

JIGNASA STUDENT STUDY PROJECT

GROWTH OF INDIAN LITERATURE in ENGLISH

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To

The Commissionerate of Collegiate Education

Hyderabad, Telangana

DECLARATION

We hereby declare that this study project entitled: Growth of Indian Literature in English is based on our research work. The study project is undertaken in line with the guidelines of Jignasa Project, under the aegis of Commissinerate of College education, Hyderabad, and we state that it has not been submitted in part or full earlier.

Students Researchers

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Student Researchers

Growth of Indian Literature in English

INTRODUCTION:

English as a language was brought to India by the British. They first arrived in India with the aspirations of becoming the controllers of the spice trade. With time, they started realizing their colonial and imperial aspirations. The result was that English just did not remain a language in India. It became something more. After independence the importance of English as a language increased. It became the official language of India. A generation of Indians was produced who were more comfortable in reading and writing in English than they were in their mother tongues. It sounds strange but that was the happening in reality. This led to a period when the Indians also started to write in English, thereby producing which is today known as Indian English literature. Many researches are being pursued on Indian English literature and the rise and growth of the Indian English writers. That gave an ample scope to review related literatures.

Indian Writing in English: Background.

In 1793, Sake Dean Mahomed wrote perhaps the first book by an Indian in English, called *The Travels of Dean Mahomed*. However, most early Indian writing in English was non-fictional work, such as biographies and political essays. It began to change in the late 1800s, when famous Indian authors who wrote mostly in their mother tongue, began to try their hand at writing in English. In the early 1900s, Rabindranath Tagore began translating his works from Bengali to English.

Starting in 1917 Dhan Gopal Mukerji wrote many children's stories that were set in India. He was awarded the Newbery medal in 1928 for *Gay Neck, the Story of a Pigeon*. Soon after, a new generation of Indian authors, who wrote almost exclusively in English, hit the bookshelves, beginning in 1935 with R.K. Narayan's *Swami and Friends* and Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*. Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* followed in 1938. What made Narayan's, Anand's and Rao's writing different from the Indian authors before them was that their stories were about the contemporary man on the street. There was also an Indianness to their work, in terms of the words they used and their style of writing. This resonated with the new, but growing ranks of Indians reading English literature. Their works were the forerunners to the magnificent diversity of Indian writing in English that we see today.

Moreover, English language had a great impact on the Indians and apart from its utilitarian value as a language of higher education in the sciences and as a 'link language', a fair number of Indian writers, including such eminent thinkers steeped in Indian thought as Vivekananda, Ranade, Gokhale, Aurobindo Ghose and Radhakrishnan, have voluntarily adopted it as their literary medium. There has been, from Derozio in the 1820s to R. K. Narayan today, an unbroken tradition of some gifted Indians choosing to write in English. Many of them, like the Dutt sisters, Toru and Aru, their versatile uncle Romesh Chunder, Manomohan Ghosh, Sarojini Naidu, and, among contemporaries, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, Bhabani Bhattacharya, and many others, have achieved distinction.

Some early pioneers in the Indian languages were also tempted at the threshold of their career to adopt English for their creative writing, partly because they owed their inspiration to English literature and partly because they hoped thereby to reach a wider audience. Madhusudan Dutt's first narrative poem, "The Captive Ladie", and Bankim Chandra's early novel "Rajmohan's Wife", are classic examples. Wisely they discovered in time that they could create best in their own language. Some English novels of R. K. Narayan, a born story-teller with any eye for observation and the gift of gentle irony, are superior in intrinsic literary merit to a great deal of mediocre stuff that passes for literature in some Indian languages. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that, as far as creative writing is concerned, no Indian writer in English has reached anywhere near the heights attained by some of the great writers in the Indian languages. What modern Indian literature sadly lacks is a well-proportioned and many-sided development.

The modern Indian literature is the representation of each aspect of modern life. Happily, despite this clamour of sophistry, patriotic piety, and political bias, good literature continues to be written and, as it justifies itself, it helps to sharpen the reader's sensibility. Since the time of Tagore a growing minority of intelligent critics well versed in the literary traditions of their own country and of the West have bravely maintained a more wholesome approach that is neither overwhelmed by the burden of the past nor overawed by the glamour of the latest fashion. This healthy trend of the modern Indian literature should gain in strength with a growing realization that, in the republic of letters as in that of men, a sensitive and well-trained critical apparatus and its judicious and fearless exercise are a prerequisite of happy results.

Indian English literature (IEL) refers to the body of work by writers in India who write in the English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. Its early history began with the works of R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao who contributed to Indian fiction in the 1930s. It is also associated with the works

of members of the Indian diaspora, such as V. S. Naipaul, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, Agha Shahid Ali, Rohinton Mistry and Salman Rushdie, who are of Indian descent.

It is frequently referred to as Indo-Anglian literature. (Indo-Anglian is a specific term in the sole context of writing that should not be confused with Anglo-Indian) As a category, this production comes in the broader realm of postcolonial literature—the production from previously colonised countries such as India. IEL has a relatively recent history, being only one and a half centuries old. The first book written by an Indian in English was *Travels of Dean Mahomet*, a travel narrative by Sake Dean Mahomet published in England in 1793. In its early stages, IEL was influenced by the Western novel. Early Indian writers used English unadulterated by Indian words to convey an experience which was essentially Indian. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay (1838–1894) wrote *Rajmohan's Wife* and published it in 1864; it the first Indian novel written in English. Raja Rao (1908–2006), Indian philosopher and writer, authored *Kanthapura* and *The Serpent and the Rope*, which are Indian in terms of their storytelling qualities. Kisari Mohan Ganguly translated the *Mahabharat* into English, the only time the epic has ever been translated in its entirety into a European language. Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) wrote in Bengali and English and was responsible for the translations of his own work into English. Dan Gopal Mukharji (1890–1936) was the first Indian author to win a literary award in the United States. Nirad C. Choudhuri (1897–1999), a writer of non-fiction, is best known for his *the Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (1951), in which he relates his life experiences and influences. P.Lal (1929–2010), a poet, translator, publisher and essayist, founded a press in the 1950s for Indian English writing, *Writers Workshop*.

R.K. Narayan (1906–2001) contributed over many decades and continued to write till his death. He was discovered by Graham Greene in the sense that the latter helped him find a publisher in England. Greene and Narayan remained close friends till the end. Similar to the way Thomas Hardy used Wessex, Narayan created the fictitious town of Malgudi where he set his novels. Some criticise Narayan for the parochial, detached and closed world that he created in the face of the changing conditions in India at the times in which the stories are set. Others, such as Greene, however, feel that through Malgudi they could vividly understand the Indian experience. Narayan's evocation of small town life and its experiences through the eyes of the endearing child protagonist Swaminathan in *Swami and Friends* is a good sample of his writing style. Simultaneous with Narayan's pastoral idylls, a very different writer, Mulk Raj Anand (1905–2004), was similarly gaining recognition for his writing set in rural India, but his stories were harsher, and engaged, sometimes brutally, with divisions of caste, class and religion.

According to writer Lakshmi Holmstrom, "The writers of the 1930s were fortunate because after many years of use, English had become an Indian language used widely and at different levels of society, and therefore they could experiment more boldly and from a more secure position."

Among the later writers, the most notable is Salman Rushdie, born in India, now living in the United Kingdom. Rushdie with his famous work *Midnight's Children* (Booker Prize 1981, Booker of Bookers 1992, and Best of the Bookers 2008) ushered in a new trend of writing. He used a hybrid language – English generously peppered with Indian terms – to convey a theme that could be seen as representing the vast canvas of India. He is usually categorised under the magic realism mode of writing most famously associated with Gabriel García Márquez. Nayantara Sehgal was one of the first female Indian writers in English to receive wide recognition. Her fiction deals with India's elite responding to the crises engendered by political change. She was awarded the 1986 Sahitya Akademi Award for English, for her novel, *Rich Like Us* (1985), by the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters. Anita Desai, who was shortlisted for the Booker Prize three times, received a Sahitya Akademi Award in 1978 for her novel *Fire on the Mountain* and a British Guardian Prize for *The Village by the Sea*. Her daughter Kiran Desai won the 2006 Man Booker Prize for her second novel, *The Inheritance of Loss*. Ruskin Bond received Sahitya Academy Award for his collection of short stories *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra* in 1992. He is also the author of a historical novel *A Flight of Pigeons*, which is based on an episode during the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

Vikram Seth, author of *The Golden Gate* (1986) and *A Suitable Boy* (1994) is a writer who uses a purer English and more realistic themes. Being a self-confessed fan of Jane Austen, his attention is on the story, its details and its twists and turns. Vikram Seth is notable both as an accomplished novelist and poet. Vikram Seth's outstanding achievement as a versatile and prolific poet remains largely and unfairly neglected.

Another writer who has contributed immensely to the India English Literature is Amitav Ghosh who is the author of *The Circle of Reason* (his 1986 debut novel), *The Shadow Lines* (1988), *The Calcutta Chromosome* (1995), *The Glass Palace* (2000), *The Hungry Tide* (2004), and *Sea of Poppies* (2008), the first volume of *The Ibis* trilogy, set in the 1830s, just before the Opium War, which encapsulates the colonial history of the East. Ghosh's latest work of fiction is *River of Smoke* (2011), the second volume of *The Ibis* trilogy.

Shashi Tharoor, in his *The Great Indian Novel* (1989), follows a story-telling (though in a satirical) mode as in the Mahabharata drawing his ideas by going back and forth in time. His

work as UN official living outside India has given him a vantage point that helps construct an objective Indianness. Vikram Chandra is another author who shuffles between India and the United States and has received critical acclaim for his first novel *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* (1995) and collection of short stories *Love and Longing in Bombay* (1997). His namesake Vikram A. Chandra is a renowned journalist and the author of *The Srinagar Conspiracy* (2000). Suketu Mehta is another writer currently based in the United States who authored *Maximum City* (2004), an autobiographical account of his experiences in the city of Mumbai. In 2008, Arvind Adiga received the Man Booker Prize for his debut novel *The White Tiger*.

Recent writers in India such as Arundhati Roy and David Davidar show a direction towards contextuality and rootedness in their works. Arundhati Roy, a trained architect and the 1997 Booker prize winner for her *The God of Small Things*, calls herself a "home grown" writer. Her award winning book is set in the immensely physical landscape of Kerala. Davidar sets his *The House of Blue Mangoes* in Southern Tamil Nadu. In both the books, geography and politics are integral to the narrative. In his novel *Lament of Mohini* (2000), Shreekumar Varma touches upon the unique matriarchal system and the *sammandham* system of marriage as he writes about the Namboodiris and the aristocrats of Kerala. Similarly, Arnab Jan Deka, a trained engineer and jurist, writes about both physical and ethereal existentialism on the banks of the mighty river Brahmaputra, and his co-authored book of poetry with British poet-novelist Tess Joyce appropriately titled *A Stanza of Sunlight on the Banks of Brahmaputra* (1983) published from both India and Britain (2009) which is set under this backdrop evokes the spirit of flowing nature of life. His most recent book *Brahmaputra and Beyond : Linking Assam to the World* (2015) made a conscious effort to connect to a world divided by racial, geographic, linguistic, cultural and political prejudices. His highly acclaimed short story collection *The Mexican Sweetheart & other stories* (2002) was another landmark book of this genre. Jahnvi Barua, a Bangalore based author from Assam has set her critically acclaimed collection of short stories *Next Door* on the social scenario in Assam with insurgency as the background.

The stories and novels of Ratan Lal Basu reflect the conditions of tribal people and hill people of West Bengal and the adjacent states of Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal. Many of his short stories reflect the political turmoil of West Bengal since the Naxalite movement of the 1970s. Many of his stories like 'Blue Are the Far Off Mountains', 'The First Rain' and 'the Magic Marble' glorify purity of love. His novel 'Oraon and the Divine Tree' is the story of a tribal and his love for an age old tree. In Hemingway style language the author takes the reader into the dreamland of nature and people who are inexorably associated with nature

REVIEW OF LITERATURES:

This segment has three broad sections. The first one is a section comprising of review of contextual issues i.e. a review of the conditions prevailing in India regarding the rise and growth of the Indian English writers. The second segment is that of review of literatures written on the topic or related topics. The third section is the section on reviews of the works of eminent Indian writers who wrote/ write in English.

Contextual Reviews:

Indian writing in English has a very recent history, which is one and a half century old. British ruled India for 150 years. India and England dealt with each other in trade, military and political affairs. During this period, England acquired wealth and empire of India. India, in return, got English language, literature and the concept of constitutional government. From the historical perspective, Indian English literature has passed through several phases such as Indo-Anglian, Indian-English, Indian writing in English and recently Indian English literature. In spite of its diverse cultures, races and religions Indian writing in English has successfully recaptured and reflected the multi-cultural, multilingual society. As a result, it has aroused a good deal of interest at home and abroad also. The works of various writers get not only a vast category of readers, but also receive a vast critical acclaim. The term Indian writing in English is used in a wider sense. This is the body of works by the writers whose mother tongue is one of the languages of multilingual India. According to K. R. S. Iyengar, there are three types of Indian writers in English. First group included those who have acquired their entire education in English schools and universities. Second group includes, Indians who have settled abroad, but are constantly in touch with the changing surrounding and traditions of their country of adoption. And finally, there are Indians who have acquired English as a second language. Consequently, a large number of Indians were greatly moved by the genuine desire to present before the western readers an authentic picture of India through their writings. Many Indian writers have chosen English as a medium of expression and left a great impact on different forms of literature. For example, Toru Dutt, Pandita Ramabai Saraswati, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu, Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Nissim Ezekiel, Nayantara Sahgal, Kamala Das, Jayany Mahapatra, Anita Desai, Bharati Mukherjee, Salman Rushdie, Shashi Deshpande and some recent Indian writers such as Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, Aravind Adiga, Chetan Bhagat and many others. They have been using English to represent the Indian culture and spirit. In this connection, the remarks of Randolph Quirk and Raja Rao are worth quoting. Quirk rightly remarked that English is not the

private property of the Englishmen. Similarly, Raja Rao says in the Preface of his novel *Kanthapura*: “One has to convey in a language that is not one’s own.” One can notice “Indianness” in Indian writing in English. K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar has rightly commented in this regard: “What makes Indo-Anglian literature an Indian literature and not just a ramshackle outhouse of English literature is the quality of its ‘Indianness’ in the choice of its subjects, in the texture of thought and play of sentiment, in the organization of material and in the creative use of language”. Whereas Meenakshi Mukherjee observes: “Whatever be the language in which it is written, a novel by an Indian writer demands direct involvement in values and experiences which are valid in the Indian context.” Indian writing in English expressed a shared tradition, cultural experiences and Indian heritage. Early Indian writers have used many Indian words and the experiences throughout their works of art. R. K. Narayan has created *Malgudi* similar to Thomas Hardy’s *Wessex*. Nirad C. Coudhury is famous for his “*The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*” (1951). As figured by Reddy Venkata K. and Reddy Bayapa P. these writers do comment on the social issues like: “superstitions, casteism, poverty, illiteracy and many other social evils that were eating the vitals of Indian society.” Salman Rushdie is the most notable among all the Indian writers in English. His *Midnight’s Children* (1980) won the Booker Prize in 1981. We know Shashi Tharoor for his *The Great Indian Novel* (1989). Bharati Mukherjee, the author of *Jasmine* (1989) has spent her career on the issues involving immigration and identity. Vikram Seth is known for his *A Suitable Boy*(1994). Other remarkable writers include Khuswant Singh, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Amitav Ghosh, Bharati Kirchner, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, C. R. Krishnan, Vikas Swarup, Chetan Bhagat, Aravind Adiga and others. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is well known for her unique literary creations like ‘*Arranged Marriage*’ (1996), ‘*The Mistress of Spices*’ (1997), ‘*Queen of Dreams*’ (2004), ‘*One Amazing Thing*’ (2011), ‘*The Oleander Girl*’ (2013) and others.

Indian writing in English has witnessed some controversies in its evolvement. It has to prove itself on the grounds of superiority and inferiority compared to literature produced in other Indian languages. It also witnessed accusations of being superficial, imitative, shallow etc. Indian writers in English have also been criticized of being not real socio-cultural ambassadors of India. They have been said to get themselves uprooted from the authentic Indian sense. However, the new generation of Indian writers in English has handled the wide range of themes and the subject matters. Shashi Deshpande, Shobha De, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, Chetan Bhagat, Aravind Adiga and Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

have written on variety of themes. For these writers English is a medium of expression of their creative urge, through which they can reach to the international readers.

Review of Literatures:

Rao (2017) commented that there is a unity and variety in India. Many writers contribute for writing in English. It has been originated from Anglo-Indian literature, which is a product of Indo-Anglian relations. As a result, Indian writing in English is greatly influenced by writing in England. It led to the creation of a new nation and new people. It causes privileges, responsibilities, advantages and dangers. There was a rapid growth of the usage of English language in all the fields. It causes Indian writing in English as a distinctive literature. Both the advantages and disadvantages are balanced by seeing more English and English men in India. Indians tried to habituate Western culture which led to sustained and stimulated life. Initially, Indians focused on reading, speaking and listening. Later they started writing in English. As a bridge between India and England, Raja Rammohan Roy caused the renaissance in modern Indian literature. He opined that Indians must have traditional strength with the new scientific disciplines. Roy as well others took part for Indian writing in English. New life is seen by starting Hindu or native schools. This new situation challenged the west. Ramkrishna Paramhansa from Bengal tried to protect Indian culture. Actually, he was ignorant of English. After the death of Ramkrishna Paramhansa, his chief disciple, Swami Vivekananda, started the Ramkrishna Mission. He made some of the verse readings from Bengali compulsory. An English journal has been started from the Mission. He made some of the verse renderings from Bengali to protect Indian culture and adopt western culture for the recognition of English language. This research article mostly speaks about the history of the commencement of English language in India. However it starts from Raja Rammohan Roy's contributions. But the journey of English language in this country is much older than that.

This work would have been more absorbing if it would have spoken about the commencement of the journey of English language in India since the time the English came to India. Ahlawat (2015) wrote that Indian authors wrote in English and the recognition of their writing has evolved a term, "Indo-Anglian Literature". He also added that recently such writings have come to be known as 'Indian Writing in English'. There is unanimity among literary historians that Indian creative writing in English had begun even before Macaulay's 'Minute on Indian Education' (1835) was accepted and endorsed by Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General of India at that time. Yet, there is considerable disagreement, often verging on confusion, as to the term one should employ in describing and identifying this

area of writing. As one reviews the development of this literature, one becomes aware on the necessity to agree on a comprehensive descriptive term for it, thus assuming in giving credibility to this literature. Looking to the handicap of writing in a foreign language, Dr. Srinivasa Iyengar aptly remarked that while many good Indo-Anglian novels and many more short stories have already demonstrated the feasibility of Indian writing of English fiction, it is nevertheless true that the unique intricacies of social life and the untranslatable nuances of conversational speech are better rendered through the medium of one's own mother-tongue. It is therefore certain that much of the creative work in fiction in the India of the future will be done in the vernaculars; but good English novels and short stories will continue to appear, either as translation or as original works. Even though the tribe of Indian writers in English had increased in number, there was absence of consciousness to be identified as a group. The need to instill this awareness led to search in the twentieth century for an adequate term to identify and describe these writers. The initiative was taken by K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, who located the term "Indo-Anglian" and used it for his critique on Indian writing in English (Indo-Anglian Literature, Bombay, 1943). Iyengar informed that the term "Indo-Anglian" can be traced to Calcutta, where in 1883 it was used for the first time to describe a volume containing essays written by native students. He approved of its usage as it can be used both as substantive and adjective. Meti (2014) commented that the possible literary form for a writer is to keep him always in touch with the common readers is the fiction. It is in this area we find that the Indian writers in English have made the most significant contribution. So, of all genres, the novel is the most popular form today. According to H. M. Williams (1976), "It is undoubtedly the most popular vehicle for the transmission of Indian ideas to the wider English speaking world." We in India, on a greater extent are indebted to the European and English novel because as an art form, it has been imported to India from the West. In other words, it is a gift of Western literature. Review of Works of Eminent Indian English Writers:

R. K. Narayan –

R. K. Narayan completed his education in 1930 and briefly worked as a teacher before deciding to devote himself to writing. His first novel, 'Swami and Friends' (1935), is an episodic narrative recounting the adventures of a group of schoolboys. That book and much of Narayan's later works are set in the fictitious South Indian town of Malgudi. Narayan typically portrays the peculiarities of human relationships and the ironies of Indian daily life, in which modern urban existence clashes with ancient tradition. His style is graceful, marked by genial humor, elegance and simplicity. Among the best-received of Narayan's 34 novels are

'The English Teacher' (1945), 'Waiting for the Mahatma' (1955), 'The Guide' (1958), 'The Man-Eater of Malgudi' (1961), 'The Vendor of Sweets' (1967) and 'A Tiger for Malgudi' (1983). Narayan also wrote a number of short stories; collections include 'Lawley Road' (1956), 'A Horse and Two Goats and Other Stories' (1970), 'Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories' (1985) and 'The Grandmother's Tale' (1993). In addition to works of nonfiction (chiefly memoirs), he also published shortened modern prose versions of two Indian epics, 'The Ramayana' (1972) and 'The Mahabharata' (1978).

Nayantara Sahgal –

Nayantara Sahgal has written several books and is known for her soul-stirring plots. She has been honoured with the Sahitya Akademi Award, the Sinclair Prize and the Commonwealth Writers' Prize. She is a Member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. She has been awarded the Diploma of Honour from the International Order of Volunteers of Peace (Italy) and an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from the University of Leeds. In 'The Day in Shadow', she beautifully explores the stigma of divorce in modern India from the point of view of Simrit, a woman attempting to navigate her life after a divorce. Apart from the emotional toll of the ordeal, she has the divorce settlement and society to deal with. The book beautifully captures modern society's old fashioned disapproval of divorce and how it's expressed. She becomes close to Raj, a Member of Parliament, who adds some clever political points to the book, exploring how those in power today are far from our forefathers and barely even stand for their ideals. In 'When the Moon Shines by Day', the dystopian setting seems to be eerily close to India's actual future. Told from the point of view of a young reader, Rachana, the book shows an India where history books are no longer available and minorities live in perpetual fear. Set in the year of Emergency, 'Rich like Us' explores how that event affected lives. There are several characters from every walk of life that have a series of consequences to face because of the Emergency. 'Storm in Chandigarh' explores the tension between Punjab and the newly created Haryana with a wide range of characters, all who seem to have similar lives and dreams despite their state. Nayantara Sahgal's fiction always highlights the dangers of current political affairs and the impact of politics on society.

Khuswant Singh –

Khushwant Singh's work included both fiction and nonfiction. He mainly wrote in English language. Among his major books included 'Train to Pakistan' (first published in 1956) which won him international acclaim and Groove Press Award in 1954. The book

depicts the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. His second major work included essays on India's Emergency by the name "Why I Supported the Emergency" (published in 2004). His third major work was 'Delhi: A Novel'. He also wrote 'I shall Not Hear the Nightingale' (published in 1959). 'The Portrait of a Lady: Collected Stories' was in the form of short story collection. He also authored other books such as 'Maharaja Ranjit Singh' and 'Fall of Sikh Kingdom'. Apart from these, he wrote and published a classic two-volume book on Sikh history by the name 'A History of Sikhs' (published in 1963). His other famous works included 'Truth, Love and a little Malice' in the form of an autobiography and published in 2002, 'Sex, Scotch and Scholarship' and 'In the Company of Women' (published in 1999).

Shobhaa De –

Shobhaa De began a career in journalism in 1970, during the course of which she founded and edited three magazines—Stardust, Society, and Celebrity. In the 1980s, she contributed to "The Sunday" magazine section of 'The Times of India'. In her columns, she used to explore the socialite life in Mumbai and lifestyles of the celebrities. At present, she is a freelance writer and columnist for several newspapers and magazines. Shobhaa De runs four weekly columns in mainstream newspapers, including 'The Times of India' and 'Asian Age'. She has been the writer of several popular soaps on television, including India's second daily serial, 'Swabhimaan' (first is Shanti). De writes 'De Tour', a fortnightly column for 'The Week'. De has participated in several literary festivals, including the Writers' Festival in Melbourne. She is a regular participant of Bengaluru Literature Festival, having been part of it since its first edition and brand ambassador of Dehradun Literature Festival. A list of books written by her as follows:

ShashiTharoor –

ShashiTharoor was born in London in 1956. He is one of the leading Indian writers who write in English. The title of Tharoor's first full-length work of fiction, 'The Great Indian Novel', immediately signposts his interest in language games. The title is at once a play on the elusive 'great American novel' and a reference to the work which provides the framework of Tharoor's novel, India's greatest epic the 'Mahabharata' (which roughly translated means 'great India'). In his retelling of modern Indian history and politics, Tharoor explores ground similar to that covered by Salman Rushdie in 'Midnight's Children'. Yet though Tharoor's voice is evidently of the post-Rushdie generation of Indian writing in English, it remains distinct. In the novel, figures from the 'Mahabharata' are recreated as characters that in turn represent

figures from recent Indian history. Thus Bhishma from the 'Mahabharata' becomes Ganga Datta (who is also a fictional representation of Mahatma Gandhi) in Tharoor's version of the epic. Similarly, Karna becomes Muhammad Ali Karna in the novel, and a figure that parallels Jinnah from modern history. And just as all the major figures from recent Indian history are included in Tharoor's novel, so all the major events are recorded too, though at times two or three historical events are condensed into a single fictional one. Tharoor's early stories—some of which he wrote as a teenager for Indian mass-circulation periodicals—and a two-act play have been published in 'The Five-Dollar Smile'. The stories, which treat such issues as racism ('The Boutique'), hypocrisy ('The Temple Thief'), and gender stereotyping ('City Girl, Village Girl'), show signs of the language skills which Tharoor exploits to such great effect in 'The Great Indian Novel'. 'Twenty-Two Months in the Life of a Dog' is a short play about abuses of power during Indira Gandhi's Emergency which lacks the satirical and political bite of a novel like Nayantara Sahgal's, 'Rich Like Us', which covers the same territory. Tharoor has also written a work of non-fiction, 'Reasons of State: Political Development and India's Foreign Policy Under Indira Gandhi', 1966-1977, which examines the making of Indian foreign policy.

Shashi Deshpande –

Shashi Deshpande's (born in 1938) first book was 'The Legacy', a collection of short stories, and since then she has published dozens of stories. The authentic recreation of India, the outstanding feature of her stories, is a distinct feature of her novels also. There is nothing sensational or exotic about her India—no Maharajas or snake charmers. She does not write about the grinding poverty of the Indian masses; she describes another kind of deprivation—emotional. The woman deprived of love, understanding, and companionship is the center of her work. She shows how traditional Indian society is biased against woman, but she recognizes that it is very often women who oppress their sisters, though their values are the result of centuries of indoctrination.

Vikram Seth –

In poetry and interviews Vikram Seth (born in Calcutta, 1952) has mocked experimental literature and romantic and extreme attitudes towards life. For him literature and life should be enjoyable, commonsensical, this worldly. For someone seemingly in favor on the conventional and practical, there is a Faustidian side to his writing. His three novels have been virtuoso performances and for serious literature immensely successful with the reading public and translated in many languages. Each novel has been very different from the others and has

taken an older literary form in unexpected new dimensions. 'The Golden Gate' was a high wire act pretending to be genial comedy. 'A Suitable Boy' uses the "whom should she marry" theme of many nineteenth-century novels to offer a portrait of the intricacies of northern Indian society during the 1950s. Its models are the realistic novels of Jane Austen, George Eliot and Leo Tolstoy, with their range, depth, social detail and examination of the ways of society and it is said to be one of the longest novels in English. In 'An Equal Music' the message is similar, but the method and story deepen the treatment of character. Here Seth has taken the early twentieth-century European novel about the life of musicians and brought it up to date, set it in the contemporary world at a time when few schools in England still teach classical music, and when chamber music is losing its appeal and string quartets find it difficult to survive. This is partly a novel about economic survival as the world changes, but it is mainly about emotional survival as situations change; there is no love which cannot become destructive—excessive passions destroy.

Arundhati Roy –

Arundhati Roy (born as Suzanna Arundhati Roy) was born in 1961 in Shillong, Meghalaya, India. In 1997 she published her debut novel, 'The God of Small Things' to wide acclaim. The semiautobiographical work departed from the conventional plots and light prose that had been typical among best-sellers. Composed in a lyrical language about South Asian themes and characters in a narrative that wandered through time, Roy's novel became the biggest-selling book by a non-expatriate Indian author and won the 1998 Man Booker Prize for Fiction. Roy's subsequent literary output largely consisted of politically oriented nonfiction, much of it aimed at addressing the problems faced by her homeland in the age of global capitalism. Among her publications were 'Power Politics' (2001), 'The Algebra of Infinite Justice' (2002), 'War Talk' (2003), 'Public Power in the Age of Empire' (2004), 'Field Notes on Democracy: Listening to Grasshoppers' (2009), 'Broken Republic: Three Essays' (2011), and 'Capitalism: A Ghost Story' (2014). In 2017, Roy published 'The Ministry of Utmost Happiness', her first novel in 20 years. The work blends personal stories with topical issues as it uses a large cast of characters, including a resistance fighter, to explore contemporary India.

Amitav Ghosh –

Amitav Ghosh was born in Calcutta in 1956. His first novel, 'The Circle of Reason' (1986), follows an Indian protagonist who, suspected of being a terrorist, leaves India for

northern Africa and the Middle East. Blending elements of fable and picaresque fiction, it is distinctly postcolonial in its marginalization of Europe and postmodern in its nonlinear structure. 'The Shadow Lines' (1988) is a sweeping history of two families (one Indian and the other English) that are deeply shaped by events following the departure of the British from India in 1947. 'The Circle of Reason' and 'The Shadow Lines', both written in English, were widely translated and gained Ghosh an international readership. 'The Calcutta Chromosome: A Novel of Fevers, Delirium, and Discovery' (1995) represented Ghosh's first foray into science fiction; this densely layered novel offers an alternate history of the discovery of the parasite that causes malaria. His subsequent novels included 'The Glass Palace' (2000), a familial history centered on Burma (Myanmar) between its occupation by the British in 1885 through its independence after World War II and into the late 20th century and 'The Hungry Tide' (2004), set in Bengal and featuring American and Indian characters. With 'Sea of Poppies' (2009)—a novel that describes individuals on the Ibis, a ship on the seas of Southeast Asia carrying coolies (indentured laborers) and opium—Ghosh turned away from his earlier novels' formal experimentation and toward a more traditional form of storytelling. 'Sea of Poppies' was the first book in the Ibis trilogy, which takes place shortly before and during the first Opium War. The historical series also included 'River of Smoke' (2011) and 'Flood of Fire' (2015). Drawing inspiration from a myth involving the snake goddess Manasa Devi. Ghosh also wrote 'In an Antique Land' (1992), a book that straddles several genres—travel writing, autobiography, memoir—and blurs fiction and nonfiction. In it Ghosh described his experiences in a rural Egyptian village in the early 1980s, when he went there as an academic researcher, and in the late 1980s, when he returned there. His nonfiction works included 'Dancing in Cambodia, at Large in Burma' (1998), 'The Imam and the Indian' (2002), and 'Incendiary Circumstances: A Chronicle of the Turmoil of Our Times' (2005).

Chetan Bhagat –

Born on 1974, in Delhi, Chetan Bhagat is one of modern India's most celebrated authors who write in English. While working as a banker he had already begun to write manuscripts for his first two novels. His debut novel, 'Five Point Someone – What not to do at IIT!', was published in 2004. The story is centered on three mechanical engineering students. 'Five Point Someone' instantly became both literary and commercial success. Bhagat reached at the zenith of his popularity with his debut that was later turned into a critically acclaimed film titled, '3 Idiots' (2009). It was followed by his second equally successful novel, 'One Night At A Call Center'. In fact, it was adapted for big-screen as 'Hello' and Bhagat

himself wrote the screenplay. In 2008, he penned 'The 3 Mistakes of My Life', which is based on the all-time favorite Indian sport, cricket. The novel garnered positive reviews and the film adaptation released in 2013, 'Kai Po Che!', became a hit. Bhagat's fourth novel, '2 States: The Story of My Marriage', is an autobiographical novel that focuses on the prevailing issue of interstate marriage in India. It is based on Bhagat's and his wife's own experience, who like the protagonist of the novel relentlessly tried to convince their respective families of different casts to approve of their marriage. The book highlights the conservative mindset shared by several sects in Indian states which prohibit marriage outside their cast. The book and its film adaptation was a major success. Bhagat wrote two more books; 'Revolution 2020' (2011), and 'What Young India Wants' (2012). Additionally, he received Society Young Achievers' award, Publisher's Recognition award and Filmfare Award for Best Screenplay. Aravind Adiga – Aravind Adiga was born in Madras, India in 1974. His debut novel, 'The White Tiger', was published in 2008 and named a New York Times Bestseller. It was also awarded the Booker Prize in 2008. Adiga has subsequently published two other books: 'Between the Assassinations', a collection of 12 interlinked short stories, and the novel, 'Last Man in the Tower'.

Ameesh Tripathi – Born on 1974, Ameesh Tripathi wrote his first novel, 'The Immortals of Meluha', which was published in 2010. The re-imagination of the legend of Shiva is set in the land of Meluha. The story moves forward with the arrival of the protagonist, who helps the Meluhans against evil forces. Shiva's journey teaches him a valuable lesson and shows him his destiny. The book received rave reviews from critics all over India and paved way for the sequels; 'The Secret of the Nagas' and 'The Oath of the Vayuputras'. The Shiva Trilogy became a huge commercial success acquiring the status of the most rapidly sold books in Indian history. The trilogy has been translated into 14 different languages. Moreover, Dharma production of Indian cinema has recently bought the film rights for 'The Immortals of Meluha'. The instant and enormous success of the book is also credited to Tripathi's years of experience working in the marketing field. He claims that his ideal role model is the actor Aamir Khan, in terms of creativity and success. It is from him that Tripathi learned to invest all his creative energy in writing and once finished, he must switch to his marketing genius. He has been declared one of the top 100 celebrities in India and India's New Icon. As to honor his contribution he was awarded Society Young Achievers Award for Literature.

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