Preface

The research work is an attempt to analyze the representation of India by five authors in their seminal works of literature. The first of the five novels is *A Passage to India* by E. M. Forster published in 1924. Chronologically, it is followed by *Midnight’s Children*, the “Booker of Bookers” for the year 1993, published in 1981 by Salman Rushdie. The third one is *The Great Indian Novel*, modeled on the Great Indian Epic, *The Mahabharata*, published in 1989 by Shashi Tharoor. The fourth one belongs to the canon of Regional Literature and is composed by Kamleshwar. The original title is *Kitne Pakistan* published in 2000 and the English translation *Partitions* came in 2006. The research work makes use of the text in Hindi for reference and quoting. There are two reasons for the choice. First, the research work sees language not merely as a medium between the text and the reader, but also as something that carries a ‘voice’. The use of Hindi by Kamleshwar has a bearing on the kind of discourse being generated, as discussed later. Secondly, language acts in a cultural context and hence the impact that it carries is properly highlighted only in the original language in which the work has been composed. A translated work is, at times, not able to convey the spirit behind the words. The quotes from the text have been given in Roman script. The last and the latest one taken is Kiran Desai’s *The Inheritance of Loss*, published in 2006 and the winner of the “Man Booker Prize” in the same year.

The research work comprises an “Introduction”, three chapters and a “Conclusion”. The “Introduction” traces the issue of nations and nationalism and the status of India as a nation. Attempt has been made to analyze how India has been historically ‘there’ till date as well as to identify the variations and commonness that define it. Then, selecting three issues that have a broad base, the three chapters are conceived. Chapter I deals with the the Political History of India. The chapter tries to see how the five writers have represented the political history of India. Chapter II deals with the issue of Gender and tries to analyze the representation of the “self-other” relationship in the five novels. Chapter III is concerned with Religion and the identity it creates for an individual as a member of a majority or, more troublesome, a minority group. The “Conclusion” tries to compare the five novels for their representation of India and place the texts in a literary space. In the wake of this, an attempt has also been made to resolve the problematics touched upon in the “Introduction”: the question of India as a nation.
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The work however, is dedicated to my two lovely friends Matul and Saurabh, who passed away in separate accidents within two years of each other, and their bereaved families. They and their families had and will always have a special place in my life. This work is a salute to the intense love and passion they both had for life.

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Himanshu Parmar