Romen Basu is, perhaps, the most neglected of the contemporary Indian novelists in English. Although his contribution to Indian English novel is substantial, with eleven novels of considerable worth produced so far, his novels have not received the critical attention they deserve. Barring an article by K.T. Krishna Prasad and quite a few reviews in India and abroad, there has been no critical response to his novels, let alone a full-length study of them. Hence the need to assess Romen Basu as a novelist.

A reading of Romen Basu's novels reveals that he is a novelist of great potentiality. The variety of his themes with their significant resemblances to those of the novelists of the thirties and later of the fifties, the sixties and the seventies and especially with their roots in the realities of contemporary Indian society compels the critical attention of any serious reader of Indian English fiction.

The aim of the present thesis is to make a close study of the novels of Romen Basu with a view to showing that he is essentially a fictional artist committed to a 'cause' in each of his novels, that his novels represent the Indian ethos and that they stand out for his humanism, affirmation of life and a high sense of social purpose.
The work is divided into twelve chapters. The first chapter is introductory concerning itself with fixing Romen Basu in the growth and development of the post-Independence Indian fiction in English. The following ten chapters are devoted to an in-depth study of the themes and techniques employed in Romen Basu's ten novels.

The second chapter deals with Basu's first novel, _A House Full of People_ (1968) which is about the disintegration of joint family with Calcutta as its setting. The third chapter offers a discussion of Basu's second novel, _Your Life to Live_ (1972), which deals with the domestic disharmony between husband and wife, finally leading to the reconciliation of values and attitudes between them.

The fourth chapter shows how Basu's next novel, _A Gift of Love_ (1976), seeks to present the protagonist's haunted wanderings in search of true love in man-woman relationship. The fifth chapter deals with Basu's most satisfying novel, _The Tamarind Tree_ (1975), which shows how a village girl, Mohamaya, brings about peace, unity and communal harmony in the village, Balavpur, in the face of a wide-range of troubles.

The sixth chapter is concerned with the next novel, _Candles and Roses_ (1978), which deals with the East-West encounter in the realms of both human relationships and ideas. The seventh chapter is devoted to a study of Basu's sixth novel, _Portrait on the Roof_ (1980), which stands out as a triumph of the
East meeting the West and establishes the fact that true love overcomes barriers of religion, nation and language.

The eighth chapter deals with Basu's seventh novel, *Sands of Time* (1985), which is unique in the sense that it emphasizes internationalism as symbolized by the U.N.O. What is more, it presents the U.N.O. as the only hope for the survival and peaceful co-existence of mankind in the present-day strife-torn world. The ninth chapter is concerned with the next novel, *Outcast* (1986), which focuses on the problem of untouchability and casteism prevalent in India, taking a Bengali village, Basuli, as the objective correlative.

The tenth chapter is devoted to the ninth novel, *Hours Before Dawn* (1988), which, like *Your Life to Live*, deals with marital discord, separation and reconciliation between an Indian expatriate couple. The eleventh chapter shows how Basu's tenth novel, *Blackstone* (1989), presents the armed peasant-uprising in West Bengal against the oppressive landlords under the Naxalite leadership. The last chapter purports to assess Romen Basu's achievement as a novelist laying bare his merits and limitations.

Romen Basu's eleventh novel, *The Street Corner Boys*, has not been included in the present work for the simple reason that the thesis had been finalised by the time it was published.

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