Introduction
Chapter I

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Man’s life is not separate or isolated in himself. It is intertwined with the whole human society. Wherever one is living and whatever he is doing, his needs and wants are fulfilled from the pool of society’s prosperity. Thereby we can truly say that every individual is the property of the world. (v)

Vethathiri Maharishi put forth the above precious lines about human society in his book *History of the Universe and Living Beings*. Society in general refers to a group of people who have distinctive cultural relations and institutions sharing the same territory. These organized groups of people associate for some specific purpose or on account of some common interest. Usually, they provide protection, security, continuity and a national identity for its members. In the sphere of social building, one comes across different sections of people moving in different ways. Looking at the whole social structure, these diversities carry a special significance. Unity in diversity is a face of Indian society, unity among the members of any society or social structure is thus absolutely necessary. Otherwise, the structure will start disintegrating.

The term *society* came from the Latin word *societas* which in turn was derived from the noun *socius* used to describe a bond or interaction between parties that are friendly or at least civil. Society as a whole is able to function only with the labour of all, co-operation and help from everyone. This is essential to a noble way of living that
brings happiness to all. Socialization is a process whereby an individual learns to adjust to a society and behaves in a manner approved by the society.

Socialization and the family are two sides of a coin and without this human life is practically unimaginable. In socialization, people acquire oneness among themselves. It is the way in which the society transmits its culture from one generation to another. Man is born free and he is chained by traditions in the society in all walks of life. A human being is a social creature and a person socializes from the moment he/she is born and the first social group is the family. The development of a personality without the society is impossible because the one who lives or grows up in isolation from the society has many problems and very often he/she cannot lead a normal life. Hence, the process of socialization is inevitable and necessary for every member of any social group. The family gives introduction about socialization but it is a lifelong process in one’s life.

Sociology has a long past but only a short history. Since the dawn of civilization, society has been a subject for speculation and inquiry, along with every other phenomenon. There is warrant, indeed, for saying that *The Republic* of Plato is the greatest of all sociological treatises. But it is only within the last hundred years that the study of society has become a separate subject and a separate science. The origin of sociology and social anthropology in India can be traced to the days when the British officials realized the need to understand the native society and its culture in the interest of smooth administration. However, it was only during the twenties of the last century that steps were taken to introduce sociology and social anthropology as
academic disciplines in Indian universities. It is clear by now that sociology had its formal beginning in 1917 at Calcutta University owing to the active interest and efforts of B.N. Govind Sadashiv Ghurye (1893-1984), a towering figure in intellectual and academic circles for his unique contribution in the field of Indian sociology. He has often been acclaimed as the ‘father of Indian sociology’, 'the doyen of Indian sociologists’ or ‘the symbol of sociological creativenesses. Ghurye had been engaged in building up, almost single handed an entire first generation of Indian sociologists during post-independence period. Ghurye says, “Indian history could not be made by outsiders; it has to be enacted by the Indians themselves.” In this endeavour, they not only had to be firm of purpose but also clear-headed. The growth of India’s diversities and unities is traced through its complex history.

Social change refers to a process which results in some difference, alteration modification or replacement. These aspects of change can be felt in terms of the existing way of living, thinking, attitudes, relationships, structure and functions of society, and in the conditions of life. Social change is a continuous, ongoing process. Every society undergoes some form of change. It is not limited by time or space. It is a universal phenomenon, which can be seen in all types of societies.

The status of women globally has undergone transformation over the decades. Indian literature of the earlier era has depicted woman as one who is docile, self sacrificing, the very embodiment of self love and a veritable monument of patience, ever willing to suffer. Such virtues are highlighted as the virtues of true womanhood, the virtues of a ‘pathivratha’. Women writers focused their attention on woman’s
struggle against the repressive social structure that has relegated her to a lower, subordinate position. As a result, gender consciousness has become a major thrust area or concept for several women writers. Today, we may boldly assert that a woman writing is a woman fighting. She is fighting for her rights, for truth, for honesty, for identity, for freedom and for equality. Literature of the post-independence era of India clearly marks the creative release of the feminine sensibility.

Culture is an accumulated store of symbols, ideas and material products associated with a social system, whether it is an entire society or a family. It is important to note that culture does not refer to what people actually do, but to the ideas they share about what they do. Culture is the shared symbols of communication and conceptions of reality that is peculiar to a group or society. Indian writer, D.P. Mukerji points out that tradition comes from the root ‘tradere’, which means ‘to transmit’. The Sanskrit equivalent of tradition is either parampara, that is, succession or aitihya, which has the same root as itihasa, or history. Traditions are supposed to have a source. It may be scriptures, or statements of stages or mythical heroes with or without names. Whatever may be the source, the historicity of traditions is recognized by most people. They are quoted, recalled and esteemed. In fact, their age long succession ensures social cohesion and social solidarity. Mythology and legend are also an integral part of the social being; they are a colourful symbol of the society, and its cultural ambition and emotional sublimation can be judged by these interesting and meaningful creations. Mythology has a religious basis; it is rooted in the complex and mysterious passion of the human race to explain through symbols what it cannot
justify through ideas. Literature and art are the vernal bloom of creative human imagination, but they are a significant symbol of the society. Literature is not only the cumulative expression of nations or racial consciousness but also the concentrated essence of individual realization. The development of sociology in India may be viewed in terms of the historicity of social conditions that have shaped the sociological perspectives from time to time.

Resocialization is the process by which existing social roles are radically altered or replaced. For example, roles such as spouse, parent, widow, prison inmate and employee all involve a kind of resocialization. It is also a process that involves breaking with behaviours and ways of thinking that are unsuited for an existing or a changing circumstance, and replacing them with new, more appropriate ways of behaving and thinking. Much resocialization happens naturally and involves no formal training; people simply learn as they go in the path of their life’s journey. It is identity transformation in which people are called upon to learn new roles. Adults go through a process of resocialization, which is the learning of new norms and values that occur when they join a new group or when life circumstances change dramatically. Learning new norms and values enables people to adapt though newly learned things may contradict what was previously learned. Erving Goffman defined “Resocialization as a process of tearing down and rebuilding an individual’s role and socially constructed sense of self”. Man started living on the earth as primitive being. By the providence of sixth sense, he gradually developed an urge to understand relationship between nature and universe. In the journey of his intellectual progress from time to time and place to
place, he got some new ideas and insights. Intellectual quality of mankind is progressively improving to reform or to modify the concepts and lifestyle. It is noteworthy that socialization is not always positive but it may be negative as well and it depends not only on situation in the family but also on its social position, cultural and educational level, and the surroundings of a person. In this way, socialisation leads to resocialization to reform society in a new way. Man wakes up to use his mind sharply only when he is faced with problems. One has to accept that reformation in the society will not be completed within our lifetime. For example, widow’s life in India is yet to gain full reformation by the society. A great amount of energy lies hidden in the human system. Every person is the property and partner in the prosperity of the entire human society. Whatever an individual loses or suffers will be reflected into the entire society proportionately as a loss, deficit and disturbance. Resocialization is a sociological concept dealing with the process of mentally and emotionally "re-training" a person so that he or she can operate in an environment other than that he or she is accustomed to. Indian society has undergone radical shifts in everything. Also, one should not forget that socialization is the life long process. Every society has a structure of its own, but still change is a factor of life. Whenever new forces of transformation emerge, it will change. At the beginning of this era, due to an impact of the modern social forces, Indian society and culture have experienced a decisive transformation. This can be identified from one’s own experiences and assessments. The educational field also reformed to suit the present needs. When one compare the present time with the past, one can observe that there has been great expansion and
development in the educational field. However, it is still unfortunate that worthy education is not easily and generally available for the common people. Resocialization clearly shows us our identity in a society that undergoes a change according to the new environment and situation that is not conducive to maintain a previous identity. One can see it by our interacting with others and performing the roles required in these settings. Resocialization is renewed social assimilation and accommodation, with emphasis on the possibility of such renewed stress to bring out self-redefinition. Nations are proud of their own culture and every culture has its unique qualities. The Indian which is rich in culture with all its merits and demerits is exotic, breathtaking and intoxicating. It captures both the soul and the psyche. Everywhere in the world, man is becoming aware of his dignity as a human being because of his evolving mind. Many horizons are opening up and he gets a glimpse of his true nature and the purpose of his existence. Resocialization should be brought into action for the benefit of human society. At present there are numerous organisations dedicated for social services. With their co-operation, the local governments should make necessary arrangements for introducing social reforms so that it will result in greater happiness, health and peace for all. Indian society is among the oldest in the world and varied and complex in its heritage. But nearly three hundred years of colonial rule has changed its socio-cultural process. India is turned into an appendage of the British Empire and thus British colonial policy transformed its economy, society and polity.
During the freedom struggle, secularism was emerging as the most dominant principle. The leaders of the Indian National Congress, Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Nehru and others were deeply committed to the ideal of secularism, though each of them expressed in very different ways. Secularism becomes the mantra of the Indian nation, a nation exhausted by partition and sectarian riots and above all the assassination of Gandhiji, did not want any more divisive talk. The beginners represented the aspirations of the different sections of society and it is due to the struggles of these different people that secular principles got enshrined into the Indian constitution.

Secularism begins at the heart of every individual. There should be no feeling of "otherness". India being a traditional society that contains not one but many traditions and different religions that exist here, has so far managed to retain the secular character of its polity. In a true pluralistic society, no one group is officially considered more influential than another. Social structure theorists such as Functionalists and conflict theorists like Marxists, believe that human beings are the puppets of society. It means we are 'puppets' and that our behaviour is controlled by the structure of the society in which we live. But this argument is opposed by social action theorists such as Symbolic Integrationists who believe that society is created by the individuals themselves. The social constructionist perspective holds the view that the self is continually being "shaped and reshaped through interactions with others and involvement in social and cultural activities" (Wetherell & Maybin, 220). The social constructionist approach
implies that the self is shaped by social interaction within the historical, cultural and social contexts. Social constructionists apply an analysis of societal level which explains the self through social relations.

Psychology as the science of behaviour occupies itself principally and primarily with the individual. It is interested in his intelligence and his learning, his motivation and his memory, his nervous system and his reaction time, his hopes and his fears and the order and disorder of his mind. Social psychology, which serves as a bridge between psychology and sociology, maintains a primary interest in the individual but concerns itself with the way in which the individual behaves in his social groups, how he behaves collectively with other individuals and how his personality is a function both of his basic physiological and temperamental equipment and of the social and cultural influence to which he is exposed. Sociology, in contrast, has no primary interest in the individual, or in his personality, or in his behaviour, but concerns itself rather with the nature of the group to which individuals belong and the nature of the societies in which they live. If psychology and social psychology are primarily concerned with the behaviour of individuals, sociology is interested in the social forms and structures within which this behaviour takes place. This separation is difficult, and it is easy to over simplify that psychology studies the individual social psychology, the individual in his social groups and the groups themselves and the larger. Man is a social animal and is an isolated being. He is part of a complex network of social relationships. Psychologist, Sigmend Freud’s path breaking discovery of psychical life and of its complex interaction with cultural forms has
altered existing theories regarding the reaction of human being not only to culture, but also to each other. Social psychologists research various aspects which are prejudices, human aggression, decision making while in a group, and interpersonal relationships with others. Researches on difference between male and female, the acquisition of gender identity and how gender affects one’s behaviour throughout his life are of interest to the gender psychologists. Many fields have contributed to psychology. Philosophy and biology provide the backdrop for the scientific field of psychology. The origin of psychology is rooted in philosophy. Its origin can be traced to the times of great Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle who posed fundamental questions about mind and mental process. They putforth intriguing questions about mind and mental process and these relating to phenomena like pleasure and pain, knowledge, desire, motivation, memory and the subjectivity in perception. Rudolph Goclenius, a Greek Philosopher, invented the word ‘psychology’ in 1590. The English word ‘psychology’ originated from the root ‘psyche’ in Greek. The root word in Greek meant ‘soul’ or ‘spirit’. ‘Logos’ in Greek meant ‘knowledge’. Since the beginning, psychology has been continuously undergoing redefinitions. Thus, psychology was conceived to be a study of soul in the ancient time. At the end of the last century, psychology was recognized as the study of mind and consciousness through introspection, the description of experience. In 1818, James R. Angell (J.B. Watson’s Professor) noted the pressure to shift the focus of psychology from consciousness to behaviour, moderated the position by defining behaviour as “thing, feeling and acting”. In the second decade of the century when extreme behaviourist stance arose
and the concept of consciousness was challenged in 1913, John B. Watson defined psychology entirely in behavioural terms. At the end of this century, the focus of psychology has been broadened and it is considered a science and practice concerned with human behaviour as well as the mental process that underlie physical and mental health. During the 1920s and 1930s, definitions in psychology dropped reference to “mind” and “consciousness”. In practice, the subject of introspection largely disappeared by the 1930s. Howard C. Warren (1934), in his *Dictionary of Psychology* gave four definitions of psychology, ranging from “a branch of science that investigates mental phenomena or mental operations” to “the science concerned with the mutual interrelations of organism and environment through transmission of energy” to “the systematic investigation of the behaviour of organisms” to “the science of the self or personal individual”. Norman Munn (1946) defined psychology as “the science of experience and behaviour”. In the late 1960s, cognitive psychology ushered and humanistic psychology had a renewed emphasis on experience. By 1970s, psychology’s definition shifted yet again towards a more moderate and commonly defined “science of behaviour and experience”. In the last two decades of the century, it is recognised that psychology is not only a science but also a practice. Currently, psychology is most often defined as “the study of behaviour and underlying mental phenomena”. One of the philosophers sarcastically commented on this turn of events in which the terms soul, mind and consciousness were banished one by one in preference to the term behaviour that “Psychology lost its soul first, its mind next, its consciousness later and is left to loath only with behaviour”. A major objective of modern conflict theory
psychoanalysis is to change the balance of conflict in a patient by making aspects of
the less adaptive solutions. Self psychology emphasizes the development of a stable
and integrated sense of self through empathic contacts with other humans, primary
significant others conceived of as “self objects”. Self analysis helps to develop self’s
needs for mirroring, idealization and strengthening the self. Now, the extremism in
psychology has subsided and psychologists are more tolerant and open to accept
phenomena for their psychological enquiry including consciousness. Currently, there is
consensus among psychologists in defining psychology as the study of behaviour and
mental processes. Exploring the undiscovered regions of the mind, Freud looks at the
implications of sexuality and the unconscious imagination for human subjectivity.
According to Freud, the self does not exist independent from sexuality, libidinal
enjoyment, fantasy or the patriarchal cultural order of modern society. Another
definition made by other contemporary psychologists’ states psychology as “the
scientific study of behaviour and mind”. The subject matter of psychology revolves
around the study of behaviour, both human and animal. Psychology does not restrict
itself in studying overt or observable behaviour. Overt behaviour includes walking,
talking, laughing, hitting or jumping. It also includes study of covert behaviour as
well. Covert behaviour includes internal events like learning, motivation, attitudes,
beliefs, values and feeling psychology which is a scientific study. It involves a
systematic study of behaviour and mental processes in which the observed data is
organised based on theory.
The seed of Indian writing in English was sown during the period of the British rule in India and it broke the barrier of closed society. The ancient tale form was revived and preserved in the literature of various Indian languages. It was only by the middle of the nineteenth century, with the introduction of English education, that literature in India started to gradually flourish on its own. With the English language gaining an official status in India there came an awareness of western culture and thought among the educated Indians. This was further accelerated by the birth and growth of English journalism in India. It opens up new vistas to Indian writers both in English and the vernacular languages. Indian English literature is two hundred years old. It refers Indian writers in India who write or translate their work in English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages of India. It is also associated with the works of members of the Indian diasporas. It is frequently referred to as Indo-Anglian literature. Translations of world masterpieces as well as Indian vernacular classics also influenced the writers in English. The translation of the parts of the Vedic hymns by William Jones and the translation of *The Bhagavad Githa* by Charles Williams in 1785 can be taken in as the systematic texts of prose in English translation. Now the seed has blossomed into an evergreen tree, fragrant flowers and ripe fruits. The fruits are being tasted not only by the Indians, but they are also being ‘chewed and digested’ by the foreigners under commonwealth literature. Commonwealth Literature refers to the literature written in English in the Commonwealth countries like New Zealand, Australia and Canada and also in Asia, Africa and West Indies. In these countries, which were formerly
colonies, English language whether as an acquired or invented language, is used as a medium of expression in different cultural situations. Thus ‘English Language’ is considered as the distinguishing marker of ‘Commonwealth Literature’ that it excludes the literature written in the Regional Languages of these former colonies, despite its superiority and authenticity. Commonwealth Literature gained momentum in 1960s. It is worthy to quote from the critic, Krishna S. Sharma to enumerate this stance: “But in 1962, a bold step was taken, and the writing in English language from all the countries which were at one time a part of the British Commonwealth, was christened as ‘Commonwealth Literature’ (Sarma S. Krishna, 67). But a lot of controversies have cropped up and discussions have been held to agree if Commonwealth Literature could be termed as “Third World Literature” or “New Literature” in English and everything remains unsettled. In this connection, it is apt to quote the interesting observation made by Arthur Ravenscroft: The literature of those Commonwealth to untruces that can conveniently be regarded as belonging to the Third World are either very much concerned with the ‘turning world’, as in Africa and the Caribbean, or look back to great cultural phenomena unrelated to Europe’s Renaissance as in India (Ravenscroft 1989: 23).

A quote from Padmini Mongia, an Indian writer clarifies the distinction between Post-Colonial Literature and Commonwealth Literature:

Firstly, the term itself operates in at least two different register at once: it is a historical marker referring to the period after official decolonization as well as a term signifying changes in intellectual approaches. Secondly, in
the last ten years, the term has been deployed to replace what earlier went under the names of ‘Third World’ or ‘Commonwealth Literature’, to describe colonial discourse analysis, to detail the situations of migrant groups within First World States, and to specify oppositional reading practices. (Contemporary Post Colonial Theory: A Reader 2)

Thus, a distinction ought to be comprehended between ‘Commonwealth Literature’, ‘Third-World Literature’ and ‘Post-Colonial Literature’. It is generally accepted that Commonwealth Literature paved way for Post Colonial Literature. Mcheod remarks on this debate as:

One important antecedent for post colonialism was the growth of the study of Commonwealth Literature and adds further, ‘Commonwealth Literature’ was a term literary critics began to use from the 1950s to describe Literatures in English emerging from a selection of countries with a history of colonialism (Mc Heod, 10).

True Commonwealth Literature has a shared history and Ravenscroft comments:

In its loosest form it remained a descriptive term for a collection of national literatures united by a past or present membership of the British Commonwealth (The Empire Writer Back, 2003: 22).

With the contribution of regional and national writers, Indian literature has reached the apex of creation. It happened only after the constant caring, pruning and feeding. Few gardeners like Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao looked after
the tender plant day and night. In modern times, it is guarded by a number of writers who are getting awards and accolades all over the world. Renaissance in modern Indian literature begins with Raja Rammohan Roy. He tried to give new thoughts and removed old dogma and typical rituals through Bramhosamaj. Indian English literature was greatly influenced by freedom struggle, reformation in society, awakening among women and the depressed classes, etc. It has drawn attention of scholars at the international level. This literature has a wider sense of a national identity within the country. India was therefore one of the first countries outside Britain and America to adopt English for literary purposes.

History of English language and literature in India was started during the British period in the summer of 1608 when Emperor Jahangir, in the courts of Moguls, welcomed Captain William Hawkins, Commander of British Navel Expedition Hector. It was India’s first tryst with an Englishman and English. As East India Company spread its wings in India, Indian English fiction became a later development. The earliest writings of Indians in English consisted of prose-letters, memoranda, translation, religious, social, political and cultural tracts. The growth of Indian press also contributed to the rise of journalistic prose which was excellently written by Raja Rammohan Roy, the veritable morning star of Indian Renaissance. As the local languages did not contain essential professional and scientific terminology, the English people came to the conclusion that knowledge of English was essential for the Indian employees to work in the government machinery. With the beginning of the nineteenth century, the first organizations of educated characters in India came up in many aspects due to the
impact of these progressive ideas around which they were all united under the rising bourgeois elements. One such organization was a society called Brahmo Samaj found in Bengal in 1828 by the first eminent enlightener of India, Raja Rammohan Roy. Pre-Independence Indian English literature of this period marks a great leap forward. There is a clear cut advance in technique, form and style.

The short story is placed first in literature because it started as oral literature and it has existed in many forms, including myths, fairy tales, ballads and parables. During the first part of nineteenth century, the modern short story was introduced. India is a storehouse of tales and parables. When the printing press started, all oral stories entered into literature with certain modifications. A short story is a work of prose fiction that organizes the action, thought and interactions of its characters into the artful pattern of a plot that has a beginning and the ending. The story is presented from one of the many available points of view. It is written in the mode of fantasy, realism or naturalism. The short story, as the name implies, is a story that is short. It is a fictional work which depicts a character’s inner conflict or conflict with others, usually with one thematic focus. It produces a single focused, emotional and intellectual response in the reader. The modern short story dramatizes character, mood, style and language. The literary short story employs complex techniques to depict the often irresolvable dilemmas of the human predicament. Nowadays, some of the common subjects are not only gender, class, race, ethnic status and social issues but also poverty, drugs, violence and divorce. The latest developments include human isolation, alienation, personal trauma, anxiety, love and hate, male-female
relationships, family and the conflict of generations, friendship and brotherhood, illusion and reality, self delusion and self discovery and the individual in conflict with society’s institutions, morality, spiritual struggles and the relationship between life and art. The art of short story employs the techniques of view, style, plot and structure. The author includes a wide range of devices that stimulate emotional imagination and intellectual responses of the reader. In all Indian regional languages, the short story has gained as a literary genre.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) seems to have shown the first sign of maturity in the Indian short story. His stories were written in Bengali and late translated into English. The Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, the Panchatantra and Hitopadesha, and Jatak Kathas became a store house of tales that provided material to the writers. Rama Rao refers to India’s literary history and its influence on the short story in modern India. In the modern short story, a common man played a sole role because common men and their lives and problems were the main focus in a short story. It portrays everyday life and its affairs and so they became very popular. Few examples are: 28 Gulnaz Fatma and Other Stories (1932), K.S.Venkataramani’s Jatadharan (1932) and K. Nagarajan’s Cold Rice (1945). These short stories, deal with social reforms in the society. During the modern period, the Indian creative mind has become critical about Indian traditions. Due to this reason, some short story writers started asserting the Indian ethos in their works. It highlighted the ancient Indian values of social service, non-attachment, philosophy of life, heritage, spiritual and so on. The most famous writers of this period are Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan, depicted the
cultural clash which was prevalent, and it was closely examined in their creative works. Anand’s collections are The Lost Child and Other Stories (1934), The Barber’s Trade Union and Other Stories (1944), Reflections on the Golden Bed and Other stories (1947), The Power of Darkness and Other stories (1959), Lajwanti and Other Stories (1966) and Between Tears and Laughter (1973). Anand employs a variety of narrative modes in persons, social surroundings, and colours of life under three different forms like fables, parables, and folktales. His style is remarkable with variety.

He attacked caste system in India, inhuman customs of the feudal society and hypocrisy. He sympathizes the lower classes in the society. He was against child marriage, untouchability, patriarchy and cruelty prevailing in the Indian society through his writings. R.K. Narayan’s collections include Dodu and Other Stories (1943), Malgudi Days (1943), An Astrologer’s Day and Other Stories (1947), Lawley Road and Other Stories (1956) and A Horse and Two Goats (1970) Raja Rao depicts the Indian philosophy with its focus on the social and political aspects of life. He makes profound use of folktales, myths and legends. Moreover, Indianness is deeply rooted in his work. Among his best works are Kanthapura (1938), The Cow of the Barricades and Other Stories (1947), The Serpent and the Rope (1960), The Cat and Shakespeare: A Tale of India (1965), Comrade Kirillov (1976), The Policeman and the Rose: Stories (1978), The Chessmaster and His Moves (1988), and On the Ganga Ghat (1989).

Manjeri Isweren (often spelled as Isvaran in English) is an enjoyable short story writer with nine collections to his credit including Rickshawallah (1946). From the later twentieth century, one among the Indian short story writers is Khushwant Singh,
whose four short story collections are *The Mark of Vishnu and Other Stories* (1950), *The Voice of God and Other Stories* (1957), *A Bride for the Sahib and Other Stories* (1967) and *Black Jasmine* (1971). He too attacks hypocrisy. R.P. Jhabvala, a daughter of Polish parents, was born in Germany and educated in England. Since she was married to an Indian, she lived in India for more than two decades; apart from eight novels, she published the short story collections named *Like Birds, Like Fishes, An Experience of India* (1966), *A Stronger Climate* (1968), and so on. As readership expanded across the world, Indian stories underwent translation into foreign languages. The author is quite right in his assessment that the short story has covered a wider range of subjects with a larger gallery of characters and that the record of Indian life is more authentic in this genre than in the novel. Githa Hariharan’s collection of highly acclaimed short stories are *The Art of Dying*, was published in 1993, and a book of stories for children, *The Winning Team*, in 2004. She has also edited a volume of stories in English translation from four major South Indian languages named, *A Southern Harvest* (1993) and co-edited a collection of stories for children called, *Sorry, Best Friend!* (1997).

The novel is a “story”, a long story, but then it is not a sequence of stories; it dramatizes life but it is not a drama; it is written in prose form but it is not a prose. A novel can be defined in broad terms as an imaginary story. Even though it is an imaginary story, it is lifelike. The novel is an extended narrative and distinct from the short story. The short story is more concentrated and does not have much scope to develop characters and situations, but a novel has this scope because of its length. The novel is a mixture of fact and fancy, poetry and whimsy and history and legend.
A “novelette” or a “novella” is a narrative between the short story and the novel in length. It is distinguished from the short story and the fictional sketch, which are necessarily brief although the novel has a place in the literatures of all nations. Both short story and novel describe fictitious events. A short story is easy to read or finish whereas a novel takes long to do so because the short story is like a half an hour television show, while a novel is more like a full length movie. Novels provide us insight into the different aspects of human existence, human psyche, social and family relationships and the philosophy of life because they emerge out of the combination of personalities, social groups and classes, settings and political and economic forces that make up a culture. Furthermore, reading novels can provide remarkable insights into culture and even into a people’s mindset. It helps us indirectly by extending our consciousness and making us aware of the immense possibilities of life. In a short story, the plot is often simple and unique while a novel can be includes new developments. The novel has its own aspects like the theme will be the central idea of a novel. Plot will be the framework of the story. Characters will be the people in a novel or a story who are given some moral or dispositional qualities by the writer. A character grows slowly with the story and as one reads on one starts to understand himself or herself as the character. A story cannot be written in vacuum. It originates and moves within a cultural context. The characters, events, motivations and the entire action of the plot are controlled by the socio cultural matrix of place and time. Narration or dramatization is to narrate the story in the traditional manner of story and to dramatize means to let the story unfold with actions and dialogues. The novels are of different types. They are
picaresque novel, gothic novel, epistolary novel, psychological novel, historical novel, regional novel and so on. The themes of Indian fiction in English are multidimensional. Freedom movement, partition, hunger, famine, exploitation, unemployment, disharmony, economic inequalities, oppressions, depressions, suppressions, marital issues, gender issues, identity crisis, life and problems in software field, like monsters, grappled writer’s psyche and conscience.

The origin of Indian English novel dates back to June 6, 1835 with the publication of Kylash Chunder Dutt’s *A Journal of 48 hour* of the year 1945 in the Calcutta Literature Gazette. Indian English novelists have given expressions to the hopes, aspirations, dreams and culture of a nation from the very beginning. Indian English novel was in embryo in the 19th century but the tendencies and fictional genres like realistic novel, social novel, autobiographical novel, historical novel, romance and short story began in the nineteenth century. The national awakening (1900-1918) and the rise of political consciousness gave a great impetus to the growth and development of Indian English novel in its seminal stage S.Jogendra Singh’s *Nasrin* (1915), Balkrishna’s *The Love of Kusuma* (1910), Sorabji Cornelia’s *Love and Life Behind the Purdah* and *Sun Babies* (1910) and *Between the Twilight* (1908) are some notable novels on the theme of national and social awakening. Very few novels of pre-independence period have achieved even a tolerable measure of artistic beauty. Only a student of literary history would like to turn their pages in want of readability. Technical skill, vivid character portrayal and various artistic methods of story-telling are conspicuous by
their absence in the novels of this period. They are weak both in plot construction and characterization. The novelist leans towards didacticism and allegory.

The importance of these novels is only historical as milestones on the path of achievements to come. ‘Indian Writing in English’ has attained an independent status in the realm of Indian literature. Indian novel in English has achieved a phenomenal growth. The Indian English novel of this period deals directly with the national experience as the central theme. The various momentous events of this turbulent period Mahatma Gandhi’s passive resistance movement against the Black Rowalett Act, the inhuman Massacre of Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, the Khilafat Movement, the boycott of Simon Commission, the prohibition and the boycott of foreign goods, the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, the famous Dandi March, the Government of India Act of 1935, the emancipation of women, the Quit India Movement of 1942 and many other facets of the Gandhian movement are vividly described in the novels written during this period.

The Indian English novel of this period has a distinct corpus of works which are conscious of revealing the spirit of the age in an authentic manner. Indian society in transition from the old to the new, the traumatic experiences of the disintegration of the old values and the instability of the new ones, growing interest in modernism and progressivism, national awakening and fascination for Gandhi and Gandhian ideology, the rise of realism and humanism, the development of fictional technique and the evolution of various fictional genres are some major characteristics of novel during this period. Contribution of pre-independence Indian English writers like Mulk Raj Anand probes
the depth of humble life and reveals the dignity in the manhood of an untouchable
or a coolie; others like R.K.Narayan depicts the middle class man of south India;
Raja Rao would soar into Utopias of the soul and proclaim “the world’s greatest age
begins anew”.

In point of technique, they brought the Indo-Anglian novel closer to the latest
novels of the west. A village granny narrates the dramatic times of the Independence
struggle in Raja Rao’s Kanthapura. The autobiographical form of narration, so useful
in analyzing the character, is well utilized by Raja Rao. The technique here is Conradian;
the Grandmother in this novel takes the place of Marlow. Mulk Raj Anand used an
advanced technique of storytelling in all his novels, at the same time fighting the
cause of the poor and the have-nots. The novelists have shown considerable knowledge
of the form of novel. They have tried all the forms from the traditional novels to the
highly advanced novels like Kanthapura or Untouchable. Another change that is
discernable in the Indo-Anglian novels of this period is that they are comparatively
free from didacticism. The stories of R.K.Narayan are a fine example of a writer’s
objectivity. Mulk Raj Anand, unluckily, is not free from this propagandist motive.
When a conscious purpose, however good, becomes the predominant motive with a
literary artist, his creation ceases to be true literature. It becomes only an instrument.
Fundamentally, we must realize that literature is the flowering of the creative urge in
the artist’s expression through words, the spontaneous expression of a mood, emotion
or impression of the joy of living or the anguish of suffering; a creation, like the
flower which a tree puts forth, or the song which a lark sings as it soars overhead.

C.P. Verghese defines Indianness thus:

> What I mean by Indianness in Indian writing in English, is the sum total of the cultural patterns of India, the deep seated ideas and ideals, political, economical, secular and spiritual that constitute the mind of India that are reflected in Indian English writings. (83)

During the past few decades, Indian literature in English has made such vast strides that it has attracted the attention of readers and critics all over India as well as abroad. Today, English is not the heritage of only England but it is gaining ground all over the world. It has given space to a number of Indian words in the new English dictionary. England gave prestigious Booker Prize to Arundhati Roy. She portrays a typical Indian society in her debuted novel, *God of Small Things*. This book contains more than hundred words of Indian origin, idiosyncratic use of italics and ungrammatical constructions; Vikaram Seth, Mahasweta Devi and Manju Kapur have also received awards of international fame: English has become ours, it is not less ours for being primarily the English man’s or the American’s and Indo-Anglian literature too is our literature, the literature which, with all limitations, still taught us to be a new nation. (93)

> Indian writing in English has carved a niche for itself in world literature. We have moved from English literature to literature in English. The path travelled by Indian writers in English has been undulating and not on a bed of roses. It was
ridiculed, criticized and neglected on various occasions. Indian writers themselves were pessimistic regarding their success abroad. A renowned novelist Anita Desai told an interviewer: “There is so little of it. There isn’t enough in the name of variety, value, interest and significance” (Atma Ram, Interview with Indo-English Writers).

However, Indian writing has crossed several milestones in its journey since the publication of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee’s novel *Rajmohan’s Wife* in 1864. Indian writing in English has matured in its variety arousing considerable interest both in India and abroad. Several writers of late have revealed their talents and produced significant work, making a mark in the literary world.

Indian English literature is a contest over the nature, identity and ultimately destiny of modern India. Of late, the realistic, modernistic and pessimistic mode of the first three decades of post-independence writing is giving way to non-representational, experimental, self-conscious and optimistic literature. But the real challenge the writers of today face is the homogenization and standardization of culture due to globalization. Literatures in English are now recognized as part of the national literatures, and English is also recognized in the overall language policy of the nation. The language has deeply penetrated in the society, which has, in its turn, resulted in a variety of English in India. Indian English is used mainly by Indians whose native language is not English. It is a minority language, but yet a language of national affairs. The spread of English across different cultures and languages has meant the diversification of English, which in turn raises questions about the standardization of English. The emergence of these new varieties have raised questions concerning the power of English language,
questions of identity and pragmatics of the language in new, foreign surroundings.

Indian writing in English has asserted that they have found English a suitable medium for their expressions. They moulded the alien language obtrusively or unobtrusively to suit their purposes. Speaking at the Commonwealth Literature Conference held at Leeds in 1964, R.K. Narayan said:

> English has proved that if a language has flexibility, any experience can be communicated through it, even if it has to be paraphrased sometimes, rather than conveyed, and even if the factual detail is partially understood. We are not attempting to write Anglo-Saxon English. The English language, through sheer resilience and mobility, is now undergoing a process of Indianisation. (93)

Raja Rao in his *Preface to Kanthapura* says:

> We are instinctively bilingual, many of us writing in our own language and in English. We cannot write like the English, we should not. We can write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as a part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be a dialect which will someday prove to be as distinctive and colourful as the Irish or the American. Time alone will justify it. (3)

The long use of English in India for various purposes by educated speakers and writers has developed a distinct variety of English which proved to be intelligible nationally as well as internationally with a national identity of its own. It has been a living speech of the Indian intelligentsia for more than a hundred years. When one
stress as the Indianess of any Indian writing, one means the cultural studies. Cultural studies are committed examining the entire range of a society’s beliefs, institutions and communicative practices, including arts. India being a vast country has different beliefs and habits throughout the land. The rich Indian heritage with its culture, customs and habits is seen in plenty in Indian writing; it is through these works that Indian heritage is flashed all over the world and the world as such is quite attracted by the Eastern philosophy and culture. The translator of an Indian novel in English faces some basic hurdles. A novel reflects the society it depicts; it is also the emotional picture of that society. But how far can a translation be effective? It may, therefore, be argued that the identity of a novel is changed when it is translated into the words of another language in the same way as the identity of a poem suffers much more than that of a novel. Literature gives tongue to the hopes, aspirations, dreams and culture of a nation. The writer must show inner conflicts and contradictions; he/she must note all symptoms of emotional disorder and he/she must throw light on the struggle between good and bad going on in the depth of the human heart.

Indian literature is warmly wrapped up with the Indian religious system. The earliest sacred writings are the Vedas. It is certainly not an overstatement to say that one of the primary influencing factors on Indian literature since ages is religion. India, in the 19th century, was more or less torn by various fluctuating political and linguistic border lines. Many languages were at various stages of development, and while some literatures like the Bengali literature were sufficiently advanced. There were other literatures which had not seen the dawn of the awakening. This uneven curve of literary
progress had to be smoothened but the task of bringing the excellences of one literature to another was not very easy. English was the only language of interprovincial importance in the 19th century and the translations of say Rabindranath Tagore and others could expect to reach and did reach the farthest corners of India, through English renderings or translations. During the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century, some Bengali works of merit were translated into English, the foremost being the well-known translations of the books of Rabindranath Tagore and Bankim Chandra. These vernacular classics translated into English have come to form a common base on an all-India level. This must necessarily lead to a considerable cross fertilizations and provoke the mutual enrichment of the Indian literatures.

During the 20th century, several Indian writers have distinguished themselves not only in traditional Indian languages but also in English. India’s only Nobel laureate in literature was the Bengali writer Rabindranath Tagore, who wrote originally in English, and did some of his own English translations from Bengali. More recent major writers in English who are either Indian or of Indian origin and those who have derived much inspiration from Indian themes are Vikram Seth, Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, Rohinton Mistry, Vikram Chandra, Mukul Kesavan, Raj Kamal Jha, Vikas Swarup, Shashi Tharoor, Nayantara Sehgal, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Ashok Banker, Shashi Deshpande, Jhumpa Lahiri, Githa Mehta, Githa Hariharan, Manil Suri, Ruskin Bond, Preeti Shenoy and Bharati Mukherjee. Mulk Raj Anand, R.K.Narayan and Raja Rao, along with few others of a lesser stature, blazed the trail long before, and they themselves have kept up with the times and eminently fulfilled their early promises.
Before independence, it could be said, with some justification that the best fiction in India was written in Indian languages. The best creative talents did not take place in English, and Indian life did not yield completely to the English language proficiency of the Indian writers. The best creative literature on Indian themes written in English before independence was the work of Englishmen like Kipling and Forster. The approval and recognition of an English author was in itself considered a blessing is indicated by the fact that the 1935 edition of Anand’s *Untouchable* carried a preface by E.M. Forster and the 1937 edition of Narayan’s *The Bachelor of Arts* appeared with an introduction by Graham Greene. In a sense this attitude has continued to persist till recently, for it is often pointed out that a special distinction of Malgonkar’s *A Bend in the Ganges (1964)* is that it was one of the best novels of the year according to Forster.

At the time of independence, the situation has partly changed as seen from the increasing number of talented writers turning to English. But the foundations for the post-independence development were perhaps laid in the schools and colleges two decades before independence. The spread of education, the attractions of world market, the growing sense of national self-confidence and maturity, the diversion of talents from regional languages into English for a variety of reasons resulted in brain drain inside India from regional languages to English. The acceptance and reputation of the early masters outside India, the prestige and recognition according to creative writing in English within India: all these probably led the way. But primarily the fact is that a number of gifted writers succeeded in producing a sizable volume of fiction, far above the average in quality that justifies the view that English fiction, by Indian writers
today, can hold its own in comparison with the work of their counterparts from other areas of the Commonwealth. In recent years, it has attracted a widespread interest, both in India and abroad. It is not only a part of Commonwealth Literature but also occupies a great significance in the world literature, and won for itself international acclaim. Fiction, being the most powerful form of literary expression today, has acquired a prestigious position in Indian English literature.

In England and America many critics appreciate Indian novel in English. Novel came in an art form to India with the British. It was a new genre in Indian literature. The English renderings of novels written in various Indian languages contributed much to the evolution of Indian English novel in the nineteenth century and in the first two decades of the twentieth century. R.C. Dutta, Bankim Chandra and Tagore translated their novels into English. The output of Indian English novel was not worthy of note until the year 1920. Meenakshi Mukherjee rightly comments: “---the flowering of Indo-Anglian fiction coincided with the novel’s coming of age in the regional languages of India.” (124)

Early Indian English novels were derivative and imitative of English models. Early fiction writers copied their language from English Romantics and Victorians. They obviously imitated Defoe, Fielding and Scott. But they evinced little creative effort. Most of the early novels were mediocre. From the technical viewpoint, they were shabbily written. What distinguishes Indian English novel from the very beginning is, its social concern, realism and its unfailing interest in man. Ralph Fox says in his book *The Novel and the People:*

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The Novel and the People:
The novel is not merely fictional prose, it is the prose of man’s life, the first art to attempt to take the whole man and give him expression ....the great feature which distinguishes the novel from the other arts is that it has the power to make the secret life visible. (46)

Many women writers made debut in the field of Indian English Literature and earned wide name and fame. Many of them have won prestigious awards, honours and recognition. The Indian English women novelists have played a crucial and momentous role in enhancing the quality and quantity. They have further added the woman’s perspective and feministic dimensions to the novels. Indian societies gave priorities to the works of male experiences. Those days, women writers were not allowed to express their experiences apart from the domestic arena. Their works were always undervalued because of some patriarchal assumptions. On the other hand, male authors were encouraged to deal with heavy themes. More priority and acceptance were given to their works in the society. In the nineteenth century, many women participated to contribute their part in freedom struggle against British rule in India and this lead women’s literature into further stages. During this period, the world of feminist ideologies began to influence the Indian writing in English. Among the women writers, Sarojini Naidu, the great poetess, charmed the readers with her writings. Feminist themes have also been used by authors like Nayantara Sahgal and Rama Mehta. Regional theme has been aptly used by Kamala Das, Anita Nair and Susan Viswanathan. Novelists like Kamala Markandaya and Anita Desai captured the spirit of Indian cultures and its traditional values. In the era of 1990s, women authors made their debut, and India
became a popular literary nation. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Suniti Namjoshi and Anuradha Marwah Roy used realism as the main theme of their novels. The novels of authors like Namita Gokhale or Shobha De were outspoken. Most of these female novelists are known for their bold views that are reflected in their novels. Basically, these are the novels of protest and an outburst of reservations and contaminations. Unlike the past, where the works of women novelists were given less priority and were actually undervalued, classification of feministic or male writings hardly make any sense today. Women writers were considered as a powerful medium during the twentieth century, and the last two decades have witnessed phenomenal success in feminist writings of Indian English literature. Today is the generation of those women writers who have money and western education. Their novels consist of the latest burning issues related to women as well as those issues that exist in the society since long. The publishers feel, the literature actually survives because of these types of bold topics and commercials used by the women novelists. They describe the whole world of women with stunning frankness. Their write – ups give a glimpse of the unexplored female psych, which has no accessibility. The majority of these novels depict the psychological suffering of the frustrated housewives. Since long, feminism has been used by the women novelists. Their novels reflect that the present age woman has realized that she is not helpless and is not dependent. They feel that a woman is equal to man. Today a woman has also become a direct moneyearner and she is not simply confined to household duties. The women of modern era think on different lines and that is what is depicted in the novels of the Indian women authors. Indian women
writers explore the feminine subjectivity and apply themes that range from childhood
to complete womanhood.

A German critic, Gotthold Ephrain Lessing does not like the idea of being pigeonholed as a feminist author. When asked why, she explained:

What the feminists want of me is something they haven’t examined because it comes from religion. They want me to bear witness. What they would really like me to say is, ‘Ha, sisters, I stand with you side by side in your struggle toward the golden dawn where all those beastly men are no more’ Do they really want people to make oversimplified statements about men and women? In fact, they do, I’ve come with great regret to this conclusion. (Doris Lessing, The New York Times, 25 July 1982)

These women writers say that feminism means putting an end to the silent sufferings of women. With their strong and sure strides, women writers in India are moving forward for the peace of the present world. They are bursting out after a long time of silence. Indian women writers like Kamala Markandaya, Bharathi Mukherjee, Anita Desai, Nayantara Sahgal and many more have played a pioneering role in passing the readers a wild range of indigenous Indian issues, highlighted by a strong feministic outlook. It is surprising to note that in a slow and painful way these writers have climbed the ladder of success. The modern India succeeded in drawing the attention of the public towards the problems of gender inequality, social evils and exploitation of women in a patriarchal society. Through the women writer’s eye, we can see a
different world and analyze the potential of human achievement. They portray how women do not enjoy an equal status with men; how even an educated woman could pursue a career only if she does not neglect her pre ordained domestic duty. Though a woman is a scientist, doctor, lawyer or an artist, the discharge of her feminine duties is the first priority. Indian writing in English has been accredited as an integral and a fundamental constituent of commonwealth literature. Fiction, being a unique form of literary expression, has undeniably occupied a significant place in Indian writing in English. Indian writers in English find fiction as a genuine medium for the expression of their artistic and innovative skills and they experiment with the new stylistic use of language techniques. The novelists depict not only the social, political and cultural problems faced by Indians but also the psychological problems such as alienation, rootlessness and searching for identity. With the recent feminist resurgence, women novelists are making bold attempts to explore the conditions of social and psychological phenomenon. Women essentially write from their experience as women. The theme of women’s existence, survival and identity are essentially concerned with the gender discrimination and other problems related to women who are exposed to both physical and psychological abuse and ill treatment in the male dominated Indian society. While analysing the characters and the inner mind of the Indian women from the viewpoint of feminine sensibility and insight, the women novelists depict how women struggle not only against aggressive male domination but also against the social culture and religious oppression prevalent in the contemporary society. They also illustrate how legends, myths and orthodox attitudes and traditional beliefs strengthen
the patriarchal practices which have made women as inferior creatures and mere objects of pleasure. With their keen understanding and observation of contemporary Indian society, women novelists deal with women’s aspirations, hopes, desires, anxieties and emotional and social insecurity with artistic discernment. Besides exploring the moral and the psychological dilemmas and externalizing the inner conflicts and the mental agoniies of the victimized women in society, they portray women characters who endeavour to face harsh reality and struggle for their identity and meaningful existence. Through their writings, the women novelists try not only to redefine the position of women in society but also to bring out their identity and assert their independence. Women figure prominently in novelists such as Nayantara sahgal, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Arundhati Roy, Himani Dalmia, Githa Hariharan, Shobha De, Shashi Desphande, Chitra Mudgal, Rita Chowdhury, Malati Bedekar and many others. They portray the women characters strive hard to overcome psychological impediments such as inferiority complex, inhibition, reluctance, diffidence, self-doubt and timidity and social barriers such as traditional belief and biased religious opinions, in order to achieve freedom and individuality and also to affirm independence in concrete ways. The female authors, through their works, contribute to humanist values, particularly represented in female identity. The contemporary literary stage of Indian English writer is agog with women writers who have made significant inroads in world literature by winning top international literary awards. Increasingly, more and more women are giving voice to their concerns and experiences and are creating a body of ‘literature of their own’. Indian writers have made a substantial contribution to the
growth and the enrichment of Indian novel in English. Women have been the nodal
point of several literary creations in post colonial India. Recent surveys proclaim that
more women read fiction than men, the reason being perhaps that the women writers
fictionalize their experiences, whereas the women readers derive an imaginative,
empathetic awareness of their emotional situations through these works. They read
especially novels that deal with the social status of women and highlight their existential
problems. They help in defining and redefining their women readers. The fiction acts
as a pointer providing a sort of beacon to determine a suitable alternation to present a
scenario of society, when the Indian society is undergoing multi dimensional culture
crisis, thus arousing awareness hitherto absent. In this sense, the post colonial Indian
women are left with bicultural sensibilities finding it difficult to dissect, decipher and
decide which path to follow or alternatively to mix both. A number of Indian women
novelists produced novels which revealed the true state of Indian society. During the
last four decades, the image of the women characters in fiction has undergone a change.
It shows that women writers have moved away from traditional portrayals of enduring,
self- sacrificing women towards female characters searching for identity, which are
no longer characterized and defined simply in terms of their victim status. Recent
writers depict both the diversity of women and the diversity within each woman,
rather than limiting the lives of women to one ideal.

This research focuses on the novel and short stories penned by Githa Hariharan,
and hence a comprehensive and better understanding of her life’s background and her
journey in the arena of literature would enable a precise in-depth interpretation of her novels.

Githa Hariharan was born in 1954 in Coimbatore, India, in a Tamil Brahmin family from Palghat, South India. Her father was a journalist in a renowned Indian newspaper *The Times of India*. Her mother, a home maker, dedicated her life in upbringing of her three children. Blessed with a happy childhood, Hariharan as a child enjoyed full liberty in the dizzying company of books. Having fed on the richness of Victorian classics and the Japanese novels, Hariharan’s upbringing was neither liberal, nor oppressive. She grew up in Mumbai and Manila. She received her education both in India and in the United States. A personage of versatility, she has tried her hands in varied arenas. She has served as a staff editor in WNET – Channel 13 in New York, and from 1979 she served in Bombay, Madras and New Delhi as an Editor, first in a publishing house and then as a freelancer. Githa Hariharan is a social reformist and nationalist to the core. She engages herself in reforming the ills of Indian society. Thus, in 1995, Hariharan questioned the validity of the Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act as they are discriminatory against women. The case, “Githa Hariharan and another Vs. Reserve Bank of India”, paved way for a Supreme Court judgement in 1999 on guardianship. She has carved a niche for herself as a well acclaimed writer. Her published works comprises novels, essays, short stories, newspaper articles and columns. Her first novel, *The Thousand Faces of Night (1992)* won the Commonwealth Writer Prize in 1993. Her other novels include *The Ghosts of Vasu Master (1994)*, *When Dreams Travel (1999)*, *In Times of Siege (2003)*, and the latest Fugitive
Histories (2009). She is also the author of a collection of highly acclaimed short stories, The Art of Dying, which was published in 1993. She also published stories for children, The Winning Team in 2004. She has edited a volume of stories in English translation from major South Indian languages, A Southern Harvest. Moreover, a collection of stories for children, Sorry Best Friend (1997) has been co-edited by her. Hariharan’s name and fame attained international status. Her works been translated into a number of languages namely Spanish, German, French, Dutch, Greek, Urdu, Italian, and Vietnamese. Again in anthologies such as Salman Rushdie’s Mirror Work: 50 years of Indian Writing; 1947-1997, her essays and fiction have been included. She regularly writes column for the major Indian Newspaper ‘The Telegraph’.

Hariharan, as a Visiting Professor, has been visiting several Universities, namely, George Washington University in the United States, the University of Canterbury at Kent in the UK, Dartnorth College and James Miller Islamia in India. As a gifted writer, Hariharan, with her creative craftsmanship, delves into the secrets of life and lays bare its realities. Widely renowned for her social consciousness, critical analysis and realistic appreciation, she aspires to explore the appalling plight of the fairer sex in all fields of life, social, economical, political, and cultural. This in fact has elevated her literary venture.

Hariharn’s first novel The Thousand Faces of Night (1992), highlights the survival strategies of women belonging to three different generations. The novel has won the Commonwealth Prize for First Best Book. The protagonist of the novel, Devi, being the youngest of the three, is US returned modern woman who ends up in a bitter
marriage. Another powerful character in the novel is her mother Sita, who strives for self assertion by aspiring to bridge the widening gap between tradition and modernity. Mayamma, being the last, is the old family retainer in Devi’s husband’s house, and is a real typical instance for women’s exploitation by patriarchal society. She belongs to the distant past with her affixed location in the suffocating tradition. Married life becomes a success only if she endures all the torture heaped on her without retort. Hariharan’s portrayal of this relation clearly reflects her notions about the plight of wives in India. The primary thing that strikes is the insensitivity of Indian husbands who never tries to understand the psychology of their wives. Even an educated husband like Mahesh is representing the whole educated male chauvinistic society.

*The Art of Dying (1993)* is a collection of twenty short stories that narrates the tales of woe and eccentricity. With exceptional craftiness, the writer has probed into the meaning of death, the stark realities of being lost and its haunting memories. The pervasive theme of these stories is again the chaffing pressures of the hegemonic patriarchal society in India. These twenty stories of contemporary Indian life demonstrate a distinguished originality with human concern.

Hariharan in her next novel *The Ghost of Vasu Master (1994)* portrays the life of a humble retired teacher Vasu whose meaningless life changes at the arrival of a handicapped pupil Mani, who either cannot or will not speak. Having understood the futility of employing the routine methodologies to teach Mani, he ultimately adopts the mode of the Panchatantra tales as a tool to teach and heal Mani and also to develop a meaningful relationship with him.
When Dreams Travel (1999), Hariharan’s another novel is drawn on The Arabian Nights delineating Shahrzad and her sister as the protagonists of this wonderfully crafted novel which brings to limelight the irrationality and brutality embedded in a patriarchal set-up. The tales of adventure narrated by the witty, eloquent, brilliant and quick tongued Shahrzad to the king Sharyar to escape his sword and her ultimate win over him allows a wide scope for projecting, the constant struggle between sexes for power and love.

Hariharan’s next novel, In Times of Siege (2003) revolves around the theme of the interference of the religious fundamentalists in the life of a diffident and naive Professor who is posed by a demand from them to revise a historical event. This makes his life topsy-turvy. Shiv Murthy, a 53-year-old is a history Professor at an open university in Delhi. An extremist group blames Shiv for propagating anti-Hindu agenda, as his module on the 12th century poet and social reformer Basavanna is termed by them as distortion of history. At this juncture, his 24 year-old ward Meena who has broken her leg and is recovering at Shiv's home, comes to his rescue and instills him the confidence to confront the fundamentalists.

Against the backdrop of post 2002 India, Githa Hariharan’s latest published novel Fugitive Histories centres around Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Delhi. The novel in vivid terms lays bare the legacy of prejudice that has its adverse effect in the lives of common men in the post-independent India. Mala, a recent widow who lives in Delhi suffers from pangs of memories of her dead husband Asad whose sketchbooks and paintings haunt her. She remembers the shattered secular ideologies of the intelligent,
idealistic Asad in the wake of post-Gujarat riot and she struggles to lead a life without Asad and his memories. On the other hand, in Mumbai, her daughter Sara, a young social worker, is found grappling to understand her own mysterious nature and her life. As apart of her work, she visits Ahmedabad where she meets Yasmin, a teenage girl and one of the victims of the violence in 2002 and whose life has become enmeshed, but has to go on. It is here that Sara’s various questions on her and her life receive its answers. Hariharan’s fight against social evils and feminism formed a basis for Renaissance in society. A writer should be courageous to tell the people what they do not like, and which are far reaching in their content and truth. Whoever visualises a society beyond their contemporary scenario is a great writer indeed. That vision, she expresses in a clear and bold tone, whether anyone likes it or not. Hariharan is known for her bold and frank style of writing. Her writing does so with issues concerning the modern society. Through her characters, she attempts to project the large society as a whole; but her works mainly delineate the awakening of woman’s consciousness which impels her to strive for self actualization. The author, as a feminist, intrigues the reader with a lot of questions. Today’s women break the traditional constraints and redefine their identity with the available educational and vocational opportunities. Her women are conscious of their rights and responsibilities, especially the educated middle and upper class women.

This research has been undertaken with the aim of comprehending a few aspects of the sociological and psychological aspects, employed in the selected works of Githa Hariharan. Hereafter the fiction The Thousand Faces of Night will be mentioned as
Sociology and psychology are closely related with each other. Both are interrelated and inter-dependent. They are involved in solving the contemporary social problems.

The hypothesis that has been formulated for undertaking research in the fictional work of Githa Hariharan has been facilitated by the following aims and objectives:

1. To prove Githa Hariharan’s short story skill inside and outside the novel,
2. To analyse the quest for resocialisation as an important search for contemporary Indian society,
3. To evaluate the role of women who are caught in a constant flux of new equations in contemporary society,
4. To decipher in vivid terms the psychological crisis encountered by women, in particular the concept of self as a brooding concern for many women, and
5. To demonstrate the real and the mythical are combined in projecting an ideal image of womanhood over the decades.

Reviews

- Hariharan’s sensitive novels ought to be read by every thinking Indian married or separated. It shows, with exceptional fictional skill, the subtle and everyday way in which women are bludgeoned to play male-scripted subordinate roles - ‘India Today’
• Githa Hariharan has a gifted pen that is able to dip itself into a trove of refined observations of life and all the pain it can inflict on the unsuspecting wanderer.
  - ‘The Sunday Times of India’

• We could do with more of the skill, economy and discretion that characterise Hariharan’s first novel.- ‘The Indian Express’

• Hariharan writes with great self-assurance and is in very much her own way, a stylist.- ‘Financial Express’

• There is luminous resonance in the images of Githa Hariharan...A prose style at once gentle and mellifluent...... A work of truly original thinking.- ‘The Economic Times’

• Sunny and well-lit prose which conceals nothing, reveals everything- ‘The Times of India’

• Githa Hariharan understands the psychology of women and portrays them with insight, understanding, and sympathy.- Dr.Monika Gupta

• Hariharan writes in a clean and straightforward manner- all her characters are suitably dealt, they talk and communicate effectively, stories from the Indian epics (The Ramayana and The Mahabharata) provide scaffolding to the main storyline of the novel. Hariharan relates the relevance of epic stories in contemporary society. - Pradeep Trikha

• Githa Hariharan in her short story collection The Art of Dying (1993) has projected the post feminist ethos with perfection. The main text seems to run smoothly well within the orthodox order as if upholding the traditional power
equation, but very subtly she lets us see and feel the simmering ferment just below the surface.- Rajul Bhargava

- Githa Hariharan’s fiction is wonderful and full of subtleties and humour and tenderness-Michael Ondaatje

- Githa Hariharan’s *The Thousand Faces of Night (1993)* may best be read as a part of the re-visionist ‘myth –making program me one finds in women’s texts but Hariharan’s use of and response to myths adds a new dimension to this mode. - C.Vijayasree

- Githa Hariharan’s world of a South Indian extended family is to me more accurate than R.K.Narayan’s.- Indira Nityanandam

- *The Thousand Faces of Night* can be aptly defined as the several faces of thought presented by Githa Hariharan about the central theme- the struggle and predicaments of women in Indian society.- Mrs.Bindu Jacob

- Hariharan’s performance as an artist reflects her perfect command on language, way of expression and syntactic structure, etc. Her each sentence seems to be stamped of a perfect artist’s skill and intelligence.- Tripti Garg

- Hariharan’s controlled discourse deals with the question of what it means to be a woman in India. Her novel presents three women whose different and yet similar stories cut across generations and cross barriers of caste and class. - Nilufer E.Bharucha

- The parameters of choice have altered tremendously and Devi seems a beacon light for the modern Indian women. The first novel by Githa Hariharan
suggests immense possibilities for the world of modern Indian fiction.

Ramesh Dayate

- One of the most moving of the several mythological stories which the book contains – all of which are a part of Devi’s cultural and psychological survival kit – the most striking, fascinating and disturbing is the story of the Kritya, “a ferocious woman who haunts and destroys the house in which women are insulted.” - Makarand Paranjape

The present study is undertaken to trace Sociological and Psychological Perspectives in the Select Works of Githa Hariharan. The chapters have examined Hariharan’s first novel *The Thousand Faces of Night* (1992), and *The Art of Dying and Other Short Stories*. A brief analysis of the chapters would offer an insight into the core issues of the research.

The introductory chapter begins with a brief study of sociology and psychology, its significance, definitions, quotations, issues and problems. Besides, it presents an account of the history of Indian writing in English and writers from beginning to the present. A short note is given to show the relation between the short story and the novel. As the focus of the research is on Githa Hariharan, the biographical features of the writer and outline of all her works were analysed. The study includes objectives and reviews of others related to the selected works.

The second chapter is titled *Resocialization in Contemporary Indian Society*. Resocialization is a concept of sociological concern that addresses how individuals adapt to operate in a different environment. It is indeed a remarkable picture of
society one gets in Githa Hariharan’s *The Art of Dying and Other Stories*. Yet each story is different from the other in terms of pattern and theme. All the stories which are dealt in this chapter underwent resocialization in five stages from birth to death.

The third chapter *An Existential Crisis* aims at delineating the individual’s existential crisis from their personal life. The major theme of *The Thousand Faces of Night* running throughout is one close to psychological crisis. The novel is woven around three generations of women, Devi, Sita and Mayamma. All the three main female characters are progressing to delimiting restrictions through self analysis and self discovery; they try to create physical as well as psychological space for themselves so as to grow on their own.

Sociology and psychology though they are two areas different they cannot exist in the absence of the other. This is clearly exemplified through the analysis of *The Thousand Faces of Night* and *The Art of Dying and Other Stories* while the second chapter *Resocialization in Contemporary Indian Society* focuses on the sociological perspective, it also allows the readers to make the individual psychological derivation about the contemporary Indian society. Similarly, the third chapter *An Existential Crisis* concentrates on the psychological point of view. It enables the reader to scrutinize the social situation of the life of three different women of different generations.

The aim of the fourth chapter *The Myth and Tradition* is to examine the use and importance of myth in Githa Hariharan's novel, *The Thousand Faces of Night* (1992). Myth plays a vital role in this novel and also in real life situations. Therefore,
Githa Hariharan clearly presents the characters that are much related to the mythical characters. Her vision about myths helps the women to understand their lives in order to face all the sufferings and it helps them in their lives. With the help of mythical stories, the women characters mould their lives and learn to struggle. Their mind and body become strong to face anything and to learn through experience in their lives. Thus Hariharan proves that strength and bravery are gained in the women characters through their knowledge of mythical stories.

The fifth and concluding chapter sums up the findings of the research mentioned in the previous chapters with regard to sociological and psychological aspects of Githa Hariharan’s selected works. It paves way for the possibility of further research in her works.

The next chapter analyzes Resocialization in Contemporary Indian Society in the collection of twenty different short stories from the book The Art of Dying and Other Stories.