Reviews of Literature

Salman Rushide, (1980): Saleem Sinai is born at the stroke of midnight on August 15, 1947, the very moment of India’s independence. Greeted by fireworks display, cheering crowds, and Prime Minister Nehru himself, Saleem grows up to learn the ominous consequences of this coincidence. His every act is mirrored and magnified in events that sway the course of national and international. Chetan Bhagat is also a great writer and all his novels are dealt with the problems of the young generation.¹

Jumpa Lahiri, (1999): Mr. Kapasi, the protagonist of Jumpa Lahiri’s title story, would certainly have his work cut out for him if he were forced to interpret the maladies of all the characters in this eloquent debut collection. Take, for example, Shoba and Shukumar, the young couple in “A Temporary Matter” whose marriage is crumbling in the wake of a stillborn child.²

Rohinton Mistry, (2002): Rohinton Mistry’s enthralling novel is at once a domestic drama and intently observed portrait of present-day Bombay in all its vitality and corruption. At the age of seventy-nine Mariman Vakeel, already suffering from Parkinson’s disease, breaks an ankle and finds himself wholly dependent on his family. This is family novel. In the same way Chetan Bhagat’s novel ‘Two States’ is also a family novel’.³

Aravinda Adiga, (2008): Set in raw and unromanticized India, ‘The White Tiger’ the first person confession of a murderer is as compelling for its subject matter as it is for the voice of its narrator, amoral, cynical, unrepentant, yet deeply endearing.⁴

Chitra Banered Divakaruni, (1997): From the award-winning author of mistress of Spices, the bestselling novel about the extraordinary bond between two women, and the family secrets and romantic jealousies that threaten to tear them apart.⁵

Premchand (first 1936) (2002): Godan, a story of stark realism, is Premchand’s most outstanding novel. The realism, artistry and tenderness with which he has created the characters here, particularly that of Hori, are unparalleled and unsurpassed in the whole fiction of India. Hori is an immortal character symbolic of the peasantry of this century.⁶

William Dalrymple, (2003): White Mughals by William is the romantic and ultimately tragic tale of a passionate love affair that crossed and transcended all the cultural, religious and political boundaries of its time. James Achilles Kirpatrick was the British Resident at the court of the Nizam of Hyderabad when in 1978 he glimpsed Kahir un – Nissa- ‘ Most excellent among women’.⁷

Kiran Desai, (2005): ‘The Inheritance of loss’ by Kiran Desai is a very good novel’. In a crumbling, isolated house at the foot of Mount Kanchenjunga in the Himalayas lives an embittered, when his orphaned grand-daughter, sai arrives on his doorstep. The judge’s cook watches over her distractedly, for his thoughts are claimed by his son, Biju.⁸
Amish Tripathi, (2010): 1900 BC. In what modern Indians mistakenly call the Indus valley civilization. The inhabitants of that period called it the land of Meluha a near perfect empire created many centuries earlier by Lord Ram, one of the greatest monarchs that ever lived. This once proud empire and its Survanshi rulers face severe perils as its primary rives, the revered Saraswati.9

David Davidar, (2003): ‘The House of Blue Mangoes’ tells the story of the Dorai family in south India during a time of tremendous political and social upheaval. Sophisticated and filled with brilliant historical and emotional insight, it is enlivened by touches of humour and deeply felt tragedy that draw on the author’s own family history.10

A.M. Homes, (1999): As the only woman on the list, A. M. Homes deserve recognition for her amazing writing skills, her unique voice and her gloomy view of the world. Homes shine when about screwed- up, out of love on the brink of out of lover couples. Torching is no exception. The married couple, Paul and Elaine, first appeared in a short story in The Safety of objects, and then took on a life of their own. Married in suburbia, with two young boys, we follow them in their search for happiness, or some form of contentment, which they never seem to find. Smoking crack in the dining room, having affairs, trying to burn down their own house…nothing seems to change their boredom and disappointment. They are stuck. They have becomes strangers to each other, to themselves to their children.11

Mark Danielewski, (2000): Words to describe this novel: Dazzling, original, mind- bending, genius, heart- breaking, and addicting, wonderful, jaw- dropping. The list goes on and on and on. No other novel has created its own world quite like leaves. Danielewaski made us question our own sanity. He led us through the 3- and a half minute hallway and then left us there, shivering and alone, waiting for the monster, who we’ve only ever felt, but we know is the most terrifying thing in the world.12

Andre Dubus, (2004): Dubus is considered by many the great short writer of the 20th century, and there is fairness in this claim. This book consists of three novellas, woven together and taken from earlier Dubus publications. It is also a wonderful movie starring the enigmatic Laura Dern and Naomi watts. It’s about two middle- aged couples who can’t to keep their pants on. Affairs are had, feelings crushed, epiphanies thwarted, friendships teste.13

Cormac McCarthy, (2006): Cormac McCarthy is one of the greatest novelists still alive today, and his newest book, The Road, clearly exemplifies this claim. It’s full of McCarthy’s terse dialogue, minute detail, stream of consciousness, masculinity, and an excruciatingly intense violent plot. Not to mention that, in addition to all of these things, it’s also overwhelmingly sad, which is not an easy thing for a novel to be? It’s the perfect combination of everything, with exact measurements dolled out like a recipe for brownies.14

family, the struggles, they encounter in the Dominican Republic, and the curses that follow them to America, who desperately wants to find love. We follow him in constant struggle to find it, and bear witness to his countless rejections. Not girl wants anything to do with this sweaty, obese nerd, and at some point our pity turns to admiration, as we root for him to succeed.  

Denis Johnson, (2007): This mammoth odyssey about the Vietnam War transcends all other attempts to write about Vietnam, and makes them look like Hallmark greetings cards. It follows Skip sands, working for the psychological operations department of CIA, and his larger than life uncle ‘Colonel sands’. It takes us everywhere in Southeast Asia, and even back to the United states. Johnson depicts a war where nothing is clear, where friends and enemies are indistinguishable, and where myths are created out of the land itself.

Arundhati Roy, (1997): They all crossed into forbidden territory. They all tampered with the laws that lay down who should be loved and how. And how much. The year is 1969. In the state of Kerala, on the southernmost tip of India, fraternal twins Esthapeen and Rahel fashion a childhood for themselves in the shade of the wreck that is their family.

Rohinton Mistry, (1996): with a compassionate realism and narrative sweep that recall the work of Charles Dickens, this magnificent novel captures all the cruelty and corruption, dignity and heroism of India. The time is 1975. The place is an unnamed city by the sea. The government has just declared a State of Emergency, in whose upheavals four strangers.

Chetan Bhagat, (2009): Love marriage around the world is simple: Boy loves girl. Girl loves boy. They get married. In India, there are a few more steps: Boy loves girl. Girl loves Boy. Girl’s family has to love boy. Boy’s family has to love girl. Girl’s family had to love Boy’s family. Boy’s family has to love girl’s family. Girl and Boy love each other. They get married.

Vikram Chandra,(1998): On the heels of his award- winning and extravagantly praised first novel, ‘RED EARTH AND POURING RAIN’, Vikram Chandra offers five ingeniously linked stories- a love story, a mystery, a ghost story, and other tales spun by an elusive narrator sitting in a smoky Bombay bar. Critics around the world have embraced the book as a work by this exciting young writer.

Arun Joshi, (1999): ‘The Foreigner’ by Arun Joshi is about the human relation and its various aspects. The central character of the story is Sindi Oberoi and the story revolves around his loneliness and feelings of anguish and anxiety born of his estrangement from his environment, tradition and his true life. In this story the young hero after experiencing life and love in America comes back in Delhi. It propels him from one crisis to another, sucking in the wake several other people, including June, an attractive American with whom he has a short lived but passionate affair. Babu is another character who forms the third vertex of their doomed love triangle.

Ravinder Singh, (2009): Can modern day gadgets like Mobile phones and the ‘http: \www’ era of internet bring you the love of your life? You haven’t met her earlier, but commit to marry. Will
you still call this a love marriage? And what if on the engagement day while you pull the ring out from your pocket, you realize what you planned was just a dream which never comes true.  

Shilpi Somaya Gowda, (2010): Moving between two worlds and two families, one struggling to survive in the fetid slums of Mumbai, the other grappling to forge a cohesive family despite their diverging culture identities, this powerful debut novel marks the arrival of a fresh talent.  

Anurag Mathur, (1997): A hilarious and poignant love about an Indian exchange student’s year at a small Americans university. An engaging look at the clash of Indian culture and an America that is both harsh and exhilarating to a smart but naïve foreigner. Gopal arrives in American from a small town in India prepared for study but decidedly unprepared for the cultural differences he encounter.  

Vikas Swarup, (2000): Vikas Swarup’s spectacular debut novel opens in a jail cell in Mumbai, India, where Ram Mohammad Thomas is being held after correctly answering all twelve questions on India’s biggest quiz show, who will win a billion. It is hard to believe that a poor orphan who has never read a newspaper or gone to school could win such a contest. But through a series of exhilarating tales Ram explains to his lawyer how episodes in his life gave him the answer to each question.  

Anne Cherian (2008): Neel, an anesthesiologist in San Francisco and Leila, a 30 year old teacher in Neel’s native India struggle to reconcile their own desires with the expectations of others, in this riveting story of two people, two countries and two ways of life that may be more compatible than they seem.  

Shashi Tharoor, (1993): ‘The great Indian Novel’ is an internationally acclaimed novel. Tharoor has masterfully recast the 2,000 year old epic, The Mahabharata, with fictional but highly recognizable events and characters from twentieth century Indian politics. Chronicling the Indian struggle for freedom and independence from Great Britain, Tharoor directs his hilarious satire as much against Indian foibles as the bumbling of the British rulers.  

Amitav Ghosh, (2008): At the heart of this vibrant saga is a vast ship, the Ibis. Its destiny is tumultuous voyage across the Indian Ocean, its purpose to fight China’s vicious nineteenth-century opium wars. As for the crew, they are a motley array of sailors and stowaways, coolies and convicts.  

Amish Tripathi, (2011): Today, He is God. 4000 years ago, he was just a man. The hunt is on. The sinister Naga warrior has killed his friend Brahaspati and now stalks his wife sati. Shiva, the Tibetan immigrant who is the prophesied destroyer of evil, will not rest till he finds his demonic adversary. His vengeance and path to evil will lead him to the door of the Nagas... The serpent people. Of that he is certain.  

Anita Nair,(2004): The Novel ‘Ladies Coupe’ is a wonderfully atmospheric deliciously warm novel takes the readers into the heart of women’s lives in contemporary India, revealing how the
dilemmas that women face in their relationships with husbands, mothers, friends, employers and children are the same world over.\(^{29}\)

Vikram Seth, (2000): The author of the international bestseller ‘A Suitable boy’ returns with powerful and deeply romantic tale of two gifted musicians. Michael Holme is a violinist, a member of the successful Maggiore Quartet. He has long been haunted, though by memories of the pianist he loved and left ten years earlier, Julia McNicholl. Now Julia married and the mother of small child unexpectedly reenters his life and the romance flares up once more. With poetic evocative writing and a brilliant portrait of the international music scene ‘An Equal Music’ confirms Vikram Seth as one of the world’s finest and most enticing writers.\(^{30}\)

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, (2008): A reimagining of the world-famous Indian epic, the Mahabharata told from the point of view of an amazing woman. Relevant to today’s war-torn world, The Palace of Illusions takes us back to a time that is half history, half myth and wholly magical. Narrated by Panchaali, the wife of the legendary pandavas brothers in the Mahabharat, the novel gives us a new interpretation of this ancient tale.\(^{31}\)

Indu Sundaresan, (2002): Based on the life of an actual empress of the Mughal Empire, the woman for whom the Taj Mahal was built. ‘The twentieth Wife’ blends historical reality with the rich imaginings of a fairy tale, providing a fascinating portrait of one woman’s defiant life behind the veil.\(^{32}\)

Karan Bajaj, (2008): What do you do when you are a twenty-five year old Yale graduate making half a million dollars a year as hotshot investment banker wall-street? You bust you ass become a millionaire by thirty of course. Not if you are Samrat Ratan born in the USA to immigrant Indian parents. You quit and enroll in business school in Indian instead.\(^{33}\)

Vikram Chandra; (2007): Set in present day Mumbai, this work tells the story of a notorious Hindu gangster and a police inspector whose lives unfold and eventually intersect with cataclysmic consequences. A gripping epic saga, the tale is filled with humour, tragedy and characters who prove to be all too human.\(^{34}\)

Anita Desai, (1999): Anita Desai has long proved herself one of the most accomplished and admired chroniclers of middle class India. Her 1999 novel ‘Fasting Feasting’ is the tale of plain and lumpish Uma and the cherished late born Arun, daughter and son of strict and conventional parents. All characters capable of their own small rebellions give fasting feasting its sharp bite.\(^{35}\)

Judy Balan, (2011): It’s the classic tale of Punjabi boy meets Tamilian girl, they fall in love, the families oppose it, but love consequences all and they get married to live happily ever after. Or do they? There’s a twist in this hilarious tale by Judy Balan when, four years done the lives Rishab and Deepika fall out of love. But if getting married was hard, getting divorced is much, much hard.\(^{36}\)

Rashmi Bansal, (2011): ‘I have a Dream’ is the story of 20 idealists who think and act like entrepreneurs. They are committed to different causes, but they have one thing in common: a belief that principles of management can and must be used to achieve a greater common good.
These stories say one thing loud and clear change starts with one person and that person could be someone next door.\textsuperscript{38}

Preeti Shenoy, (2011): What would you do if destiny twisted the road you took? What if it threw you to a place you did not want to go? Would you fight, would you run or would you accept? Set across two cities in India in the early eighties, Life is what you make it’ is a gripping account of a few significant years of Ankita’s life.\textsuperscript{39}

Amitabha Bagchi, (2007): Above Average is the story of a middle class Delhi boy with an aptitude for science and math but a yearning to be the drummer of a rock band. Both of which necessitate his admission to the premier engineering college of India: IIT. SO in keeping with his high grades and all that is expected of him, Arindam effortlessly graduates from being a colony kid to being amongst an elite bunch of techies, the best of science graduates from around the country whose lives revolve around rarefied mathematical truths and the move immediate pleasures of the IIT rock fest.\textsuperscript{40}