Chapter-I
Introduction...
Birth of new Indian Literature.
Genre-novel-beginning-development.
Brief History till date.
Chapter – I

Indians’ association with English language began with the establishment of commercial centres at different places in India of East India Company, England in 1600. In 1838, English became the official language overtaking Persian language in the three regions i.e. Bombay, Calcutta and Madras under the rule of the Company. Later in 1856 Bombay, Calcutta and Madras universities came up imparting Western education through English medium to Indians and as such Indians came in contact with English literature. After the First War of Independence, 1857, entire India came under the colonial rule of Britain as East India Co., a Trading company of England was taken over by the British Government.

The first Indian–English writer, Deen Mohammed (1759-1851), an employee of East India Co., from Patna, Bihar; published his travelogue in English entitled The Travels of Deen Mahomet in 1794. Michael H. Fisher, a Research Scholar has done a great service “for making this text available in his scholarly monograph The First Indian Author in English (1996) “The entire travelogue is written in epistolary form. (1)” Earlier it was believed that Cavelly Venkata Boriah is the first Indian author in English.

C.D. Narasimhaiah says that “Indian Writing in English is to me primarily part of the literature of India, in the same way as the literatures written in various regional languages are or ought to be. ... Sanskrit was not an ‘Indian’ language, nor were Arabic and Persian, but the one became the very breath of India, that by which all else is known-devabhasha,
*devajanavidya* and the other two, Persian more than Arabic, have fathered forth a very sophisticated 'Indian' language, namely, Urdu. ... we can speak of Indian English as they do of American English, Australian or African English". It took two centuries for Indian English literature ----to come to fore.²

During 19th century Western-educated Indians used English as a “link language” between people speaking different languages of the States and Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) Cavelly. V. Boriah (1776-1803), Cavally V. Ramaswamy, H.L.V. Derozio (1809-31), K. Ghosh (1809-73), Michael M. Dutt. (1827-73) Hasan Ali, P. Raja Gopalla, Mohan Lal, Toru Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) et al. used it to express their creative ideas. Indians have used and even today continue to use English as a medium of expression for practical purpose as well as for creative expression. India is a multi-lingual country like Europe and even 60 years after Independence, English continues to be a link language between different States of India. There are more than 20 big Indian languages and in all 144 languages are spoken in the country. The writers and intellectuals continue to write in English for communicating with the outside world as well as for achieving self-expression too artistically using English in an Indian way. In the beginning, Indian poets used English for their creative poetic expression.

In the second half of the 19th century many genius and talented Indian-English poets came on the literary scene. Some Indians also wrote dramas in English. "Novel" is the latest genre of English Literature. The word "novel" is derived form Italian word " novelle", which means new and
fresh story. A novel is the loosest form of literature with maximum freedom for a writer. There are various definitions of a novel but it is rather difficult to give a comprehensive and a complete definition. A critic remarks that a novel is a story told in prose and above all else it is characterized by realism which distinguishes a novel from other kind of prose fiction in which little regard is paid to reality.

A novel is a fictitious prose narrative of considerable length in which characters and actions representative of real life are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity. F. Marion-Crawford, an American novelist describes a novel as a "Pocket Theatre" containing as it does all the accessories of drama without requiring to be staged before spectators. In fact, a novel is a long narrative in prose detailing the actions of fictitious people. George Meredith calls novel "a summary of actual life". A famous novelist, Henry Fielding says, "a novel is a comic epic in prose". W.H. Hudson says that the drama is the most rigorous form of literary art and novel (prose fiction) is the loosest. For writing a drama, a long preliminary discipline in technique and thorough knowledge of principles of a drama and of a stage is essential. But any one can write a novel who has pen, ink and papers at command and a certain amount of leisure and patience is essential. A novel is an effective medium for the portrayal of characters and their thoughts, emotions and actions within and without combining in itself the creation of poetry with the details of history and the generalized experience of philosophy of life in a manner never attempted in any other genre of literature by a writer.
In fact, in a novel there is freedom of movement, with vast canvas-a breadth, width for the choice of the artist, plot, characters, dialogue (narration), setting i.e. time and place of action, style, atmosphere, technique and a stated or implied philosophy of life are the major components entering into composition of any work of prose fiction. A novel is the loosest genre of literature but its very freedom from all limitations and restrictions allow it to give a fuller representation and portrayal of real life and characters than any other literary genre can provide. Technique gives real colour to a novel. Taking into consideration the "loose form" and "freedom" in writing a novel, large numbers of Indians have used novel form for their creative expression in Indian languages and hundreds of novels were published. At the same time novels were also written in English by the Indians. There is reciprocal influence between the Indian English novels and the novels in regional languages. Bengal became the literary centre of Indian English and later on Madras, Bombay also became the literary centres. The first novel in Bengali entitled *Spoilt Son of a Rich Family* was published in 1858. The first novel in British English entitled *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded* by Samuel Richardson was published in 1740 and the first Indian English novel *A Journal of 48 hours of 1945* written by Kylash Chander Dutt was published in 1835.

Bankim Chandra Chatterjee published his novel in English entitled *Rajmohan’s Wife* in 1864. Raj Laxmi Devi’s *The Hindu Wife* was published in 1876 and Toru Dutt’s *Bianca* was published in 1878. The novels of historical significance are K.K. Lahiri’s *Roshanara* (1881), Mirza Murad Ali Baig’s *Lalun, the Beragun or the Battle of Panipat* (1884), H. Dutt’s *Bijoy Chand* in 1888, K. Chakarvarti’s *Sarata and Hingam* 1895,
Lal Bhari Day (1824-94), Behramji M. Malabari (1853-1912), Nagesh Vishwant Pai (1860-1920) and Kurpabai Satthianandhan (1862-94) were the pioneers of Indian English fiction. Today all these novels only find place in the history of Indian English Literature.

These writing helped to cause revolutionary reorientation of Hindu traditions and customs in the line of rationalistic and scientific modernism. These writers looked at the European Civilization, Culture and Christianity for new ethical codes and new aesthetic forms. A novel became a new platform for intellectuals to discuss new concepts of freedom, i.e. political and individual and the Western philosophy ignited their imagination. Indian-writers were acquainted with the Western value, through English literature. They used the genre of a novel in romantic vein with a recipe of Victorian taste. The emergence of novel in India is to some extent as a result of prevailing cultural situation full of outdated customs, worn out moral traditions, reactionary Hindu orthodoxy and religious didacticism. In such environment, a novelist came to be valued as a liberating voice of progress. So in the beginning the writers presented the characters, which were the victims of oppressive society and they were strongly motivated by religion, their innate human instincts, emotions, feelings, aspirations, ambitions, thoughts as well as mental conflicts.

During the first half of 20\textsuperscript{th} century, there is a rapid development of fiction. Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004) wrote ---\textit{Untouchable} (1936), \textit{Two Leaves and A Bud} (1937), \textit{Lament on the Death of Master of Arts} (1939), \textit{Across the Black Waters} (1940), \textit{The Sword and the Sickle}
(1942) **The Big Heart** (1945), **Seven Summers** (1951) before his return to India from England.

After Independence, India's basic challenge was the changing of her social institutions as well as economical system. For curing India's ills like poverty, illiteracy, rigid caste hierarchy, age-old-outdated traditions, blind faith, superstitions and customs. Mahatma Gandhi had prescribed a change in people's hearts and Jawaharlal Nehru advocated the training of people's minds. But Gunner Myrdal has pointed out that such strategies without alteration of the social system are likely to be ineffective. He says that in India intellectual and moral conversion tends to be advanced, as panacea for all kinds changing social institutions is rather hopeless quest. This remains the basic dilemma for a change in Indian politics.

Anand has a strong faith in Marxism. He visualized that all the ills of Indians can be cured by adopting communism. He is under the pressure of commitment to Marxism and reformist zeal, took the dispossessed, underprivileged, down trodden and destitute everywhere – the slums of the cities, in the factories, in the villages, in the gardens of tea plantation, in factories, on the roads and pavements and made them enter the mainstream of Indian life through the new awakened consciousness. He wrote four autobiographical novels and the last one is entitled **Nine Moods of Bharat: Novel of a Pilgrimage** (1998).

During the first half of 20th century India's Freedom Movement was in full swing and as such the theme of the novel became inescapably political, the mood of comedy, the sensitivity to atmosphere, the probing of
psychological factors, the crises in individual’s soul and its resolution with detached observations find place in Indian English literature.

R.K.Narayan (1907-2001) wrote Swami and Friends (1935), The Bachelor of Arts (1936), The English Teacher (1937), The Dark Room (1938), Mr. Sampath (1952), The Financial Express (1955), Waiting for Mahatma (1967) and Grandmother Tale et al. His best novel is The Guide (1958). He writes with complete objectivity and with a quaint mixture of humour and irony pointing out the oddities and angularities of characters. His humour is a discernible. His comedy includes wry farce, simple witticism and irony of incongruous worlds.

Raja Rao (b.1908) wrote Kanthapura (1938), The Serpent and the Rope (1907), The Cat and the Shakespeare (1965), Comrade Kirillov (1976) and The Policeman and the Rose (1978). He wrote The Chess Master and His Moves (1998) which is first part of trilogy and two parts entitled The Daughters of the Mountain and A Myrobalm on the Plam of Your Hand are yet to be published. “He is probably the finest painter of the East–West confrontation as a symbolist and philosophical and as an original voice in modern fiction,” remarks M.K.Naik. In the words of C.D. Narasimhaiah, “he (Raja Rao) is “the most significant writer in English”. S.C. Harrex comments that: “Raja Rao has made a bold attempt to write philosophical novel.” He is ‘an insider outsider, an Indian obsessed expatriate.’ He is a lone literary phenomenon, a symbolist, bordering on metaphysical ideas poetically.
Bhabani Bhattacharya (1906-89) wrote *So Many Hungers* (1947), *Music for Mohini* (1952), *He who Ride A Tiger* (1957), *A Goddess Named Gold* (1960), *Shadow from Ladakh* (1967) and *A Dream in Hawai* (1975): He portrays an affirmative vision of life, the conflict and struggle between the old and young generations and his strong wish for the establishment of a new and just social order. With a social purpose he exposés both hypocrisy and helplessness of people in crisis. There is social realism in his novels and he presents his vision of a Welfare Society in India and his main concerns are political, economical and social.

Sudhin Nath Ghose (1899-1965) is an experimenter and innovator. He wrote *Gazelles Leaping* (1949), *Cradle of the Clouds*. (1951), *The Vermilion Boat* (1953), and *The Flame of the Forest* which reveal his unique Indian sensibility and vision both in content and technique with an exciting experiment in the expression of the Indian ethos in a form using the ancient Indian tradition of story telling. There is an autobiographical flavour and he portrays simple and sophisticated ways of life, full of traditions and religion. He dislikes materialistic civilization and spoilt urban life and presents Indian sensibility and ethos with utmost veracity.

Bhalchandra Rajan wrote *The Dark Dancer* (1969) and *Two Long In The West* (1961). He presents the crisis of identity and quest for roots. Shiv K. Kumar has written *Nude before God* (1986). He describes with great intensity a story of sexual betrayal. The other is an interesting portrait of campus novel and it is a novel of an academic on academic life which is full of amusing satire.
B.S. Gidwani’s *The Sword of Tipu Sultan* (1976) is a fine historical novel. Before writing the novel, he researched on the subject and referred to all the available material and sources on the life and reign of Tipu Sultan. He took 13 years to write the novel. On the theme of Freedom Movement and partition Manohar Malgonkar wrote *A Bend in the Ganges*. K.A. Abbas wrote *Inquilab* and Attia Hussain wrote *Sunlight On The Broken Column*.

Khushwant Singh’s “Forte runs too highly coloured writing sharply etched characters and violent bloody action.” He is a realist and is totally objective in his portrayal of man’s inhumanity to man and his heroes are man and woman, who fight to remain individuals in the depersonalized world of power politics’ and religious fanaticism. *Train to Pakistan* (1956) presents realistically the ghastliness and callous brutality of the time. It is set in a fictional village called Mano Majra on the India-Pakistan border in 1947. The village is an epitome India where Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs were living in harmony until Independence. The partition created crisis of human values. He gives intensity and pointedness to realism with artistic objectivity and presents the brutal atrocities committed on either side of the border. And there is commentary on the various aspects of modern civilization vigour, raciness, clarity and frequent use of nativization, the technique and style are worth praising. Khushwant Singh assesses that he is more familiar with English than his mother tongue.

*I shall Not Hear the Nightangle* presents the life of a Sikh family in pre-Independence era with sympathy. Khushwant Singh’s *Delhi* (1992) is an ambitious chronicle, which covers more than eight hundred years in the life
of a city, Delhi that is the heart of India. The character of Bhagmati, a "bisexual harlot" is like the “Objective Correlative” of the city of Delhi, helps to present the plight of a city dominated and despoiled by many invaders. Bhagmati emerges as a Greek mythological figure like Tiresias, whose performances are described with a zest and titillating detail, which reveals thematic concerns.

Delhi is a historical novel and it is a recodification of his irreverent views on India, which lacks historical vision. It also portrays a shameless world of sex and lust. Women entice men to satisfy their lust and men too gratify their lust. He interweaves historical events in the episodic plot of the novel. Each episode is complete in itself but there is lack of coherence. There is no evolution of life-like characters. He fails to create lively and vivid historical atmosphere as Bhagwan Gidwani does in The Sword of Tipu Sultan. There are major historical events of Indian History such as Ahmed Shah Abdali’s claim to Mughal Empire in 1758, the First War of Independence against the British colonizers in 1857, Bahadur Shah Zafar’s exile, the British Rule, India’s Freedom and the partition of the country. Some contemporary events such as assassination of Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi on 30th October 1984 by her own Sikh Body Guard and the subsequent senseless massacre of Sikhs are vividly portrayed. Delhi is a guidebook, history, erotica, and a critique of religion particularly Sufism, Indian political system and propagandana.

Manohar Malgaonkar (b. 1913) wrote Distant Drum, Combat of Shadows, The Princes, A Bend in the Ganges, The Spy in Amber, The Devil’s Wind, Shalimar, a serious fiction Bandicoot Run (1982), and The
Garland Keeper (1987). His novels are historical including contemporary history. Cactus Country (1992) is a spy story written in the background of the Bangla-Desh Liberation Movement. The hero, Aslam, is a young Pakistani. It presents an acute awareness of the political question-Why and how a new nation is born by the partition of Pakistan? It is real and authentic in human terms. It highlights the tragedy of a sub-continent which is again partitioned in 25 years. An eminent scholar, B.P. Engade rightly comments that:

He (Malgonkar) is at his superlatation best in the corpus of his racy, amorphous form of a narrative, weaving an interminable fable with interlaced incidents of enthralling beauty. He incorporates into his fictional composition, the colour and glamour, fragrance and social fauna of India he has known so thoroughly”.

Chaman Nahal wrote four historical novels following Paul Scott’s Raj Quartet. His vision is ironic and looks at history, politics, society and presents in a satirical manner. Azadi (1975), is on the theme of partition. He wrote four novels which covers thirty years from the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa in 1915 to Freedom in 1947: The Crown and the Loincloth (1981), The Salt of Life (1990) and The Triumph of the Tricolour (1993). It forms an Indian Quartet against the background of political developments of the age and life history of Thakur Shanti Nath’s big family, a wealthy Punjabi landowner and his changing fortunes. Sunrise in Fiji (1988), is a “painful odyssey” of the protagonist, Harivansh Batra, 45, a wealthy architect, who finds himself at the end of his tether. He goes to Fiji ostensibly for work but in reality to do some mental stock taking. He
remembers nostalgically his early life in the Punjab, his lost love, and his roots in family and Indian traditions. **The Boy and the Mountain** (1997) is a novella of hundred pages which deals with a single day in Lalit’s life. He is an adolescent living in the foothills of the Himalayas. It is a fable full of symbols.

Arun Joshi (1939-93) uses flashback technique of interior monologue. His novels **Foreigner**, **The Strange Case of Billy Biswas** and **The Last Labyrinth** (1981), reveal impact of surrealism. He is preoccupied with the theme of existential alienation. The novels are full of symbols particularly the names of the characters. **The City and the River** is allegorical. The Epigraph **An Old Prophecy** virtually sums up the entire narrative in which finally the River rises and destroys the City on its bank. The allegory is both existential and political. As a general allegory, the narrative presents a cyclical view of history. It is a fable about the role of Evil in human life, as presented in Hindu philosophy. Evil is power-drunk, and it is recurrent in human life. It is a transitional novel. He is deeply concerned with the modern man’s condition and inescapable ordeals particularly alienation.

G.V. Desani (1909-2000) wrote **All About H. Hatter** (1948) (Revised 1972) which is amalgam of comedy and tragedy. It is full of pathos and bathos. There is veracity of themes such as East-West encounter, search of identity in the midst of national and cultural restlessness, exploration of reality and symbolic representation of the splinters of the Westernized Indian sensibility, sense and nonsense, humour and irony, lofty wisdom and sheer buffoonery, fantasy and realism. Prof. K. R. S. Iyengar says:
"To the Joycean freedom of linguistic experimentation and the endless appetite for experience there is added a Rebelarsion exuberance, and a quirkiness that is peculiarly Desani's own."

Technique of the novel is unique as it is structurally patterned on the Panchantra which employs the device of chain-story-telling throughout, beside autobiographical narrative and the surrealistic technique are used to describe the seven stages.

There is great impact of Feminism on the works of Indian-English women-novelists, who have written on various themes. It range from a focus on women's lives and their exploitation, their problems, sexual relationship, freedom of sex, political awakening, search for identity, struggling individuality in developing modern Indian scenario and fight for equality on par with Men.

Mrs. Purnai Kamala Taylor (Markandaya) deals with a wide variety of themes such as hunger in Nectar In A Sieve (1954), love and class conflict in A Silence of Desire (1960). She presents hunger, poverty and love for poor of Calcutta in A Handful of Rice (1966), the tension resulted due to dam-construction in The Coffers Dam, the miserable plight of immigrant Asians in The Man Nowhere (1972), the conflict between children and parents, the adolescent and grown up in Two Virgins (1973) and the East-West dichotomy in The Golden Honey Comb (1977). Her novel Pleasure City (1982) presents the cultural confrontation between tradition and
modernity beside the fidelity and the innate dignity of man in the midst of varied conflicts, trials and tribulation in a realistic manner.

Ruth Praver Jhabvala wrote *The Nature of Passion, The Householder*, and other novels which portray urban middle-class Indian life linked with domestic problems, confrontation between occidental and oriental attitudes besides the collision between the traditional and the modern. She left India in 1975, and settled in U.S.A. *Heat and Dust*, (1975) is set entirely in India. She uses her European Jewish heritage and American experience, *In Search of Love and Beauty* (1983), which is based on a group of German and Austrian refugees in New York. She explores the background of the characters from West and presents the roots of their fascination with India.

*Three Continents* (1987); is the story of Harriet, a young American, who desires to inherit a fortune. She goes to London, where she meets an Indian holy man, and later marries his son, Crishi. Harriet is completely subservient to Crishi though she is aware that he has married her for her money. She allows the murder of her twin, Michael to be passed off as suicide. She also forges Michael's signature so that Crishi can acquire his wealth. *Poet and Dancer* (1993) is set in New York, which presents the story of Angelica Manarr, an intelligent, and hardworking person. *Shards of Memory* (1995) is set in America, England and Europe. It centres on a Movement led by a mysterious "Master", who has great personal magnetism. It is a complicated story of avarice and love spanning four generations. Master is son of an American Jew mother and a Parsi father.

*In Custody* (1984) presents the world of Devan Sharma, a poorly paid lecturer in Hindi in a town, who loves his sister’s language Urdu, which has been neglected in India after Freedom. All the desperate boredom of Devan’s life is faithfully portrayed. *Baumgartner’s Bombay* (1988), has a German Jew as a protagonist. In keeping with T.S. Eliot’s epigraph, “In my beginning is my end...” It is a sombre, novel lit by flashes of humanity. *Journey to Ithaca* (1995) is a story of charismatic old woman as a Guru and Matteo, a sensitive young man and his bride Sophie. *Fasting, Feasting* (1999), is based on the theme of India’s encounter with the West.

Nayantara Sahgal wrote *Rich Like Us* (1985), *Plans for Departure* (1985), *Mistaken Identity*, (1988) on the theme of nationalism, politics and history. All her major characters of the novel are centripetally drawn towards the vortex of politics but she never professes any political creed. She also focuses attention on Indian women’s search for sexual freedom and self-realization. *Rich Like Us* (1985) is her best novel which gives a picture of India in 1975, the time, when her cousin, Mrs.Indira Gandhi, then the Prime Minister declared a state of National Emergency internally in India.
and assumed absolute power for two years. No writer has dealt with it in
detail ‘this darkest period’ of modern Indian History in his/her novel. The
only significant portrayal is in Salman Rushdie’s Midnight’s Children,
where the whole episode has an air of nightmare fantasy: Indira Gandhi, “the
widow” is like the wicked witch of fairytales.

Shashi Deshpande (b.1938) presents women’s sensibility and writes
under the burden of Feminism in her novels That Long Silence (1988), The
Binding Vine (1993), A Matter of Time (1996) and Small Remedies
(2000). She portrays the miserable and pathetic conditions of Indian women
living in urban and rural area in a rigid patriarchal society—with an intention
to free the female psyche from the conventional male control family and
male dominated society.

Gita HARIHARAN (b. 1954) wrote Thousands Faces of Night (1992)
which presents three women belonging to different generations with nothing
to relive the darkness of their lives. It is full of the legends and folk tales. In
The Ghosts of Vasu Master (1994), the protagonist is a retired school
teacher (“Master”). Vasu has no company but only his memories of his dead
wife, two sons and his father. When Dreams Travel (1999) is a kind of
feminist retelling of the Arabian Nights. It is the story of not only
Shahrazad (Scheherezade), but of her sister Dunyaazas and her husband. All
kinds of fantastic stories are presented but it is a dark, thought provoking
and not pure entertaining novel.

which deals with the life of upper class of contemporary India in metropolis.

Suniti Namjoshi (b. 1941), a feminist uses fantasy, surrealism, allegory and fables. She is a fabulist and her novels are not based on any particular social context. In *The Conversations of Cow* (1985), the protagonist, Suniti is a lecturer of Indian origin. Her Guru appears in the form of a cow, and the tale slips into the realm of fantasy with the Cow and Suniti moving around Canada. In her *The Mothers of Maya Diip* (1989), Jyanvi and the Blue Donkey are invited to the Indian kingdom of Maya Diip, *The Island of Illusion* here they find a rigid matriarchy. Permission to become a biological mother is a useful weapon in the hands of the ruling matriarch. All boys are drowned in the sea when they attain puberty, after being milked for sperm. Fortunately, Maya Diip escapes many of the evils of male dominated conventional society but is plagued by other innate qualities of human beings such as jealously and love for power.

*St. Suniti and the Dragon* (1994) is a fable about love and sainthood. It is full of Irony, fantasies and the imagery ranges from talking flowers to instructive angles, from Grendel’s mother to St. Sebastian. Songs, dialogues, dramatic monologues, postcards, his prayers and diary entries find place in
the novel. Her *Building Babel* (1997) is an ongoing novel with interactive hypertext links, on the website of the Spinifex Press. It is about the evolution of culture under the aegis of Crone Kronos (Time), and is full of characters from fairly tales and myth, such as Snow White, Kronos and Queen Alice. Readers have been invited to send their contributions “memes” for this ongoing work by e-mail to women @ spinifexpress.com.au or by snail mail to P.O. Box 212, North Melbourne, Victoria 3051, Australia. Such a collaborative venture is typical of her experimental techniques.


Gita Mehta’s *Raj* (1989) portrays an evocative picture of an Indian family’s life, dealing with life history of a young girl, whose marriage is arranged with a prince. There is a vivid description of princely splendour. *A River Sutra* (1993), presents a kaleidoscopic view of Indian life with an emphasis on the exotic aspects.

Nina Sibal's first novel, *Yatra* is a fine work of art with the use of Magic Realism. Krishna Chahal, the heroine is endowed with a magical skin that changes colour in response to India. She is born with a fair texture of skin which grows darker and darker. Her paternity is not known because her Greek mother, Sonia is not sure whether she is the daughter of Paramjit, her Punjabi Sikh husband, or Stavros, her Greek lover. She is conceived in August 1947. "*Yatra*" goes back to 1849 and the journey is undertaken by Swaranjit Kaur, an ancestress of Krishna, to escape from the British Colonial Rule in India.

Arundhati Roy (b.1961) is a regional novelist who presents authentically rural life of Kerala in *The God of Small Things* (1997). She deals with politics, social situations, people their rites, rituals customs, traditions, patriarchal domination, a caste-ridden mentality of people, malpractices of Marxism and the prosecution of untouchables and down trodden people by the police. She is an innovator of unique style. She portrays the veteran Marxist leader E.M.S. Namboodaripad by name. It is a protest novel, which mirrors the atrocities inflicted upon the helpless children, weak women and untouchables.

Shoba De (b.1948) is a realist and presents the life of upper class society in metropolis in a bold manner. Her novels are *Socialite Evenings* (1988), *Starry Nights* (1990), *Sisters* (1992), *Strange Obsession* (1992), *Sultry Days* (1994), and *Speed Post* (1999). She portrays the sexual mania of commercial world. She explores the subdued depth of women's psychology as well as the moral and spiritual breakdown of modern society.
in which helpless and forsaken Indian women’s strong desire for joy and they aspire to fly freely in the “Sky of Freedom”.

Salman Rushdie (b.1947), wrote *Grimus* (1975) and *Midnight’s Children* (1981) which reveals that he has perfected the technique of Magic Realism used by Gabriel Gracia Marquez and Ben Okri. He is successful in amalgamating the Third World technique of Magic Realism and the Western mainstream tradition of postmodernist sensibility and is characterised by the artistic use of language. He is a pioneer of Magic Realism, using various oral traditions, narrative patterns with unique style beside experimentation in the use of language and he is famous for his bold Chutnification of English Language. His imagination is hyper-active and as such he employees Surrealism and Magic Realism, which have affinities with the strong Oral Traditions and narrative patterns of Third World particularly Lawrence Sterne, Gunter Grass, Gabriel and Garcia Marquez.

In his first novel, *Girmus* (1975) Rushdie uses these various strategies and it is a story of Flapping Eagle, an American-Indian in search of his lost sister. He finally locates her on a Mediterranean island controlled by Grimus, a magician. There are several myths and motifs in his novels. The name *Girmus* is an anagram of *Simurg*, a great wise eagle in the great Persian poet, Firdosi’s *Shahnama*; while the Rose which is the secret of Grimus’s power and the protagonist’s guide Virgil (Jones) are taken from Dante. There is also use of Sufism, mysticism and satire. In *Midnight’s children* (1981) he employs a multi-facet narrative, such as an autobiographical *buildingsroman*, a picaresque fiction, a political, a topical satire, a comic extravaganza, and a surrealist fantasy, beside innovation in
from and style. It is the story of Saleem Sinai, born on the midnight, of 15th August 1947, the year and time of the birth of Free Indian Nation. So he feels that he is mysteriously handcuffed to history. The novel opens with an account of the life of Saleem’s grandfather. The hero actually appears on page 116 of the novel. It presents Saleem’s peregrinations over the next twenty-five years, which includes his experiences during the Bangla Desh War in 1971 and Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s clamping of Emergency in the country in 1975.

There is meaningful use of fantasy and symbolism. Saleem who truly represents the “Free Citizen” of newborn Indian nation. His father is an Englishman and mother an Indian woman. Saleem is born with blinking eyes and has to be taught to shut them, “for nobody can face the world with his eyes open all the time”. “And out of the 1001” reminds number of stories in (The Arabian Nights) children born on the midnight of 1947, exactly there are 420 children, which reminds the notorious number of the Section of the Indian Penal Code which with deals cheating.

Shame (1983) is on the political theme Pakistan, in which the political equations are quite clear. The protagonist is Omar Khayyam Shakil, an illegitimate son of the three mothers and a British Officer. The novel is a political allegory with clever use of symbolism, fantasy and Magic Realism.

Salman Rushdie’s Satanic Verses (1988), brought him World Wide notoriety, because the book is blasphemous. The publication of the book deeply hurt the feelings of millions of Muslims throughout the world as it is against the religion, Islam. Salman Rushdie was tried on the charge of
blasphemy in Islamic Religious Court in absence and a “Fatwa” (Decree) was issued against him by Supreme Religious Authority on Islamic Theology, Imam Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, condemning him to death because Salman Rushdie, a Muslim was proved heretic on the basis of his written book and was declared “Murtid” according to the principles of Islam and hence sentenced to death. In Christianity (Roman Catholic) also any Christian writing or saying against the belief or teaching of his own religion is declared “heretic” and is condemned to death by burning alive in a public square by “Inquisition”, a religious court. In Islam also, no believer (Muslim) can write or say against his own religion, Islam.

Haroun and the Sea of Stories (1990) is most delightful novel, which opens in a manner typical of children’s tale: “There was once in the country of Alifbay a sad city.” There lives Haroun, a small boy, whose father, Rashid Khalifa is a master storyteller. But his wife runs away with another man and he suddenly finds that his power of story telling is also gone. He regains the power in the end after several adventures and a great war against tyrannical oppressors. There are allegorical characters like Prince Bolo (speak). Princess Batchet (dialogue) and Khatam-shud (completely finished).

In The Moor’s Last Sigh (1995), there are ingredients such as a wide canvas; a story covering several generations; characters sporting different kinds of eccentricities; use of disguise, real-life personages; Magic Realism to allegory; and constant word-play. There are putative parallels at various places in the novel between the protagonist, the Moor Muslim and Boabdil, the last Moorish (Muslim) King of Granada, Spain.
Boabdil’s defeat in 1492 ended the eight-hundred-years-old Rule by Muslim Kings in Spain. It depicts Boabdil riding out of the Palace of Alhamra at more than one place. It is typically postmodern in its theme and technique as it transcends all the barriers of genre, narrative, time, history and location. The Ground Beneath Her Feet (1999), deals with the theme of Music and Love. Vina, a singer, is the woman and her lover, Ormus Cama, worships the ground beneath her feet. Finally, the lovers are separated for good, when Vina disappears, literally swallowed up by the “ground beneath her feet”, in an earthquake in Mexico. His latest novel Shalimar, the Clown (2005) is set in Kashmir based on the theme of terrorism.

Many contemporary novelists with the use of the technique of Magic Realism present a meaningful vision of life. Amitav Ghosh (b. 1956), wrote The Circle of Reason (1986). The protagonist is a Bengali orphan, Nachiketa, nicknamed as “Alu” (potato) because his head is shaped like potato. Alu is forced to run away from his village, as he is falsely accused of being a terrorist. His peregrinations take him to the Middle East, moving as he does from Al-Ghazira, a small Persian Gulf town to Cairo, Egypt, the Sahara and finally Algeria. An Antique Land (1992), The Calcutta Chromosome (1996) and The Glass Palace (2000) are different in theme, spirit and tone.

Upamanya Chatterjee (b. 1995) wrote English August: An Indian Story (1988). It has uncommon amalgam in expression through a mixture of wit, sharp expression and refreshingly foul language, a fundamentally
anarchic iconoclasm but satirical in tone. The worlds of bureaucrats and business executives often brush each other and both by their very nature invite satirical treatment. Young Agastya Sen is known as “English August” to his friends, August being the Anglicisation of Agastya, and English, a snide reference to his admiration for everything English. As a probationary officer in the Indian Administrative Service, Agastya is posted to a small town, where he finds life completely boring, his colleagues dull, and his work mechanical and as such he seeks relief in drugs, drinking and masturbation. Finally, he feels that he himself does not know what exactly he wants. It presents the protagonist’s existential angst and modern cynicism.

In his next novel The Mammaries of the Welfare State (2000) one meets August, eight and a half years later, and discovers that like the Bourbon kings, he has “learnt nothing and forgotten nothing.” He still finds work as dull, unrewarding and futile. He is an unheroic hero without charm; with no development after years of experience. It gives various pictures of bureaucracy with Blunderland of Babudom. The novelist employs several comic devices to pinpoint its absurdities, bureaucratic red tape, corruption, nepotism, sheer pig-headedness etc. There is sheer farce and exuberant wordplay especially the humour in absurd acronyms, as in “BOOBZ” (Budget Organization on Base Zero). and has a keen and sharp eye for the ridiculous. He writes English with felicity and ease.

Weight Loss (2005), is a long, grim and comical story of Bhola and his doomed attempt to travel light and his efforts to cut through accretions of flab—sexual, moral, cultural and spiritual. There are lustful adventures with
subaltern of both sexes. He is an unremarkable man, rootless, amoral, misanthropic, restless—caught in a fury of confusion and self-hated, oscillating endlessly between indulgence and denial, unable to reconcile, the imperatives of mind and loins, conscience and carnality. It is like an ancient fable about man—caught between an urgent animality and distant sublimity and never quite figuring out how to be human.

Rohinton Mistry (b.1952) Such a Long Journey (1991) presents the human predicament of modern individual. The protagonist is like a typical classical tragic hero, who passes from happiness to misery. He exposes social and a political evil of India is ruthless criticism on the prevailing corruption in India. He is a social and critical realist. It presents the story of life full of hardships of a middle-aged person from a Parsi family. He is a bank clerk in Bombay. All of a sudden his humdrum life is disturbed when his best friend is involved in a bank fraud, in which he too unwittingly becomes a partner. He is lucky enough to go scot free, but his friend dies in mysterious circumstances in prison. The novel is based on the famous “Nagarwala Case” during Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s rule.

A Fine Balance portrays a “fine balance” between hope and despair in the lives of major characters but life moves on, as usual though one of them commit suicide. The setting of the novel is the mid-70’s, when a State of Emergency in India was imposed by the Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who deprived people their Freedom and fundamental rights bestowed on the citizens by the Constitution of India. He gives pathetic and
moving portraits of excesses inflicted on innocent Indian people during nearly 2 years’ Emergency period. He portrays graphic pictures.

Boman Desai (b. 1950) in *The Memory of Elephants* (1988) presents a story of Homi Seervai, a young Parsi scientist in the USA, who invents a machine, which can activate human brains, that part in which memories are stored. There is frustration in his love affair and he tries to make use of the machine to re-live his memories of love, but something goes wrong with the machine. Later on, he begins to re-live in the past, not only of his family but also that of his entire race, from the time of the migration of the Parsis from their country, Persia to seek shelter in India. It is an encapsulation of “History of Parsi Community”, with their origin, and religion, life, culture and character.

*Asylum, USA* (2000), is a comic extravaganza. The protagonist, Noshir Daruvala, is a young Parsi student in Chicago who requires a green card otherwise he is to be deported back to Bombay, India. He gives Barbara a thousand dollars to marry him but in vain. Later, he discovers that she is a lesbian. Afterwards, he meets Blythe but again unsuccessful and so he lurches on from one woman to another but he is not successful. He uses various devices to make it more facetious than genuine comedy.

Shashi Tharoor wrote *The Great Indian Novel* (1988) which is postmodern. It parodies the epic structure of Vayasa’s *Mahabharata* to analyze India under Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s rule. He employs Indian narrative and there is use of fine symbols like the Classical epic, which makes it a great work of Art. He uses the technique of running a
continuous parallel between antiquity and modernity. He finds parallels between the chief characters and events in the classical epic and the famous political leaders and developments in contemporary Indian history. These are suitably modified, sometimes hinted at, sometimes they are given an ironic twist in a spirit of self-mockery. The venerable Bhishma, the son of Ganga in the epic becomes Gangadutta, a Mahatma Gandhi-like figure; but Mahatma Gandhi’s great Salt-March becomes the father comic Mango-march. Duryodhana, the wicked son of King Yudhritarashtra is transformed into a woman: Priya Duryodhani, stands for Indira Gandhi; the evil, she did by splitting the Indian National Congress Party and her gagging of people’s freedom and democracy during the notorious Emergency in India. There is continuous word-play of high order and use of comic verses. The witty titles of the books set the proper tone for the diverting narrative: The Rigged Veda; The Bungle Book, Midnight’s Parents etc.

Farukh Dhondy (b. 1944), wrote the novel Bombay Duck (1990). The most credible part of this rather footloose fantasy is the Book of Xerxes Xavaxa Hoax Xtraordinaire deals with the exploits of the resourceful Parsi, Xavaxa, whose crazy schemes such as a baby-smuggling racket in London.

The Revised Kamasutra (1993) is a boisterous-extravaganza. It is sexual odyssey of the hero, Vijay, from a small-town, middle class boy from South India. His sexual propensity begins at the age of seven and it fully flowers when he goes to the USA as a young man. Crasta’s word play is resourceful. Rukun Advani (b. 1955) wrote Beethoven Among the Cow (1994). He is self consciously post modernist, episodic and meta-sexual.

Anuradha Marwah-Roy (b.1962) wrote the novel *Idol Love* (1999) portraying a very ghastly and chilling picture of an Indian Utopia/Dystopia in the twenty-first century. The so-called “Hindu Fundamentalists Agenda” has been put into practise and carried to it extreme end. The agenda is put into reality and the Indian society of Ram-inland i.e. during those days India will call Ram-inland. The principles of Manu, the Hindu lawgiver and the author of Manusmiriti will be totally implemented in the country called Ram-inland. The Hindu women will be given complete freedom and equality on par with men. They will be called “Ardhanginis”. All careers in the society will be open to women, if they are willing to give up family life and become “Sadhus” (female hermits). The capital of this country now called Ram-inland will be Rajdhani (Delhi) has been sanitized and the lower classes and lower castes will be called Dasas (slaves) and other religious minorities will be called Dohhis (traitors). These Dohhis will have to carry special Identity Cards wherever they go. Lower castes and people from religious minorities will do the entire Menial work. It is full of fantasy and it gives a picture of day to day life of Ram-inland, the Hindu fundamentalist Utopia/Dystopia.

invisible lettuce pickers, Characters signal intimacy through e-mail in the world of new technology. It is a melancholic story of a man living in modern age and the protagonist is an idealist. He received phenomenal royalty. It proved a success and at the same time it earned accolades for him. It is a postmodern novel, which presents a saga of history, identity written in evocative language. It is the story of Pran Nath with complexity of his various identities—the one that he is born with, the one that is thrust upon him and various others, which he chooses for himself. His seven incarnations cut across sub-continental history over the last decade of British Rule of India. Kunzru succeeds in weaving the hero’s problematic life into his narrative, which retains its structural integrity through the various contexts that emerge and re-emerge from the beginning to the end.

Nirpal Singh Dhaliwal, aged 32 has published a novel entitled Tourism. The main protagonist, who himself is a tourist. It fictionalises his meeting and marriage to a well-known British journalist Liz Jones, much older, much richer, more style conscious, formerly the editor of Marie Claire magazine. The writer admits his racy always-risque account of the coupling of a lazy Indian lothario and well-bred English rose is deeply autobiographical.

“I dip my pen into the experience of life”. Says Dhaliwal. “This book asks question about identity”, Dhaliwal says, “and the fact that no one is really originally from London... everyone comes from somewhere else. Everyone is a tourist here,...”

Kaavya Viswanathan, 19 year old, who is in her second year as an English student at Harvard University (U.S.A.) has published the book
entitled "How Opal Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Gota Life." which earns her 2,81,000 pounds as an advance. She is the youngest writer to join the clan of Indian English novelist. The novel is based on her experiences of college “boot camp.” It chronicles how Opal’s immigrant parents draw up a battle plan called HOWGIH—How Opal will get into Harvard—which involves wearing Harvard night shirts and learning college songs.

I. Allan Sealy (b. 1951), wrote The Trotter-Nama: A Chronicle (1988), which is a rollicking family chronicle blending history, legend, digressions and genial humour. The title alludes to medieval chronicles of kings, like the great Persian poet, Firdosi’s Shahnama, which is History of Iran in verse, and the King Baber’s Baber-nama. It tells the story of seven generations of the Trotters, the descendants of a French mercenary, who settled near Lucknow in the eighteenth century. Finally, it ends with most of the Trotters migrating to England and Australia, after India’s Freedom from British Rule. Sealy is, on the whole, faithful to historical facts. It is a postmodernist narrative, with an open form and uses a device like the mock-heroic and parody. The style shifts register accordingly. The digressions comprise passages from archival material, dictionary entries and even recipes, including one “Trotter-curry” which makes it an enjoyable novel with tremendous verve and vitality.

His novel Hero (1990), is a departure from the Anglo-Indian theme, The Everest Hotel: A Calendar (1998) is an other interesting novel. Inspite of the fascination for the use of Magic Realism by the novelists in the modern times, novel of Social Realism still flourishes because a novel is born out of social reality. Vikram Seth (b.1952) belongs to the school of
social realism and he has so far written poetry, three novels and a biography. He catapulted into worldwide fame with the publication of *The Golden Gate* in April 1986. It is an arguable anachronistic commodity a novel in verse. He was inspired by Alexander Pushkin's novel in verse *Eugene Onegin* written in 1831. His second novel *A Suitable Boy* (1993) received much royalty, attention and popularity. His third novel *An Equal Music* (1999) is a bold experiment.

*Two Lives* is published in 2005. It is a biography, which unfolds an enigmatic love-story choreographed by history, with his uncle Shanti and aunty Henny as a strangest of romantics. Shanti was his uncle, a dentist by profession who fell in love and married, Henny, a German Jew. Vikram Seth says: “It is a simplification to call it biography or memories”.

It also presents his life as Shanti’s “little son” and Henny’s “my nephew”. He got an idea to write a book, when Vikram Seth by chance came across the correspondence between Henny and friends and the epistolary romance between his uncle and aunty before marriage. The letters found in that hidden trunk of Henny are history’s post scripts, gossips, poignant, affectionate and beseeching scribbled by friends and well-wishers in their own bruised existence and what unites them is solidarity of the victims, or the kindness of friendship. “Friendship, more than romantic passion is the core of their life.” Seth says. He admits the centrality of these letters in *Two Lives* and says that: “I don’t think I would put so much weight on it until I came upon the letters of Henny.”

Since 1940, the epistolary romance between Shanti and Henny goes on uninterrupted. It was a period of II World War and the history has been
playing out its most dehumanizing script, and that makes Two Lives a searing testament against the “banality of evil”. The Nazi project of Final Solution was termination without the benefit of an argument, absolute annihilation never repeated but recurring the memory of the living, like Henny. Shanti and Henny lived in Germany during the time when Adolf Hitler’s Nazi Party based on Nazism putting into action its plan to wipe out all Jews not only from Germany but Europe. Hitler wanted to annihilate Jews completely from the face of the world. It was darkest period in the history of Europe. It is not professional history of two individuals but in fact it is history of ordinary lives in extraordinary situation, those countless extras in history’s horror show.

In reality Two Lives presents the tragedy of the Jews—gets a different chronicler Vikram Seth, a non-European a non-Jew and as Indian poet brings the personal and historical to a perfect textual harmony, ...It was not meant to be cathartic, and in the end it was.

Regarding writing a book in future Vikram Seth says, “I’ll need some time to recover”. So the next book from him could be “something short may be a play or essays.”
Chapter-1
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