Introduction:-

Indian Writing in English has now become a globally approved term itself. After the period of independence writers had to prove their skills in writing in English. It was because English language was then looked as a foreign language, not accepted as a literary language by a large group of critics and writers. But now there is an instant change in situation. Though English language is not presently spoken by more than few percent of the population, the language is well accepted and permitted for the literary usages.

Indian literature in English or Indian English literature as it is called now was born when India was forcibly brought under the British rule. When the British left India, literature in English flourished tremendously. English now is not looked as symbol of the colonial rule and of slavery, but a way which leads towards progress, prosperity and a bright future. The last two decades of the country has witnessed the flourishing of creative writing in English. A tremendous change could be seen after the nineteen nineties in English literature. It was a period of unbelievable creation and innovation in writing.

The nineteen nineties are also important period for Indian novel written in English. It has been a most momentous decade for the Indian novel written in English. It brought out some significant changes as some experimentation in themes, style and genre style instead of getting stuck to old and classical forms. In this period the third generation novelists produced some highly visible, and academically, critically acclaimed works, which proved great financial successes. These works show their clear pathway towards globalization of Indian writing in
English. The rich works of nineties in some respect are continuation of eighties, in other respects they are visible signs towards the better future in the matter of technique, thematics, and the use of the English as it is the own invention of a new kind of language, that is, Indianization of English language.

In this period, new writers emerged on the scene and won some international prestigious awards like Booker Prize and Commonwealth Writers Prize, and it effected in great deal in accessing the attention of critics and readers towards their works. Novel is perhaps the only form of writing that instantly acquire a world-wide visibility as it is created. Not only in India but all over the world, the novel is more read, more appreciated and more marketed than poetry. The novelists of this decade are marked by their passion in innovation and contemporariness. There are some who are interested in dealing with histories, and classicness of writing, but they also up to some extent used the new experimental modes of Raj Kamal Jha, Pankaj Mishra, Gita Hariharan, Vikram Chandra, Vikram Seth, Amit Chaudhari, Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor, Gita Mehta, are the contemporary writers, innovative and different.

Indian English literature has relatively recent history. It is only one and a half centuries old. The first book written by an Indian in English was by Sake Dean Mahomet, titled Travels of Dean Mahomet; published in 1793 in England. Early Indian writers used the forms and the techniques of Britishers, to convey their experiences which were essentially Indian. Raja Rao’s novels are Indian in terms of its story telling qualities. Rabindranath Tagore wrote in Bengali and was responsible for translations of his works into English. Dhan Gopal Mukerji was the first Indian author to win a literary award in United States. Nirad C. Chaudhari, a
writer of non-fiction, is best known for his The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian where he relates his life experiences and influences. P. Lal, a poet, publisher and essayist, founded a press in the 1950s for Indian English writing. R.K. Narayan is a writer who contributed over many decades and who continued to write till his death recently. Similar to Thomas Hardy’s Wessex, Narayan created the fictitious town of Malgudi, where he set his novels. Some criticize Narayan for the small, detached, and closed world that he created in the face of the changing conditions in India at the times in which the stories are set. Narayan’s presentation of small town life and its experiences through the eyes of a child protagonist Swaminathan, in Swami and Friends is a good sample of his writing style. Simultaneous with Narayan's work, a very different writer, Mulk Raj Anand, similarly gained recognition for his writing set in rural India; but his stories were harsher, and engaged, sometimes brutally, with division of caste, class and religion.

Dhan Gopal Mukharji was the first successful Indian man of letters in the United States and the winner of Newbery Medal in 1928. Dhan Gopal Mukharji presented his childhood and adolescences in the first part (caste) of his autobiography Caste and Outcast (1923). In this work, he gave details about Brahminical traditions of his ancestors, and his experiences as an ascetic. He also wrote a memorial of Jadu Gopal, titled My Brother’s Face. Around 1916 he wrote Rajni or Song of Night, a book of poems, and Laila Majnu, a musical play in three acts, both published by Paul Elder and Co, of San Francisco. He has mainly written some children books, as Kari The Elephant (1922), Hari The Jungle Lad (1924), and the most successful was Gay Neck, The Story of a Pigeon (1927), for which the American Literary Association presented him with The Newbery Medal in 1928.
His other children books include Ghond, The Hunter (1928), The Chief of The Herd (1929), Hindu Fables for Little Children (1929), Rama, The Hero of India (1930), and The Master Monkey (1932). He also wrote A Son of Mother India Answers (1928) (partly in response to Katherine Mayo’s Mother India), Devotional Passage from the Hindu Bible and Visit India With Me (1929), Disillusioned India (1930), and My Brother’s Face (1932). The Face of Silence (1926) is about the nineteen century saint and visionary Ram Krishna Paramhansa.

Raja Rao was another prominent figure in Indian English writing. The death of his mother, when he was of four, left a lasting impression on him, the absence of mother and orphan hood are prominent themes in his works. Raja Rao’s novels and short stories are deeply rooted in Hinduism. His semi-autobiographical novel, The Serpent and the Rope, published in 1960, is a story of a search for spiritual truth in Europe and India.

Gita Mehta is a well known Indian English writer. She has produced 14 television documentaries for U.K. She emerged as a writer in her own right. Her books have been translated in 21 languages and been on bestseller’s lists in Europe, the US and India. The subject of both her fiction and non-fiction is exclusively focused on India, its culture and history and the western perception of Indian culture. Her works include Karam Cola, Raj, Snakes and Ladders, A River Sutra, Eternal Ganesha.

Among the later novelists, the most notable is Salman Rushdie, born in India, now living in U.K. Rushdie with his famous work Midnight’s Children (Booker Prize 1981, Booker of Bookers 1992, and Best of the Bookers 2008)
presented a new trend of writing. He used a hybrid language- English generously presented with Indian terms- to convey the theme that could be seen as representing the vast canvas of India. Rushdie is usually categorized under the magic realism mode of writing. Salman Rushdie is an Indian-British novelist. Rushdie’s first novel Grmus published in 1975, a science fiction tale, was generally ignored by literary critics and readers. His next novel Midnight’s Children published in (1981), however built his literary fame, and it also significantly shaped a new way of writing in Indian English writing, that would follow over the next decade. Midnight’s Children is regarded by many as one of the great books of the last 100 years. This work won the 1981 booker Prize and, in 1993 and 2008, was awarded the best of the Bookers as the best novel to have received the prize during its first 25 and 40 years respectively. Midnight’s Children has received numerous award and been cited as the Rushdie’s best, most flowing and inspiring work. The story deals with the life of the child born at the stroke of the midnight as India gets her independence, who is awarded with special powers and a connection to other children born at the dawn of the new age of the history of Indian sub-continent and the birth of the modern nation of India. The character of Saleem Siani has been compared to Rushdie himself. After Midnight’s Children Rushdie wrote Shame (1983), in which he depicted the political turmoil in Pakistan, based his character on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and General Muhammad Zia-Ul-Haq. The novel won the France's Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger (Best Foreign book) and was the close runner up for Booker Prize. Both these works of post-colonial literature are characterized by a style of magic realism and the immigrant’s outlook of which Rushdie is very conscious, as a member of Indian Diaspora. Rushdie wrote a non-fiction book, The Jaguar Smile (1983). His most
controversial work, The Satanic Verses, was published in 1988. He followed with this with The Moor’s Last Sigh (1995), a family epic ranging over some 100 years of India's history. The Ground Beneath Her Feet (1999) presents an alternative history of modern rock music. His 2005 novel Shalimar and the Clown received in India, the prestigious Crossword Fiction Award, and was, in Britain, a finalist for the Whitebread Book Awards. It was shortlisted for the 2007 International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. In his 2002 notification collection, Step Across This Line, he professed his admiration for Italian writer Italo Calvino and the American writer Thomas Pynchon, among others. Rushdie has had a string of commercially successful and critically acclaimed novels.

Bharti Mukherji, author of Jasmine (1989), has spent much of her career exploring issues involving immigration and identity with a particular focus upon the United States and Canada. Another figure Vikram Seth, author of A Suitable Boy (1994) is a writer who uses purer English and more realistic themes. Being a self-confessed fan of Jane Austen, his attention is on story, its details, and its twists and turns.

Vikram Seth is another Indian English writer. He is a poet, novelist, travel writer, liberalist, children writer, biographer and memoirist. Comparing the character Haresh, Lata, Savita, and two of the Chaterji Siblings in A Suitable Boy: Seth was been honest in acknowledging that many of his fictional character are drawn from life; he has said that only the dog Cuddles in A Suitable Boy has his real name- “Because he can’t sue or complaint.” Justine Laila Seth has said in her memoir On Balance that other characters in A Suitable Boy are composites but
Haresh is a portrait of her husband Prem. Vikram Seth’s notable works are A Suitable Boy and The Golden Gate.


Shashi Tharoor is a diplomat and a writer who has been known mostly for his having worked as an Indian diplomat at the United States. Tharoor’s fictional work include, Riot (2001), Show Business (1992), The Five Dollar Smile and Other Stories (1990), The Great Indian Novel (1989). His non-fictional works are The Elephant, The Tiger and The Cell Phone: India- Emerging 21 Century to Power (2007), Reasons of State (1982), Nehru The Invention of India (2003), Kerala God’s Own Country (2002), India: from Midnight to Millennium (1997). Tharoor has written numerous books in English. Most of his works are centered on Indian themes and they are ‘Indo-nostalgic’. Perhaps his most famous work is The Great Indian Novel, published in 1989, in which he uses the narrative style and the theme of famous Indian epic Mahabharata to weave a satirical story of Indian life in non-linear mode with the characters drawn from the Indian independence movement. His novel Show Business (1992) was made into a Hindi Bollywood film in 1994.

Suzana Arundhati Roy is an Indian writer and activist. She won the Booker Prize for her novel, The God of Small Things in 2002. She began writing her first
novel, The God of Small Things, in 1992 and completed it in 1996. The book is semi-autobiographical and captures her childhood experiences in Ayemenem in Aymanam. The book received the 1997 Booker Prize for fiction and was listed as one the New York Times Notable Books of the year for 1997. It reached fourth position on the New York Times Bestseller’s list for Independent Fiction. From the beginning, the book was also a commercial success: Roy received half a million pounds as an advance, and right to the book were sold in 21 countries. After the success of her novel, Roy has been working as the screenplay writer again.

Problem / Subject Matter:-

The proposed research project attempts to explore and examine cultural, social, and political depictions in Man Booker Prize winning Indian English novels. This research will study the Booker prize winner novelists-Salman Rushdie, Arvind Adiga, Arundhati Roy, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala and Kiran Desai with their winning novels.

Indian English Literature has occupied an important place among English and other literatures of the world. Particularly Indian English Fiction has attracted the wide spread interest all around the world. The Indian English novelists are now recognized among the literary jewels of the world literature. They have won time and again nearly all literary awards and appreciations. In India it has crossed the racial, cultural and regional barriers and earned immense popularity. The Indian English novel has been translated into nearly all the languages of the world. Indian English novels of post independence days have reflected to the world colourful and glorious culture and traditions of our country.

Today, Indian English literature has become an independent discipline. It is acclaimed all over the world. Salman Rushdie is so much enthusiastic about the achievement of Indian English novel that he declares it as the only national literature of India. From the trio of Indian English novelists-R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao to the writers like Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai, Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth and Arvind Adiga- they all have dealt with different aspects of Indian culture, Indian life and Indian society. Today, the themes of Indian English novels are many and mine cultural, social, varied. The
thematic pre-occupations of Indian novelists are portrayal of poverty, hunger and disease, portrayal of wide spread social evils and tensions, politics, exploration of the hybrid culture of the dislocations, and conflicts in tradition ridden society.

Modern Indian writers have depicted Indian culture with varied perspectives. India is a land of multi cultural and multi lingual diversity. Cultural is generally known as the socially sanctioned behavior of people. It is a way of life of people. One of the best early definitions of culture was given by E.B. Tylor that it is the complex whole which included knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Culture includes all the endowments acquired by man from his group by both consciously and unconsciously. The individuals learn the values of their society through a process of acculturation. When I came across the intended novels, I felt it is essential to work on these writers as they have delineated India with its varied cultural, social and political realities.