and makes her unhappy. In the end, however, he is caught in a mesh and confesses his misdoings, clouds of doubts and suspicion melt away, the atmosphere clears and all the good persons are reconciled and happy. It is mainly a plot-oriented novel. But the impatient, gullible nature of Padmakar and the pure, innocent character of Kamala are well brought out through several incidents. The gradual change in Dadasaheb's attitude to Kamala is also very well described and this shows that essentially Dadasaheb is a good man.

Mayecha Bazar (1910-1912) is a complete novel like the other two just considered and perhaps contains more human interest than they do. But this, too, suffers from ineffective handling. Currents of two different stories run together in this novel but are not properly integrated.

The novel deals with events in the lives of three different groups of persons but is mainly concerned with those of two. Padmavati is the daughter of Abasaheb, a social reformer. He has given her some education and got her married to a poor young man, Balasaheb, when she was fourteen or fifteen years old. Padmavati has two brothers, but due to the harshness with which Abasaheb treated them they have left home. The mother feels that Abasaheb has bestowed all his love and favours on Padmavati and ill-treated the sons. So she is unsympa-

thetic to her. After marriage, Balasaheb comes to live in Abasaheb's family and has been sent to England to study for the bar. He feels that he has been duped into the marriage and wants to take revenge. He is also wicked, suspicious and scheming by nature.

Another family is that of Dadasaheb, his wife, his son Vasantrao and daughter Malati. Malati has also received education and is married to one Madhukar who, after marriage, leaves for England to study for the Indian Civil Service examination. He has left for England at the same time as Balasaheb.

These two families are on very friendly terms and they frequently pay visits to each other. Vasantrao and Padmavati have been friends since their childhood and there is a warmth of feeling between them. Vasantrao's feelings for her are so strong that he prefers to stay unmarried. Padmavati is wise enough to be discreet in her behaviour. During Balasaheb's absence in England Vasant-rao continues to pay calls on Padmavati as before. It is this that makes Balasaheb suspicious about Padmavati's fidelity to him. He writes alternately insulting and flattering letters to her from England.

Soon after the novel opens Abasaheb dies. On return from England Balasaheb demands of Padmavati the key of Abasaheb's safe and the will he has made. Padmavati refuses to comply. She is a strong-willed and spirited lady. She treats him respectfully as a husband and is faithful to him but as a man she has no regard for him.

The story which follows is the story of a long-drawn tussle and tension between the two on this score. Balasaheb takes to drinking, is associated with a gang of cheats and harasses Padmavati in every possible manner. This is excellent material for a novelist of Haribhau's stature. The two characters are very complex and their relationship complicated. But the story is so long-drawn and so much attention is bestowed on intrigues that social

and psychological interests suffer. However, Haribhau's delineation of these two characters is very effective and the handling of situations skilful.

The third constituent of the novel is concerned with the fortunes of a young widow Mathurabai. She has lost her husband as well as her parents and is required to support her younger brothers and sisters. She does this working as a school teacher.

Her neighbour Digambharpant claims to be her late father's friend and under the pretext of guiding and guarding her he imposes himself on her and criticises her for her unorthodox and 'irreligious' behaviour. Finding that she does not care or change her ways, he begins to harass her and spread scandals about her. In the end through sheer exasperation she leaves the place and finds another house which happens to be in the neighbourhood of Padmavati's. They soon become friends. Mathurabai is happy. Padmavati, who has been in bad health for a long time, dies willing away her property to Mathurabai and entrusting her son to her care.

Madhukar and Malati fade out of the story after Madhukar's return to India. Thus the novel is mainly about Padmavati's and secondarily about Mathurabai's fortunes.

Actually Padmavati's case is one of personal relations and tensions while Mathurabai's is of social tensions. The hardships that Mathurabai has to suffer and the hostile actions and slanderous propaganda that she has to face are indicative of the crisis through which middle-class Hindu society was passing during that period. Some of the widows were receiving education and becoming independent. But this was disliked and resisted by the self-styled guardians of the old order. Thus from the social point of view Mathurabai's story is of greater importance and, as far as it goes, it is handled well. But in the novel as a whole Padmavati's story has been given

precedence. The two stories are not blended properly and there is too much of intriguing which detracts from the effectiveness of the novel.

Aajach (This Very Day), 1904-1906, and *Karmayoga* (1913-1917) are both incomplete. Thematically they may be considered to be in line with *Ganpatrao*, *Yashwantrao Khare* and *Mee* and go a step further. In *Ganpatrao* the emphasis was on emancipation of women, educating them, raising their age of marriage, and treating them as equals of men. In *Yashwantrao Khare* the emphasis was on political reform. In *Mee* equal importance was given to both. In *Aajach* more dimensions are added. The novel opens with a discussion in which four persons returning from the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress (1901), participate. Some of them have already appeared in earlier novels. One of them is *Ganpatrao*, a protagonist of social reform, another is *Yashwantrao*, a protagonist of political reform, the third is *Krishnarao* who appeared as *Krishna Bapu* in *Yashwantrao Khare*. He is of the opinion that unless we Indians start industries there is no future for us. The fourth person is *Narayanrao* who appears for the first time in this novel. He is of the view that unless we have complete political independence we shall not make any progress at all.

The discussion takes place on the train by which they are travelling and runs through several chapters of the novel. At one station a swami by name *Advaitananda* enters their compartment and makes his own contribution to the discussion. It is his conviction that unless a movement is based on faith in God and religion, it will not succeed and will be meaningless. The novel runs into more than two hundreds pages but the narration makes no progress and there is no indication as to what the end would have been. One is only left guessing. The novel has got bogged down in discussions and arguments.

Like *Aajach*, *Karmayoga* (1913-1917) also is incomplete. The hero Chandrashekhar is the son of Ganpatrao, (the hero of *Ganpatrao*) and Saraswatibai. Saraswatibai is the second wife of Ganpatrao and is Nana's sister Godavari. She was widowed before she married Ganpatrao. Nana, his wife Yashodabai and their daughter Leelavati are also there in this novel.

Chandrashekhar has passed the M.A. Examination in the first class and all entertain high hopes about him and expect that he will devote his life to social work.

Chandrashekhar himself is undecided as to what he should do. For the time being he would like to rest and relax, think over, and then make his plans. Like his father he, too, is an unbeliever. While he is undecided, and thinking of one plan of action after another, he happens to meet a Swami. He is much impressed by the Swami's personality, his dignified bearing and his eloquence. The swami blames Chandrashekhar for his indecision and his inability to think of any plan of action. He insists that without faith in God faith in action (karma) is meaningless. One should have implicit faith that there is a power which has created the world and rules it, and that whatever it does is for the good of the world. While he is in this frame of mind he goes on a visit to his maternal uncle Nana to spend a few days with him. There he meets Tai (of *Mee*) who conducts the Ashram founded by Bahl (also of *Mee*). He is so impressed by her personality and by the way she manages the Ashram and its various departments that he feels he has found the field for his work. The novel is left incomplete at this stage.

So far the novel has not moved at all though it has run into several chapters. There is another story in which there is more life and action. It relates to the family of one Bhausahab. He was Ganpatrao's contemporary at the College and he prides himself on his proficiency in Sanskrit language. He is anti-reformist, boast-

ful and high-handed in running his family. But he is also easily won over by flattery. He thinks he has histrionic talents and is so much impressed by one Vikramsheel who is a wastrel and a vagabond that he gets busy producing a play with his help. The rehearsals take place in the house of Bhausaheb. His ward and protege Narmada comes under the influence of Vikramsheel and on one occasion Chandrashekhar finds her in his company in the dusky hours of an evening. He feels that it is his duty to rescue her from the clutches of the scoundrelly Vikramsheel.

This is another direction which Chandrashekhar might have taken. But as the novel goes no further we do not know what actually he would have done.

There is plenty of human drama in the affairs of Bhausaheb's household. But so far, this part of the story appears to be only incidentally related to the main part. How far it would have been integrated with it we do not know. So this last social novel also leaves us guessing about its end.

When we take a general view of all these novels we can see that Haribhau must have planned to write a saga of the life and fortunes of half a dozen families of the middle and lower middle classes of Maharashtra, covering a period of about thirty-five years and involving scores of persons, and thus trace the social history of Maharashtra. From novel to novel we can see that, during this period, the condition of women has changed for the better. They are being given some education, their age of marriage is slowly rising, remarriage of widows continues to be opposed but some such marriages do take place and when widows do not marry, some of them at least are able to take service or do social work. This is in keeping with realities.

In the socio-political field the extreme positions about social and political reforms have been modified if not abandoned and equal importance is given to economic and

industrial aspects of national life too. Emphasis is also being laid on spiritual matters, and on the importance of spiritualising socio-political work.

But this is about the social content of the novels. What we are concerned with is Haribhau's achievement as a novelist and his contribution to the Marathi novel. If we compare Haribhau's novels with those that were being published before his time, or during the time that he was writing, we find that his novels are closer to life. He himself has called them *Aaj-kalchya Goshiti* — stories of contemporary life. Even the idealism and romanticism that appears in some of his novels arises from the aspirations and desires of the characters in them and is not imposed from the outside. This again, is consistent with reality. The language he uses is also of everyday life and suited to the person who uses it. The principal characters are individuals and not stereotypes and the development and unfolding of characters is done very skilfully. This is best seen in the case of Yamu, Bhau, Tai and Yashwantrao.

The thoughts and feelings of the characters in particular situations are analysed and described in great detail. The surroundings and settings in which the characters live and grow and act are also true to life and closely related. The best example of this is *Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetu?* But it can be seen, *Mee* and *Yashwantrao Khare* also. If *Yashwantrao Khare* had been completed it would possibly have compared favourably with *Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetu?* The characters in that novel are etched with greater mastery and the forces that mould the character of Yashwantrao are more clearly defined.

Although some of Haribhau's novels are left incomplete and some of the complete ones are not as satisfying as they might have been, there is no doubt that Haribhau's novels have had such an impact on novel writing in Marathi that Marathi novel after Haribhau has not been

the same as it was before. On the one hand, he set the pace for the novel of discussion which was written later by V. M. Joshi and others and, on the other hand, the realistic novels that followed were also influenced by his work. His most significant contribution to the social novel is his treatment of individual characters, and of the family as a social unit. In most of the modern novels the individuals do not seem to belong to a family. In Haribhau's novels we see the individual character as an integral part of the family, a product of the family. He or she is influenced by the condition and fortunes of the family. And through the family we get a glimpse of the larger society. The family is a part of the fabric of the society. The families in Haribhau's novels invariably represent the decadent or static or dynamic aspects of the society, and they act and react on each other. It is in this sense that Haribhau's novels are truly social novels.

CHAPTER FOUR

Haribhau Apte's Novels : Historical

It may be a matter of coincidence but it so happens that just as Haribhau wrote eleven social novels so he wrote eleven novels on historical themes. There are other coincidences also. While considering his Social novels one novel *Chanakshapanacha Kalas* (1889-90) was left out because it was a translation of the English adaptation of a French detective novel.

Haribhau's first historical novel *Mhaisurcha Wagh* — (The Tiger of Mysore) may also be omitted. In the first place because it is a translation of Col. Meadows Taylor's *Tipu Sultan*. Secondly, it is an abridgement of the original and that too a distorted one and incomplete.

Of the remaining ten novels six deal with themes from Maratha History. It would be advisable therefore to consider them together. In doing so the time sequence of their publication will be ignored and they will be considered in the chronological order of the historical events. These novels are — 1) *Ushahkal*, 2) *Suryodaya*, 3) *Suryagrahan*, 4) *Gad Ala Pan Sinha Gela*, 5) *Kewal Swarajyasathi* and 6) *Madhyanha*. Of these six novels *Suryagrahan* and *Madhyanha* are incomplete.

Interest in Maratha history in general and in Shivaji in particular began to be aroused in Maharashtra in the latter half of the nineteenth century, particularly after the publication of Grant Duff's *History of the Marathas* and Neelkanth Janardan Kirtane's criticism of it. This was a side effect of the general awakening of the national spirit. After the first flush of admiration for the British rule had somewhat subsided, leaders of thought began to search for the causes of our political subjugation and for the means to regain political independence. Several were the remedies suggested such as social and religious reform, spread of education both among men and women, starting industries, fighting for political power and so on. Rousing national self-respect and seeking inspiration from Indian history were also among such means.

In April 1895 articles on Shivaji began to appear in Tilak's paper *Kesari* and under his inspiration the birthday anniversary of Shivaji was celebrated for the first time on Raigadh in April 1896 with great enthusiasm. Thus, a new era of interest in Shivaji and in Maratha history was inaugurated which continues to this day. Possibly it was these forces which induced and inspired Haribhau to write novels on Shivaji's life and career. *Ushahkal* (1895-97) his first historical novel is also the first of his novels on Shivaji which followed.

Upto the time of Shivaji, for about three centuries, Maratha nobles, with their jagir lands and the bands of soldiers at their command, had willingly submitted to the Muslim rule and were prepared to transfer their loyalty from one Sultanate to the other, without compunction so long as they were allowed to retain their lands and their privileges. It did not seem to matter to them that Hindus, who were once the rulers of the land, were now subjected to alien domination. They were not unaware that Hindus and Hindu religion were humiliated, but they were not much upset by it. Shivaji's father Shahaji was a

typical instance of this. A brave soldier and commander, and an able administrator, he lent his services by turns to the Sultans of Ahmednagar and Bijapur. And yet he was among the more spirited ones.

But Shivaji was a different kind of man. He was brought up and trained independently by his mother and Dadoji Konddev. He gradually developed the ambition to carve out an independent kingdom for himself where Hindus could live honourably and fearlessly. He came to feel that it was his mission and as he grew up he began to gather around him a band of like-minded young men including the poor but hardy mavalas living among the hills of Sahyadri. He tried to win the sympathy and support of elderly Maratha nobles for his cause. But they disliked his ideas and plans of revolt and wanted to be left undisturbed in their position. This led to clashes between the independence-loving, rebellious young men and the stabilized older generation. The novel *Ushahkal*, is a picture of this clash between the two generations.

It deals with the first exploit of Shivaji's career viz. the taking of Torna fort in 1647 when he was only seventeen years old. In the novel the name of the fort is changed to Sultangadh and except for Shivaji, Tanaji, Yesaji, the Sultan of Bijapur and Ranadullah Khan almost all the other characters are imaginary.

Rangrao Appa is the killedar of Sultangadh, a fort which he holds for and on behalf of the Sultan of Bijapur. His son Nanasaheb sympathizes with Shivaji. The novel opens with a dramatic incident at Sultangadh. Clothes of honour have been received from Bijapur and are to be given to Nanasaheb at a ceremony. Nanasaheb refuses to receive them. There is hot exchange of words between father and son and the son Nanasaheb leaves the fort to join Shivaji's band of companions. Then he goes to Bijapur with Tanaji on a mission. There he is put into prison but is released through the good offices of Meherjan

the daughter of Ranadullakhan of the Bijapur Court. Subsequently Shivaji organizes an expedition and takes the fort of Sultangadh with the help of Tanaji, Yesaji, Nanasaheb and the mavalas. The story ends with this victory.

This, of course, is the bare skeleton of the story. Between these two incidents occur scores of others which make up the content of the novel and give it flesh and blood and soul too.

There are consultations in underground cellars, journeys through subterranean passages, spies going out in disguise to collect information, Shivaji going in a trance and seeing the goddess Bhawani in a vision and getting messages from her and so on. In addition women are abducted or put into difficult situations from which they are rescued or they themselves get out and in any case do not allow their honour to be sullied. They are high spirited and resourceful. All this is in keeping with the conditions and spirit of the period. And all the incidents and movements are so well described that they bring the past to life.

Just as the contrast between the older and the younger generations is well brought out, so is the contrast between individual characters. For example Shivaji is a born leader. He has the capacity to inspire confidence and to organize and hold people together. He commands the loyalty of his friends and followers, is courageous and ready to take calculated risk. He is a good judge of men and situations and is cool-headed.

There are some defects in the novel and these are to be found in Haribhau's other novels too, both historical and social. He is very fond of keeping the names of persons hidden from the readers. Similarly, he has a tendency to give undue importance to minor characters, subordinate situations and sub-plots. Usually the narration of one incident is left half-way and the thread is

picked up again after a number of chapters have intervened. He often forgets that he has kept the readers waiting for too long. He is also inclined to be repetitious as well as prolix.

But inspite of these drawbacks the novel impresses and satisfies, because it throbs with life. The characters come alive and, whether imaginary or real, fit into the pattern and there is an authenticity about the atmosphere, conditions and spirit of the period. *Ushahkal* may be described as Haribhau's best novel on Maratha History as *Pan Lakshyant Kon Gheto?* is his best novel on the social life of the period.

The background of the novel *Ushahkal* has been given in such detail because it lies at the back of all the other novels dealing with incidents in Shivaji's life. The novel we shall take up next is *Suryodaya* (1905-1906). The theme of this novel is the death of Afzalkhan at the hands of Shivaji. The title is worth noting. *Ushahkal* means 'dawn'. *Suryodaya* means 'sunrise'. Shivaji is now no more just a "trouble maker" as he was thought to be by the older generation of Maratha nobles and by the Sultans. He had grown in influence, had led many successful campaigns, had many more adherents, an army and equipment, and had established authority over an area. So, in the eyes of the Sultan of Bijapur he was an enemy to be taken seriously. Therefore, Afzalkhan was sent with the set purpose of getting hold of Shivaji dead or alive. Shivaji was aware of Afzalkhan's intention and was ready, on his side, to face the situation. A meeting between the two was arranged and they met at noon at the foot of Pratapgadh. Afzalkhan was killed by Shivaji.

It was Afzalkhan who first pressed Shivaji's head under his left armpit and thrust his sword into Shivaji's back. But being forewarned Shivaji had protected himself against such a move and was, besides, nimble. He quickly

extricated himself and thrust a dagger into Afzalkhan's belly, so deep that it reached the Khan's back and later, he cut his head off.

Though of great political importance the incident itself is a small one. So perhaps to add stuff to it Haribhau invented a sub-plot to run parallel to the main one. Four years before in 1655, one of Shivaji's men had put to death Chandrarao More, an influential Maratha in the neighbourhood of Pratapgadh. This was done for political reasons. In this novel Haribhau has made one Tarabai — a fictitious daughter of Chandrarao More — hatch a plot to take revenge on Shivaji for her father's death. But the narration of this plot occupies so much space in the novel that it almost swallows up the main plot. An instance of how Haribhau interrupts the main course of narration and comes back to it after a tediously long interval can be seen in this novel.

The only redeeming features are the delineation of Afzalkhan's character, the skill shown by Shivaji's intermediary, Gopinath Pant, and the description of the feelings of Shivaji and his mother Jijabai previous to the meeting and of the anxious night they spent before the day on which Shivaji was to meet Afzalkhan.

Suryagrahan (1908-1909) which means 'solar eclipse' deals with the theme of Shivaji's visit to Agra in 1666, his confinement there and his escape from confinement and return to Maharashtra. The novel is incomplete. The treaty of Purandar imposed by Jaising in 1665 was humiliating to Shivaji but he had to agree to it because there was no alternative. Shivaji must have been extremely restless at this time. Here was an opportunity for Haribhau to describe the struggle going on in his mind, but he does not avail himself of it. Instead, he describes three incidents in which Shivaji rescues young women who were being abducted. One is compelled to say that a theme which was full of dramatic situations in which

different aspects of Shivaji's character show themselves has not been properly exploited.

Gad Ala Pan Sinha Gela (1903) is a novelette about the capture of Sinhagad by Tanaji in 1670. Sinhagad was within the territory of Shivaji's Jagir, but it had changed hands many times and at this time was in the possession of the Moghals and the officer in charge was Udayabhanu a Rajput. Both Jijabai and Shivaji were unhappy that the fort was in the possession of the enemy. So he determined to take it back. On the night of February 4, 1670 Tanaji and three hundred mavalas climbed the cliff with the help of a rope which was cut off when all had reached the top. After a stiff fight for three hours, in which both Tanaji and Udayabhanu were killed, the fort fell to the Marathas. As in the case of Afzalkhan this, too, is a simple episode and does not provide enough material for a novel. In order to enrich it, Haribhau has added a romantic element to it. It is the story of Kamalkumari, a young Rajput widow, who had been abducted by Udayabhanu and kept at Sinhagad. She was on the point of performing the rite of sati when Tanaji arrived and rescued her.

The canvas of the story is small and is not overcrowded with incidents. The romantic and heroic elements are well blended. The incidents stand out prominently and principal characters like Shivaji and Tanaji are well depicted. The story holds the reader's attention from the beginning, it sustains his interest and ends at the point where it began, but at a different and higher level. Altogether it is one of the best-written novels of Haribhau, and among his novels on Maratha history it stands next only to *Ushahkal*.

When these four novels on the career of Shivaji are taken together one notices certain things. Shivaji is certainly shown as a hero, a deliverer of the people from alien domination, but he is not deified. A successful

attempt is made to recreate the spirit and atmosphere of the period, and with the historical material available the dead past is brought back to life. Even where characters and situations are invented they are in keeping with the spirit of the time, whether they are there in support of Shivaji or in opposition to him.

Kewal Swarajyasathi (1898-1899) is about the confusion which followed the capture and cruel execution of Sambhaji by the Moghals in 1689. His wife Yesubai and son Shahu were taken prisoners by the Moghals. As a result, Maratha affairs had fallen into disarray. Rajaram, the second son of Shivaji, was nineteen years old at the time. He was a sincere man but he lacked ability. He was no good judge of men and those who surrounded him were mostly men of straw. He fled from Raigadh to Jinji in the South, near Madras, but among those who were left behind there were some who made heroic attempts to save and keep together Shivaji's kingdom.

There are more authentic historical incidents and real historical persons in this novel. Sambhaji's capture and execution, the imprisonment of Sambhaji's wife and son were challenging events and the Marathas accepted the challenge and acquitted themselves creditably. Many Maratha women, discarding pardah, came out into the open in the cause of the state. There were many dramatic and exciting situations which the author could have exploited to good purpose, but this has not been done.

There are three situations in the novel. 1) The capture of Sambhaji and his heroic, though cruel, death, 2) The siege and fall of Raigadh, 3) Rajaram's flight to Jinji and the efforts he made from there to save the Maratha kingdom. Taken individually and separately these events are handled well and described with skill. But the different parts are not properly integrated and do

not produce a unified effect. They remain separate and unrelated.

However, the characters of Sambhaji and Rajaram are depicted well. The self-respect and high spirit of Sambhaji, the way he meets his death, the disturbed condition of Rajaram's mind are described graphically. That is all that can be said in favour of the novel.

Madhyanha (1906-1907), Haribhau's sixth novel dealing with incidents in Maratha history, covers nearly twenty years of the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The word "Madhyanha" means "midday", or "noon", when the sun is at its zenith. This refers to a crucial period in the history of the Peshwas starting from the murder of Peshwa Narayanrao in 1773 and ending with the victory of the combined forces of the Marathas over the Nizam at the battle of Kharda in 1795. The novel is incomplete and it is difficult to say what Haribhau had in mind in using this title. It may be questioned if he meant by it that the power and glory of the Peshwas was at its zenith during this period or that it reached its zenith in 1795 with the victory over the Nizam. The novel stops at this point and is left incomplete. But Haribhau does not say anything about this and the novel does not go any further. We cannot even say whether the last chapter of the novel is complete or incomplete.

The novel is made up of three parts and they are really three phases of a continuous process. Plenty of authentic material was available and yet the novel does not leave any lasting impression on the mind of the reader. As is his habit Haribhau gives more importance to minor events and characters and all the good that can be said about the novel is that they are interestingly handled.

Defeat at the battle of Panipat in 1761 was a catastrophic blow to the power of the Marathas in general and that of the Peshwa in particular. Madhavrao I who succeeded Nanasaheb in 1761 was a man of strong will

and succeeded in bringing some order in the affairs of the state. But he died of consumption in 1772. His younger brother Narayanrao, who succeeded him as Peshwa, was brutally murdered in 1773. His wife Gangabai was carrying and if a male child were to be born to her he would be the rightful heir to the gadi of the Peshwa. After Narayanrao's death his uncle Raghunathrao started plotting to become the Peshwa. Statesmen at the Court came to an understanding among themselves with the intention of defeating Raghunathrao's plans. But soon differences arose among them. In the meantime a son was born to Narayanrao's wife Gangabai and he was declared Peshwa. This was Madhavrao II. The real power, however, was wielded by Nana Fadnavis, and the victory at Kharda may be said to be the climax of his career.

Thus of the six novels on themes from Maratha history only two viz. *Ushahkal* and *Gad Ala Pan Sinha Gela* are really successful works of fiction and are read even today by young boys and girls and by older people as well with interest.

The other four historical novels which Haribhau wrote are based on events in different periods of Indian history. As they do not constitute a group they may be considered in the order in which they were written. They are *Roopnagarchi Rajakanya* (1900-1902), *Chandragupta* (1902-1904), *Kalakoot* (1909-1911) (incomplete) and *Vajraghat* (1913-1915).

Roopnagarchi Rajakanya (1900-1902) — The novel is based on an episode in Aurangzebs' career relating to an attack on Roopnagar. The basis for this was found by Haribhau in Tod's *Annals of Rajasthan*. A good portion of the novel is taken up by the intrigues in the zenana of Aurangzeb. Haribhau found the matter for this in the accounts of the Italian traveller Manucci who had visited

India during reign of the Moghals. The important persons and incidents are historical. Rest are imaginary.

The Rajakanya is princess Roopamati the daughter of Raja Vijaya Singh of Roopnagar. She is very beautiful and has reached the age of marriage, but as she has no mother she spends most of her time with her father, who takes her to the darbar and also on hunting expedition. Roopnagar is a tributary of the state of Udaipur though related by blood to Jodhpur. His wife, too, was from the Udaipur family. Raj Singh the ruler of Udaipur is young, handsome, brave, spirited and chivalrous like all good Rajput princes. Aurangzeb had sent one of his commanders Sadatkhan to fetch Roopamati and Vijaya Singh to Delhi and if they resisted, to destroy the fort of Roopnagar. The cause for this, so far as we can see from the novel, was neither political nor religious. It was his desire to pacify his favourite wife Udaipuri Begum who had felt insulted by a remark made by Roopamati in her letter which had been intercepted by Aurangzeb's men and brought to him. So the cause of the provocation is of little significance.

It would appear from the title of the novel that it is mainly concerned with Roopamati but she appears only three or four times in the novel and does not play any very active or important part in it. The major part of the novel is taken up by rivalries and intrigues in the emperor's zenana and the activities of enterprising but subordinate characters who get into and out of difficulties and show good or bad qualities according to their nature.

Roopnagar was a strong fort and Sadatkhan knew that Rajputs would rush to the help of Vijay Singh. He, therefore, wrote back to Delhi asking for more help. Aurangzeb, then, himself went south with a sizable army. When he arrived near Mt Abu his army was led into a narrow ravine and was attacked from all sides and badly beaten.

In the meantime, when Sadatkhan had laid siege to Roopnagar, Roopamati managed to send a letter to Raj Singh asking for his help and offering him her hand in marriage if he succeeded in rescuing her and saving the fort. Raj Singh rushed to Roopnagar, defeated Sadat and rescued Roopamati and Vijay Singh. Aurangzeb was thus doubly defeated and was forced to make peace on terms laid by Raj Singh.

Interwoven with this is another story. Raja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur had been sent on an expedition to Kabul by Aurangzeb. His son Prithvi Singh had been left behind at the Imperial Court. Aurangzeb put him to death by making him wear poisoned clothes. When news of this reached Jaswant Singh he died of the shock. His wife Chandravati was carrying at the time and in due course a son was born to her who was named Ajit Singh. Learning of this Aurangzeb sent one Nayanpal to fetch the mother and child to Delhi. (This Nayanpal was a member of the royal family of Jodhpur but had taken service at the Moghal Court). Two faithful attendants of Jaswant Singh, Durgadas and Indira sensed danger in this and managed to send Chandravati and Ajit Singh secretly to Rajputana. Nayanpal was enraged when he came to know of this and took Durgadas and Indira as prisoners to Delhi. But he was so impressed by the courage, loyalty and resourcefulness of these two and by the beauty of Indira that he fell in love with her.

On arrival at Delhi Nayanpal was berated by Aurangzeb for failing in his mission. Durgadas was put into prison and Indira was sent into the zenana. These three then plotted to run away to Rajputana and help the cause of the Rajputs.

A large part of the novel is taken up by the exploits and activities of these three at Delhi and their ultimate escape to Rajputana. And it was Nayanpal who enticed Aurangzeb and his forces into the narrow ravine near

Mt Abu. It is these exploits which are the more interesting part of the story.

Although Roopamati is the heroine of the novel we are more impressed by Udaipuri Begum and Indira. There are more facets to their characters. However, the novel makes interesting reading because there is enough of action and suspense in it.

Chandragupta (1902-1904) — It is evident from the title that the novel is about Chandragupta Maurya. But more properly the title should have been Chanakya. The novel is mainly concerned with the Machiavellian tactics by which Chanakya manages to kill the Nanda King and his sons and places Chandragupta on the throne of Magadha. Almost equally, it is about Chandragupta's mother Mura.

The sources from which Haribhau draws his material are mentioned by him in the short introductory note. They are : 1) the Puranas in which mention is made of the Nanda rulers and Chandragupta; 2) the accounts left by Greek visitors to India in which the city of Pataliputra (modern Patna) and the condition in the kingdom of Magadha are described; and 3) the Sanskrit play *Mudrarakshasa*. It is not possible to say, from historical evidence, whether Chandragupta fought and defeated the Greeks before he ascended the throne at Pataliputra or after. But Haribhau has placed this exploit after the ascension because it suits the plan of his novel.

Chanakya, whose real name was Vishnugupta, lived at Taxila in the Punjab which was overrun by the Greeks, who carried away cattle, and often women, too, and harassed the people. Vishnugupta was a very learned Brahman and also a master of the military arts. He was very sensitive and haughty and at the same time crafty. The kingdom of Magadha was powerful, so Vishnugupta decided to go to Pataliputra and persuade the Nanda king Dhanananda to attack the Greeks and drive them out of India.

He was received well by Dhanananda, but the Court Brahmans were jealous and suggested that he might be a spy of the Greeks come to get information. This so enraged Vishnugupta that he got up and vowed that he would not rest until he had destroyed the Nandas and put a man of his choice on the throne and then, with his help, he would drive the Greeks out of India. And he immediately walked out.

But he did not return to Texila. He went north in the direction of the Himalayas. On the way, he came across a group of young boys playing. One of them was so extraordinary in his looks and bearing that Vishnugupta immediately made out that he did not belong to the group he was playing with. So he made enquiries and learnt that he was living with a cowherd who had found him fifteen years before, as a child, deserted in the forest, wrapped up in a white sheet with nothing on its body except a wrist-band. That child was the boy. The cowherd produced the wrist-band and showed it to Vishnugupta who saw on it the impression of the royal insignia of the house of the Nandas. He was delighted. As the boy was found on a moonlit night he was named Chandragupta. He asked the cowherd to allow him to take the boy with him and train him for a very big career.

Vishnugupta took the boy further north to the foothills of the Himalayas and there, with a band of young boys of the forest tribes, he started teaching him the arts of fighting. Vishnugupta then changed his own name to Chanakya. Chandragupta was quick to learn and in a few years' time he became an expert in all the military arts. Chanakya decided it was time he took Chandragupta to Pataliputra. But before he did so he wanted to go to Pataliputra and survey the field.

About this time Pataliputra was in great jubilation because Sumalya the eldest son of Dhanananda had just been proclaimed crown prince ceremonially, and was also

married to a princess recently won in a battle. On this jubilant occasion the king had released many prisoners and among them was his queen Mura who had been put into prison about sixteen years before.

Mura was the daughter of a Kirata King. She was captured in a battle by Bhagurayana, the commander of king Dhanananda's army and was presented by him to the king. The king married her according to the gandharva rites and soon she was with child. Other queens of Dhanananda had no children. So they thought that if a son was born to Mura he would be proclaimed crown prince. They did not like it. So they spread a rumour that Mura was not a true princess but the Kirata king's daughter by a Shudra maid and also that the child she was going to have may not be king Dhanananda's. The king being a weak-minded man believed in these rumours and put Mura into prison and ordered that the child born of her should be killed whether it was a boy or a girl. So when the child was born, which was a male child, it was ordered to be killed. But the men who were charged with the task took pity on it and left it in the forest instead of killing it. That child was Chandragupta.

When Chanakya arrived in Pataliputra he came to know the history of Mura and he had no doubt that Chandragupta whom he had taught and trained was Mura's son. Although Mura was released from prison she was not happy. On the contrary, she was very bitter and wanted to take revenge on the king for the wrong he had done her and she let this be known to her faithful maid-in-waiting.

However, being very crafty she went about her business in a very cunning way. She wrote a letter to the king inviting him to her palace. She ingratiated herself with him by sweet words and by her physical charms which she had retained though she was about thirty years of age.

The king was so repentant of his past deeds and so taken in by her words and her charming behaviour that he declared he would stay with her and would not leave her palace. This made the other queens furious, but Mura retained him with her and succeeded in poisoning his mind against them.

When Chanakya arrived in Pataliputra and began to gather information he came to know that Mura was planning to take revenge on the king. He also found that although outwardly things appeared to be all right, underneath there was a current of disaffection. The council of ministers was not pleased with the king's ways nor were the people. Only the chief minister Rakshasa was faithful to the king and to the family of the Nandas, and so was the commander of the army.

Chanakya felt that conditions were favourable for his plan to succeed so he decided to bring Chandragupta. He managed to get an interview with Mura. He told her that her mother Mayadevi and her brother Pradyumnadeo sent their compliments to her that the latter wished to send his sixteen year old son Chandragupta to Pataliputra so that he may spend a few days with her and get to know something about the bigger world. So she agreed to receive Chandragupta when he was brought.

Chanakya returned to his Himalayan 'Ashram' and soon came back with Chandragupta and presented him to Mura.

Having left Chandragupta at the palace, Chanakya got busy carrying out his plans and the novel is all about his Machiavellian tactics. He won the confidence of Bhagurayana. He won over to his side Hiranyagupta, the confidential valet of Rakshasa and, Sumatika, the confidential maid-in-waiting of Mura. He also sought occasional meetings with Mura and encouraged her in her plan to destroy the king.

Sometime during these days Chanakya had shown the

wrist-band with the royal insignia to Mura and proved to her that Chandragupta was not her nephew but her son whom she had thought dead. She was naturally delighted.

Dhanananda neglected his duties to such an extent that Rakshasa was displeased with him. Mura would press Dhanananda to go to the court and he would refuse. Ultimately he agreed to go just for a few hours. A day was fixed. It was to be a great occasion. It was also the time fixed by Chanakya for his destruction. He had arranged to have a large pit dug at the entrance of the palace. The ground would appear to be intact on the surface but under it would be a pit. So when the king's elephant stepped upon it it would cave in and the king and his sons would fall into it where they would be killed by Chanakya's men.

Although Mura had been planning to kill the King she also had doubts whether it was proper to do so. She was restless and in two minds. At last when the day for the king to attend the court approached she implored him not to go, for she knew that he was going to fall into the death pit. But now the king was determined to go. The struggle in her mind was intensified. Who was it to be? The son or the husband? She decided to save her husband and ordered a palanquin for herself and started to follow the king with a view to warning and saving him. But she was too late.

The king and his sons all fell into the pit and were killed by Chanakya's Bhils who had been stationed in the pit. Mura followed and although she was warned by Chanakya she jumped into the pit and was killed.

Chandragupta was installed as the king and Chanakya tried in several ways to persuade Rakshasa to acknowledge Chandragupta as the king and to serve him. But as Rakshasa refused to serve anyone except a Nanda, Chanakya proved to him, again by showing the wrist-band, that Chandragupta was in reality a scion of the Nanda

family. Rakshasa agreed to act as the Chief Minister. Thus Chanakya achieved what he had vowed to achieve.

On the basis of scanty historical material Haribhau has written an interesting novel. He has used language suitable for the characters and the theme. The novel is full of intrigues of Chanakya. But the ease and speed with which he wins everyone to his side and gets everything done as he likes is rather too clever to be convincing. The best part of the novel is the character of Mura. The complexity of her character, her cunning and wily tricks, her efforts to win the king's favour and finally the moral struggle in her mind are very well described. So is the character of Rakshasa as a loyal minister. And in a way, though Chanakya succeeds with his crooked ways he also, in the end, sees that crooked ways do not always work, especially against those who are honest and firm in their loyalty. Though the novel is named after Chandragupta he is only a puppet hero. He does nothing and has no character worth describing.

All the same it is one of Haribhau's well executed novels.

Kalakoot (1909-1911) is an incomplete novel. Only the first book and chapter one of the second book have been written. It describes a few incidents in the early life of Prithviraj Chauhan and Jayachand Rathod. But as it is incomplete we cannot say in what way it would have developed and what incidents it would have covered.

Anangapal, the king of Hastinapur - Delhi, had two daughters Vimala and Kamala. Vimala was married to Vijaya Pal the ruler of Kanauj and Kamala to Someshwara, ruler of Ajmer. Vimala had a son Jayachand and Kamala's son was Prithviraj. Kamala had a younger brother called Dhananjaya who had died recently and Vimala and Kamala were on a condolence visit to Delhi when the novel begins. Of the two sisters Vimala was jealous, narrow-minded and quarrelous. Kamala, on the

other hand, was affectionate, generous and open-minded. One day when they were all sitting together, the two cousins Prithviraj and Jayachand, started quarrelling about who should sit on which knee of the grandfather. Though Anangapal loved both the grandsons Prithviraj was his greater favourite. It was nothing serious but Vimala started a quarrel with Kamala and the more Kamala and others tried to pacify her the more bitter she became and started attributing motives. Old Ananga Pal was so disgusted that he asked her to go back to Kanauj which she did. Kamala, too, returned to Ajmer leaving Prithviraj behind at Delhi where Anang Pal wanted him to be trained as a young kshatriya prince should be.

Vimala continued to harbour ill-feelings against her sister and once, in a huff, she went with Jayachand to her Kapalika-Guru in the Himalaya to get from him some kind of talisman or spiritual gift, which would enable her to secure the Kingdom of Delhi for her son Jayachand. She waited for days but she did not get any kind of gift and she was becoming impatient. After some days she found herself in a difficult situation and was rescued by Anang Pal and Vijaya Pal who had come in search of her. Then they returned to their respective places. Book One ends here.

The first chapter of Book two tells us that Vimala felt both defeated and humiliated by what had happened. She would not meet or talk to any one.

A few months later, Anang Pal sent an invitation asking Vimala and her family to be present at the coronation ceremony of Prithviraj. Her husband wanted to go with their two sons. He did not even ask Vimala what she wanted to do. Vimala herself was undecided whether she should go or not. She ultimately decided not to go and sent word to Jayachand saying that he too should not go and called her to him. But he sent word back that he wanted to go to Delhi to attend the ceremony. She took this as a rebuff

to her and felt that there was no point in her staying in Kanauj any more. She was wanted by nobody, not even by Jayachand. So she decided to go back to the Himalayas.

The chapter ends here and the author asks us to wait and see what happened next. But there are no more chapters. 'Kalakoot' means 'deadly poison.' This word is used to describe Vimala's mind which is a potful of poison. If the novel had been completed perhaps we would have known about the conspiracy between Jayachand and Muhammad Ghorī and Prithviraj's defeat. But this is only a guess.

In the novel as it is, the contrast between the characters of Vimala and Kamala is very well brought out. The Kapalika 'ashram', the jealousies and rivalries between the disciples of the chief Kapalika and their inhuman practices are also well described.

Vajraghat (1913-1915) is Haribhau's last historical novel and among his best. The subtitle of the novel is "The last Days of Vijayanagar". The historical material of the novel is drawn from Sewall's *A Forgotten Empire* and also from Ferishta. He refers to a note in Brigg's *Ferishta* which reads like this: "Caesar Frederick states that the Hindoos lost the battle owing to the treachery of two Muhamadan chiefs in Ramaraja's army, a circumstance which Farishta omits to mention." Caesar Frederick was an Italian traveller who had paid a visit to Vijayanagar in 1567, two years after the battle of Talikota at which Ramaraja was defeated. To this historical material is added a legend which had been given, a few years before, by a South Indian writer in *Hindustan Review*. This is the legend: Ramaraja, in his youth, had fallen in love with a Muslim woman, and she had a son by him. She disappeared with the son and years later the boy, grown up into a young man, came to the court of Ramaraja and asked for a job. The Raja recognized

him as his son and appointed him his bodyguard. Later, one day, when Ramaraja was sitting in the court his men brought a young Muslim girl. Ramaraja ordered her veil to be removed and had it removed. The young man resented this and protested to the Raja. Then thinking that the young girl would be a good wife for his son he handed her over to him. He prayed to her in various ways to marry him. But she replied that she would not marry until the kingdom of the Hindu Raja who had insulted her was destroyed, and she would marry the man who brought about this destruction. The young man swore to do what she desired and set about accomplishing the task.

The novel actually is a development of this legend.

Ramaraja is a historical person and the battle of Talikota in which the army of Vijayanagara was defeated and Ramaraja's head cut off are historical facts. These historical facts and the legend given above constitute the skeleton of the novel to which Haribhau has added flesh and blood and given life by inventing characters and situations.

Meherjan was the woman with whom Ramaraja was in love. Ranmast was the son born of their union and Nurjahan the young woman who wanted the Hindu kingdom to be destroyed. There is a fourth character Dhana-malla, dark and big and fearful in appearance, who hovers around Meherjan, and who has a tongue but does not use it. The resulting novel is a romance and a tragedy with a nominal political touch to it. In Haribhau's historical novels which preceded this, the stress was more on action, although it is true that a few characters do stand out. There was stress also on resentment or protest against alien rule. This is seen even in *Chandragupta* where Rakshasa refused to cooperate with an alien army. In *Vajraghat* the battle between the Vijayanagara army and the combined armies of the Bahmani Sultans is a battle between Hindus

and Muslims but it is not used as the sign of Hindu protest against Muslim domination. The Hindu-Muslim tension is used only to heighten the tone of the tragedy. It is brought in to serve as a climax to the story. The principal preoccupation of this novel is the tension and conflict in the relations between individuals and the inner conflict in the minds of individual characters. Ramaraja who is about thirty-five years old has brought away Meherjan from a party of travellers and put her up in a garden-house at a little distance from Vijayanagara. Her only companion is her very faithful maidservant Marjiana. Ramaraja and Meherjan are deeply in love with each other and they are very happy in their love. The garden is in an enclosure properly guarded. There is a beautiful tank with a boat in it and bowers on all sides. It is an idyllic place. The novel opens in this garden on a moonlit night. Ramaraja and Meherjan are in a very happy mood. Meherjan sings a song in the classical style, Ramaraja responds reciting stanzas from Jayadeva. Meherjan is particularly happy because their union is about to bear fruit. But there is an undercurrent of anxiety. Perhaps all this is too good to last long. They are rowing in a boat in the tank and suddenly Meherjan says, would it not be the happiest consummation of their love if they were both to drown themselves together. Ramaraja tried to humour her and asked her to brush aside the sad idea. He reassured her. But the next morning he deserted her to marry the daughter of the Raja because this would give him political leverage in the affairs of the state. Soon after, he became the regent, the de facto ruler of the state. Between love and political power he chose the latter. This betrayal was too much for Meherjan. So she left the garden house and went to Northern India. She was not heard of for many years. But she was determined to take revenge upon Ramaraja. In due course she

gave birth to a male child who was the son of Ramaraja and was named Ranmastkhan.

Years later, when her son had grown up into a young man she came with him to Bijapur and, using some influence, got him introduced into the court of the sultan. During all these years she had nursed contempt and hatred for Ramaraja who had trampled not only upon her love but upon her self-respect also. Soon Ranmastkhan was appointed ambassador of the Sultan of Bijapur at the court of Vijayanagara. He was about thirty-five at this time. The same age when Ramaraja had met Meherjan.

Meherjan had given Ranmastkhan the impression that Ramaraja was a hater of Muslims and seducer of women. But she did not give him any hint that he was his father

On his part Ramaraja was very unhappy that Meherjan should have gone away. In coming away from the garden, leaving her, it was not his intention to give her up altogether. His love for her was not fake. Only for the time being he wanted to be away from her. He would have resumed his relations with her after some time. He often remembered her and would go to the garden house and visit the spots where he had spent hours of intense happiness with her.

When Ranmastkhan arrived in Vijayanagara as the representative of the Sultan of Bijapur Meherjan and Marjiana were also with him and they were put up in the same garden house which had been witness to the love-life of Ramaraja and Meherjan.

When Ranmastkhan presented himself at the court of Ramaraja and the latter had a look at him he instinctively felt that Ranmastkhan must be his son. Thereafter he treated him with great affection forgetting that he was a political representative. Ranmastkhan did not understand this, and did not like it. For in his heart there was nothing but contempt and hatred for Ramaraja both as the enemy

of the Sultan of Bijapur and as an individual. These contrary feelings and the subtle conflict implicit in them are very skilfully described by Haribhau.

On one occasion when Ramaraja was sitting in the audience hall a veiled Muslim woman was brought into the court by his men saying that she had been taken in suspicious circumstances. Ramaraja ordered her veil to be removed. On this Ranmastkhan flared up in great anger and took strong objection. In spite of this the veil was removed. There stood exposed to the eyes of all an extremely beautiful young Muslim woman. She was trembling with anger. Nothing could be more insulting for a Muslim woman than being exposed like this. Ramaraja admired the spirit of both Ranmastkhan and the young girl Nurjahan and he gave the girl over in marriage to Ranmastkhan, and ordered her to be put up in the garden house where Ranmastkhan and his mother were put up.

Ranmastkhan, too, was struck by the beauty and high spirit of Nurjahan and although he hated Ramaraja all the more he was not less eager to woo Nurjahan. But iron had entered into her soul and she said she was determined not to marry until the Hindu kingdom where she was insulted was destroyed and she would marry the man who would bring about this destruction.

Ranmastkhan wanted so much to marry her that he undertook to accomplish this task. All these years Ranmastkhan's attention and affection was bestowed on his mother. But with the coming of Nurjahan it was diverted to her. Meherjan felt this gradual estrangement very keenly. This added unhappiness which she felt is also very delicately dealt with by Haribhau.

Ranmastkhan's efforts thereafter were all directed towards the accomplishment of his task. He pretended to dislike the service of the Sultan of Bijapur and expressed his wish to serve Ramaraja so that he could be constantly

near him. Ramaraja liked nothing better than this. He appointed him his bodyguard and reposed full faith in him. He was happy that he could now have his son always with him.

The opportunity Ranmastkhan was waiting for came when the four Bahmani Sultanates decided to unite in battle and give a final blow to Vijayanagara. For till then Vijayanagara had taken advantage of the disunity among the Sultanates and playing one against the other had ravaged their territories. The combined forces of the Sultans and those of Vijayanagara fought each other at Talikota. Ranmastkhan, as Ramaraja's bodyguard, was close to him on the battle field. He misguided the Raja about the alignment of the enemy's forces and persuaded him to send his men away from him. When the enemy attacked, the men close to the Raja were beaten and they fled away from him. Seizing the opportunity, Ranmastkhan cut off the Raja's head and carried it to the garden house. This is the climax of the story. Ranmastkhan had achieved his purpose. As a matter of historical fact the head of Ramaraja was cut off by Hussain Nizam Shah of Ahmednagar and fixed at the tip of a long spear to be seen by all. But Haribhau has changed this to meet the poetic purpose of the novel.

With great joy and pride Ranmastkhan carried the head on a platter and showed it to his mother Meherjan. He naturally thought that he would be rewarded for this. But on looking at the head Meherjan exclaimed, "My son, you have killed your father!" Deep down in her heart her love for Ramaraja was still alive. She wanted revenge but not the death of her lover. She picked up the head with deep feeling and carrying it in her hands jumped into the tank. Thus the wish she had expressed, years ago, of drowning herself in the tank along with her lover was fulfilled. Dhanamalla, who had disappeared with her years ago, and reappeared with her, suddenly followed

her and jumped into the tank. Nurjahan too was shocked to discover that her lover was the bastard son of a Hindu and a parricide as well. How could she marry him? She too rushed to the tank. Thrice shocked, Ranmastkhan followed her and they both jumped into the tank and were drowned. Thus the story ended at the place where it had begun viz. in the garden house and the tank in it.

The story had to be given in some detail as, without it, the tragic-romantic character of it would not be understood.

At the heart of the story is sex and love in all its aspects: as between man and woman, between father and son, and between mother and son. And the four persons who are caught in its vortex go to its bottom. Dhana-malla the big dumb, dark, fearful person, who loves Meherjan and follows her where she goes, is also caught in the mesh of love and destroyed in it. Haribhau has actually described him as being caught in the creepers under the water in the tank. He looks like the symbol of the beastly and sinister aspect of sex, haunting, speechless and irrepressible. The tank itself, with its hidden entangled creepers, may be considered to be the symbol of sex which pulls men and women together and envelopes them in its meshes sometimes to their destruction and ruin.

The novel is a fabric of the warp and woof of the consuming passion of four persons with a fifth one added. Haribhau has woven it with great skill. Some faults seen in his other novels are to be found in this novel too. But in its total effect it may be counted among his best and among his historical novels the best. This is his last complete novel and, in it, all his faculties as a creative artist have come out to the fullest extent. There is only one historical person viz. Ramaraja and one historical incident viz. the battle of Talikota and the slender thread of a legend. Out of these he has woven a rich fabric of human emotions with all their accompanying weakness and

strength. Haribhau is not a poet in the usual sense of the word, but this novel has a poetic quality about it.

A look at Haribhau's historical novels shows that he is at his best when he deals with imaginary or invented characters and situations. He can deal with them with greater freedom. That is why perhaps generally, his invented characters and situations leave a deeper impression on the mind of the reader. It must be admitted that sometimes this distorts the perspective. But fortunately for the reader this has not happened in *Vajraghat* nor in his novels about Shivaji to any very great extent. What little freedom Haribhau has taken with history is justifiable from the artistic point of view.

It would not, perhaps, be proper to compare Haribhau with Sir Walter Scott. But as he is the first major writer of historical fiction in Marathi and has had considerable influence on those who came after him, it would be worthwhile seeing what he himself has to say about this. In his introduction to *Vajraghat* he says, "The essence of the contemporary social novel is Illusion of Reality. The essence of the historical novel is a mixture of Historical Reality and Illusion or of History and Legend. What proportion of these two ingredients will be mutually helpful and compatible and enhance the aesthetic value of the work will depend upon the skill of the writer of fiction." That Haribhau has, in his best work, used historical facts and invented or legendary material to the best advantage cannot be gainsaid. He was not writing history in the form of fiction. He used historical material to produce a work of fiction, and thus re-create the spirit and atmosphere of the time. This means that the stress was not on history but on fiction. In this sense his historical novels are not historical documents but historical romances and in this lies their aesthetic value.

CHAPTER FIVE

Other Writings and Conclusion

Besides writing twenty-one novels and one novelette during his active career of thirty-four years, Haribhau also did considerable other writing falling under different categories, and delivered quite a few speeches on various occasions. These writings and published speeches will easily run into about two thousand pages.

Mention has already been made of his criticism of Agarkar's Marathi translation of *Hamlet*. He combined this with an appreciative criticism of another translation of *Hamlet* by his senior friend and mentor Mr. Govindrao Kanitkar. He has pointed out some of the defects in Kanitkar's translation also but his criticism of Agarkar's translation is scathing both in respect of accuracy of translation and of appropriate use of language. Towards the end he has given some rules for the guidance of those who would undertake the task of translation. These are very sound. Another criticism he wrote was that of the translation of *Romeo and Juliet*. This preceded the criticism of the translation of *Hamlet*. This also bears witness to Haribhau's close study of Shakespeare's plays. It is worth noting that, on occasions, he disagrees with

the views of such great writers as Dr. Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith. One can only admire Haribhau's boldness and self-confidence when one considers that he was only about nineteen when he wrote these articles.

In 1912, he had started writing articles on Shakespeare under three heads : 1) Shakespeare and his works; 2) Poetical works of Shakespeare and 3) Autobiographical Poems of Shakespeare. He wrote two articles under each head, but unfortunately they are incomplete. Had all the articles been written we would have had a comprehensive study of Shakespeare in Marathi by one who had studied Shakespeare all his life. It would have started a new trend in Marathi literary criticism, for even today there is no comprehensive and complete study, in Marathi, of any important English writer. But Haribhau had always had too many irons in the fire and so, like some of his novels, these articles too remained incomplete.

In the decade in which Haribhau started writing novels he also translated six plays. Three of Moliere's from the original French which he was learning viz. *La Marriage Force* (1887), *Le Tartuffe* (1888-89) and *Le Medecin Malgre' Lui*. (1890). The translations are quite good and that of the last one had become very popular. He also translated Congreve's *The Mourning Bride*, Victor Hugo's *Hernani* and Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. His translating plays from the French is very significant, because no one before this had translated from the original French. Marathi did not have comedy of a high order in those days. Translations of Moliere's plays would have been good examples of such. But unfortunately no more translations appeared. In the translation of the other three plays the spirit of the original has not come out, nor is the language as happy as in his novels. Haribhau was a very serious student of Shakespeare. It is, therefore, very surprising that he should have chosen "*Measure for Measure*" for translating instead of one of his major

plays. It is ironical that much of the criticism which he directed against the translations of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* can be directed against his translations also.

Besides these translations he wrote two original plays: *Sant Sakhubai* and *Sati Pingala*. Both are based on wellknown themes and one of them, *Sant Sakhubai*, was a success on the stage. On the whole, however, it may be said that play writing was not his forte. His genius was not suited to it.

Some of his miscellaneous writings have been published in four volumes under the common title *Sphuta Goshti*. This title would give one the impression that all the writings in the four volumes are stories. There are only twenty stories in all. Other writings include eight articles on different subjects, twelve biographies (some of them translated), and twenty-one letters.

In all Haribhau wrote more than thirty stories. Four of them are long short stories. One of them describing the famine in Maharashtra was translated into English under the title 'Ramji' and published in England by Fisher & Unwin. It was read widely in England and, later, its sale was banned by the government for fear that it would have an adverse effect on the English reading public about the British Administration in India. There are at least half a dozen short stories which are technically comparable to what later came to be known as the "Short Story" as a distinct literary form. This shows that Haribhau was not only the founder of the modern Marathi novel but also of the Marathi "Short Story". No writing in this form had appeared before this. It was Haribhau who saw that some themes could be properly handled only in the short form. He was not conscious that he was creating a new form but in effect he did.

In the second decade of his writing career during which *Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghet?* and *Mee* were being written Haribhau published two sets of letters : one supposed to

have been addressed by a mother to her daughter under the title *Sagunabaichin Mulees Parren* and the other addressed by a father to his son under the title *Govindravanchin Mulas Patren*. Haribhau's novels *Ganpatrao* and *Pan Lakshyant Koi Gheto?* describe the opposition which young wives had to face, from the older women of the family, in their attempt to receive education from their husbands. The letters from the mother are intended to temper the impatience of the girls in their relation with the older women, especially the mothers-in-law. Sagunabai impresses upon her daughter that all mothers-in-law are not wicked and it would be possible for young girls to receive education without offending the older women in the family. In Govindrao's letters the younger generation is advised to benefit by the experience of the older generation and not to be impatient with it.

These letters show that although Haribhau was an ardent social reformer he was moderate by temperament. We have seen from his novels that he was conscious of other problems than purely social ones viz. political, economic, industrial and so on. He was primarily an educator, a social reformer in the widest sense of the term.

Haribhau also wrote more than a dozen short biographies of eminent men and women. Some of these are translations from English. He also wrote a number of informative and hortatory articles on various subjects.

As his reputation as a novelist and public worker grew he was invited to deliver lectures on important occasions. The largest number of them, naturally, are on literature, which shows that literature was the subject closest to his heart. Two of them viz. "The Philosophy of Fiction" and "Realism in Fiction" were delivered in English before the Friends Liberal Association in Poona. These are not available. The third one delivered in Marathi on "Novels", at Bombay, in the Autumn Lecture Series is also not available. In this lecture he had divided novels under four cate-

gories, "Idealist", "Romanticist", "Sensationalist" and "Realist". He has mentioned these categories elsewhere also.

Three other lectures delivered in Marathi, and available, deserve more detailed consideration. In 1903, he delivered the presidential address on the occasion of the celebration of the Annual Day of the Marathi Grantha-sangrahalaya, Thana. The subject of the lecture was "Study of Marathi Literature". In the course of his speech he discussed the meaning of 'Vak' ('speech' or 'the word'), then went on to discuss the definitions of literature as given by Lord Morley and Sainte Beuve, took a survey of Marathi literature and, in the end, stressed the importance of libraries in the cultural life of a society.

His much celebrated and most talked of lecture, to this day, is the one which he delivered as the presidential address on the occasion of the celebration of the Annual Day of Mumbai Marathi Grantha-sangrahalaya, in 1911, at Bombay. The title of the lecture is "Vidagdha Vangmaya" and he goes on to discuss what he means by "Vidagdha" in relation to literature. Following De Quincey, but not naming him, he first divides literature into two types — one being "Scientific Literature" or "Literature of Knowledge" where Statement of Truth or fact in the main object. The manner of stating it, artistic or inartistic, is immaterial. The other type is the one in which the manner, which has to be artistic, is more important. In this case the ultimate aim is to lead the reader to Truth, but this must be done in a graceful, elegant, attractive manner. This would be De Quincey's "Literature of Power". But Haribhau makes a distinction between "belles-lettres", where the main object is beauty and grace of expression, and "Artistic Literature". This latter, according to him, is "Vidagdha Vangmaya", literature in the highest sense. Truth is the final point of arrival but this is reached by first holding the attention of the

reader, and entertaining him by the use of several artistic devices of style, construction of plot, etc. In this kind of literature the obvious and immediate aim is to please and entertain the reader but the secret and ultimate aim is to enlighten him, to lead him to Truth or Goodness. This is in keeping with what he had said in his preface to *Madhli Sthiti*. He quotes a verse —

स्वादुकाव्यरसोन्मिश्रं वाक्यार्थमुपभुञ्जते ।

प्रथमालीढमधवः पिबन्ति कटुभेषजम् ॥

Then he goes on to discuss poetry (which in the wider sense means literature) by comparing it with the arts of painting and drawing. He quotes the definitions of poetry as given in Sanskrit Kavyashastra and in the writings of European philosophers and poets. Finally, according to him, poetry (Artistic Literature) is a product of imagination which moves, pleases and entertains the reader and by this means leads him to perceive the eternal truths of nature and of the human mind. The field of poetry has no limits and no subject is foreign to it, or too small or too big for it.

His next lecture on literature was his presidential address delivered at the Akola Session of the Marathi Literary Conference in 1912. In this lecture, besides discussing literature, he made four suggestions which have not lost their relevance even to-day. They are :

1) The study of Indian Languages should be made compulsory at the University level.

2) Marathi should be made the medium of education upto the level of the Matriculation Examination.

3) A fresh edition of the Marathi Dictionary should be prepared.

4) There should be a common technical terminology for all the Indian languages.

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These lectures would show how deeply he was attached to literature and how much he valued it and how sincerely committed he was to the promotion of the cause of Indian languages.

Of the other lectures there is one which deserves special mention. It is the one on "The Teaching of the Bhagawadgita" delivered in English in 1901. He posed three central questions viz. "Who am I?", "What must I do?" and "What should I hope for?" which everyone asks himself. The first is a preliminary question and the third a supplementary one. The second question is the most important of the three. The answer to this is "You must do your duty as the occasion demands and your capacity permits." One can see the germ of "Karma Yoga" in this. He also stated that in the *Gita* there is an attempt at synthesizing different systems whose aim is realization of the 'self,' the ultimate goal.

Haribhau was one of those who founded the Nutan Marathi Vidyalaya to perpetuate the memory of Vishnushastri Chiplunkar. Every year he delivered a farewell address to the students on the eve of the summer vacation. There are ten of them and they are put together under the title, 'Advice to Young Boys.'

Mention has already been made of Haribhau's letters to Kashibai Kanitkar, but a reference here again will not be out of place. There are thirty-three dated letters in this volume. The first is dated 6 May, 1885 and the last 7 March, 1889. There are two more letters, both undated and incomplete. Most of these letters are addressed to Kashibai but some are addressed to her husband Govindrao. These letters were not intended for public view, and therefore they are written with the frankness natural to them. They throw a good deal of light on Haribhau's domestic life and his unhappiness over certain matters, the range of his reading and studies, his plans about publishing and editing periodicals, his views on

persons in public life and so on. Particular mention must be made of a long letter in which he has praised the good work done by Christian Missionaries in India. It needed great courage, in those days, to express such views even in private. From the introduction which Kashibai Kanitkar has written to this volume of letters it appears that Haribhau had promised to preserve the letters which she and her husband had written to him. She believes that he must have preserved them but since they were not found among his papers after his death she presumed that, along with other papers, they must have been consigned to fire by one of his servants. She also says that Haribhau had started writing an autobiography but thinks that it, too, must have been burnt. It is a great pity. The loss of Kashibai's and Govindrao's letters to Haribhau and of his autobiography is a serious one. Had both these been available and published we would have known much more about him.

A look at these miscellaneous writings and speeches gives one the unmistakable impression that Haribhau's interests were wide and varied, his knowledge almost encyclopaedic and his main object, whether through his writings or through his speeches, was to inform, enlighten and educate the people, men and women, young and old. and that his sense of duty to the society was very strong.

Of all his major writings however, it is his novels that have had an enduring impact on Marathi readers and on novel writing in Marathi. He made novel writing so popular that even during his lifetime a number of novel writers came up and, about the turn of the century, many publishing houses were established for bringing out series of novels, also during his lifetime the short story, as a distinct form of literature was established and was gaining popularity.

Of his miscellaneous writings and speeches his lecture delivered at the Mumbai Marathi Grantha-sangrahalaya

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in 1911, his Presidential address delivered at Akola in 1912 and his criticism of the translation of Shakespeare's plays have become landmarks in the history of Marathi literary criticism and discussion of literary problems. Nearly a century has passed since Haribhau wrote his first novel and sixty years since his last one was published but even today, as a novelist, his is a favourite name among the common readers and an honoured one among writers and critics.

Principal Works of H. N. Apte

Novels — Social

मधली स्थिति	<i>Madhli Sthiti</i>
गणपतराव	<i>Ganpatrao</i>
पण लक्ष्यांत कोण घेतो ?	<i>Pan Lakshyant Kon Ghetto?</i>
यशवंतराव खरे	<i>Yashwantrao Khare</i>
मी	<i>Mee</i>
जग हें असें आहे	<i>Jag Hen Asen Aahe</i>
भयंकर दिव्य	<i>Bhayankar Divya</i>
आजच	<i>Aajach</i>
मायेचा बाजार	<i>Mayecha Bazar</i>
कर्मयोग	<i>Karmayoga</i>
चाणाक्षपणाचा कळस	<i>Chankakshapanacha Kalas</i>

Novels — Historical

म्हैसूरचा वाघ	<i>Mhaisurcha Wagh</i>
उषःकाल	<i>Ushahkal</i>
केवळ स्वराज्यासाठी	<i>Kewal Swarajyasathi</i>
रूपनगरची राजकन्या	<i>Roopnagarchi Rajakanya</i>
चंद्रगुप्त	<i>Chandragupta</i>
सूर्योदय	<i>Surayodaya</i>

PRINCIPAL WORKS OF H. N. APTE

मध्यान्ह	<i>Madhyanha</i>
सूर्यग्रहण	<i>Suryagrahan</i>
कालकूट	<i>Kalakoot</i>
वज्राघात	<i>Vajraghat</i>
गड आला पण सिंह गेला	<i>Gad Ala Pan Sinha Gela</i>

Plays

जवरीचा विवाह	<i>Jabaricha Vivaha</i>
धूर्त-विलसित	<i>Dhoorta-Vilasit</i>
मारुन सुटकून वैद्यबुवा	<i>Maroon Mutkoon Vaidyabuva</i>

(Translated from Moliere's French Plays)

श्रुतकीर्तिचरित	<i>Shrutakirticharita</i>
जयध्वज अथवा असूयाग्निशमन	<i>Jayadhwaja or Asooyagnishamana</i>
सुमतिविजय	<i>Sumati Vijaya</i>
संत सखूबाई	<i>Sant Sakhubai</i>
सती पिंगला	<i>Sati Pingala</i>

Miscellaneous Works

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