



The Indian English Novel: Nation, History, and Narration (Oxford Studies in Postcolonial Literatures)

Priyamvada Gopal

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The Oxford Studies in Postcolonial Literatures series offers stimulating and accessible introductions to definitive topics and key genres and regions within the rapidly diversifying field of postcolonial literary studies in English. It is often claimed that unlike the British novel or the novel in indigenous Indian languages, Anglophone fiction in India has no genealogy of its own. Interrogating this received idea, Priyamvada Gopal shows how the English-language or Anglophone Indian novel is a heterogeneous body of fiction in which certain dominant trends and recurrent themes are, nevertheless, discernible. It is a genre that has been distinguished from its inception by a preoccupation with both history and nation as these come together to shape what scholars have termed 'the idea of India' Structured around themes such as 'Gandhi and Fiction' 'The Bombay Novel' and 'The Novel of Partition' this study traces lines of influence across significant literary works and situates individual writers and texts in their historical context. Its emergence out of the colonial encounter and nation-formation has impelled the Anglophone novel to return repeatedly to the question: 'What is India' In the most significant works of Anglophone fiction, 'India' emerges not just as a theme but as a point of debate, reflection, and contestation. Writers whose works are considered in their context include Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, RK Narayan, Salman Rushdie, Nayantara Sahgal, Amitav Ghosh, Arundhati Roy, and Vikram Seth.

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