

Living in Two Worlds

A sunset scene at the Taj Mahal. The sky is a vibrant orange and yellow, with the sun low on the horizon. In the foreground, two camels with red and purple saddles stand on a grassy bank. Two people are standing near the camels. The Taj Mahal is visible in the background, its white marble reflecting in the water. The entire scene is reflected in the calm water in the foreground.

Indian Immigrant Writers

This is for my fellow-foreigners, travelers along a long, dusty road. This is for the millions who come and go every year. The nameless masses traveling the continents of the world, looking for fortune, knowledge, a safe haven, egged on by a gnawing feeling, gently tugging at the edge of our being and the voices in our head promising us a brand new life, which will cause us to forget or to be forgotten.

Despite momentous obstacles, horrible hardships, and "executive orders," we come to other countries. We come by the cart-loads, in a caravan, in clouds of dust, swaying from side to side to the drums of our ever-louder beating hearts. Camels, elephants, horses, buses, trains, cars, planes. We move around, ever-transient. Ants busying our - selves with the toils of daily life.

But after the dust has settled and been brushed off,
after the suitcases have been unpacked,
after the clothes have been put on hangers,
after the echoes of living quarters
start resounding in our ears once more;
after all that, the silence and the enormity
of what we have done will come upon us.

For even if we have chosen our fate,
it is exile.

We will never belong again.

We can never truly go back again,
for we are changed forever.



Salman Rushdie:

"The ironic proposition that India's best writing since independence may have been done in the language of the departed imperialists is simply too much for some to bear."

Farrukh Dhondy:

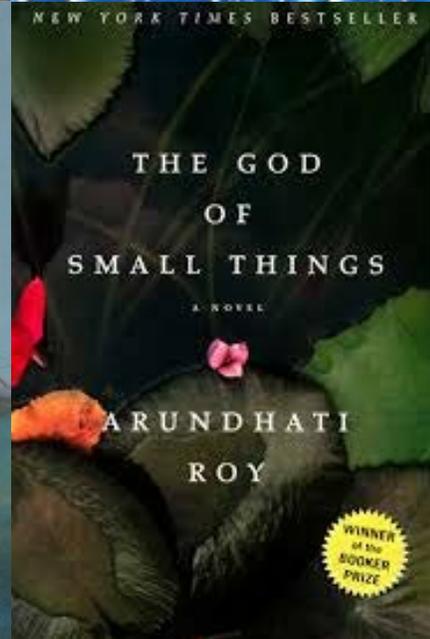
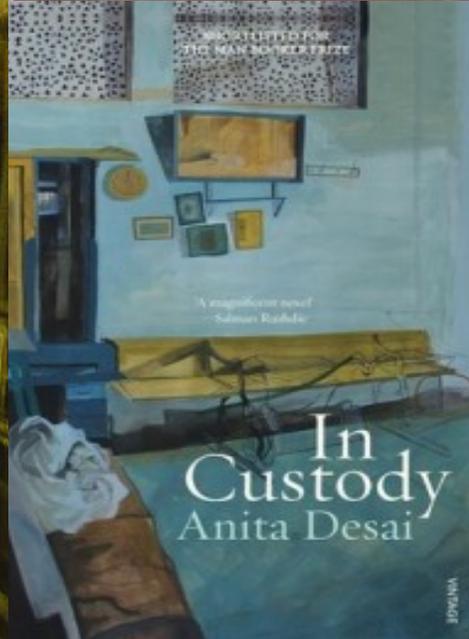
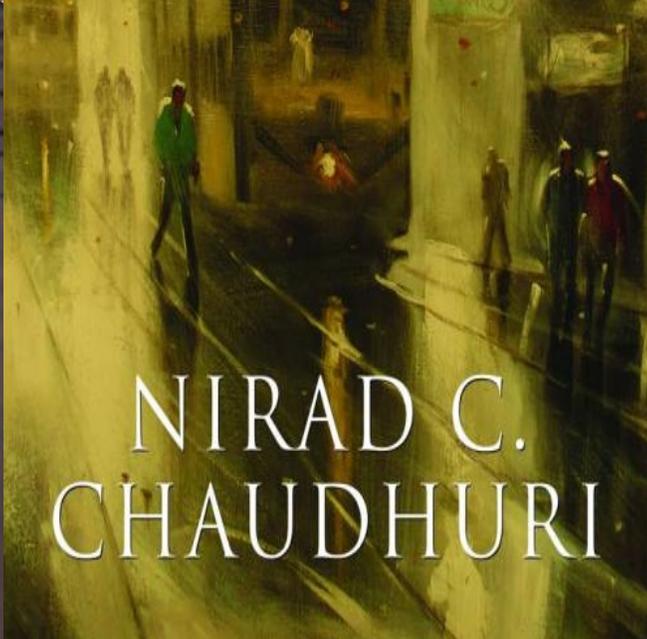
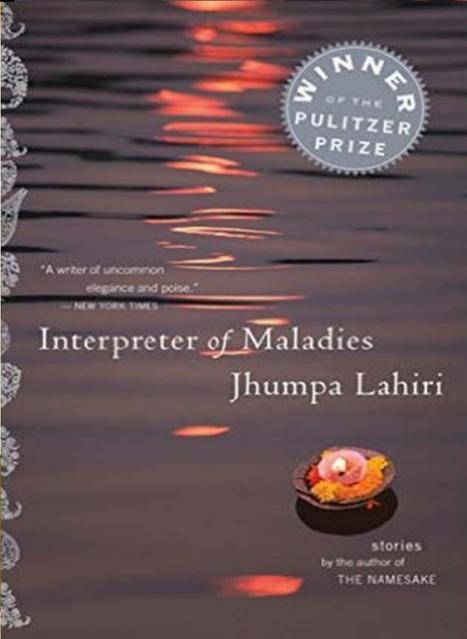
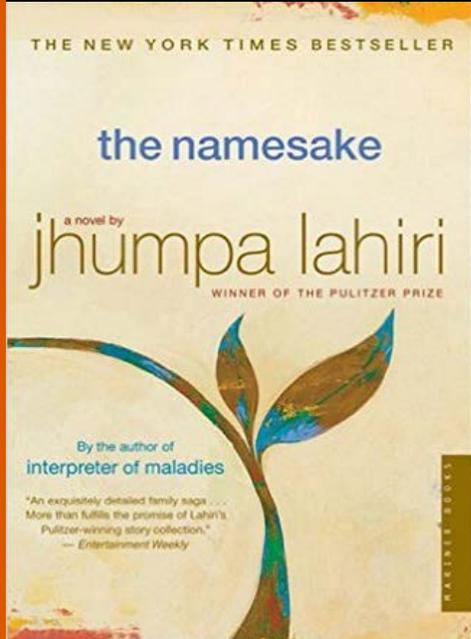
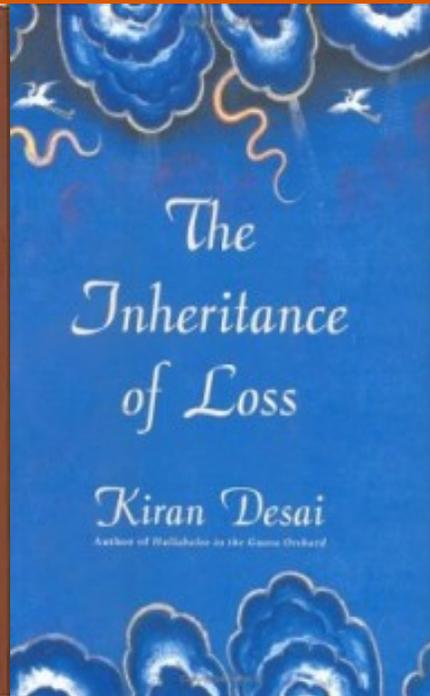
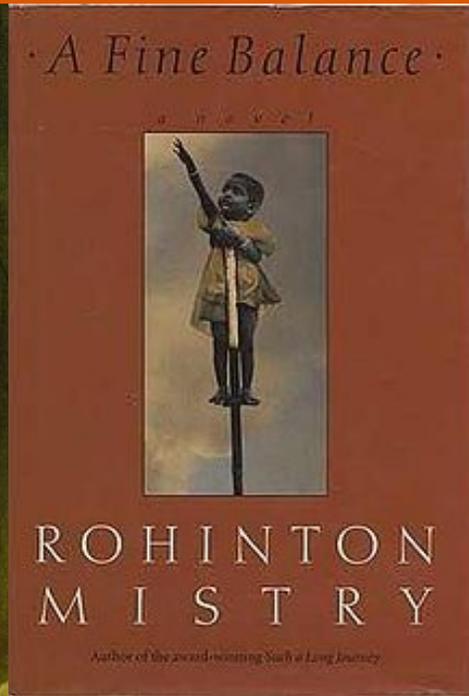
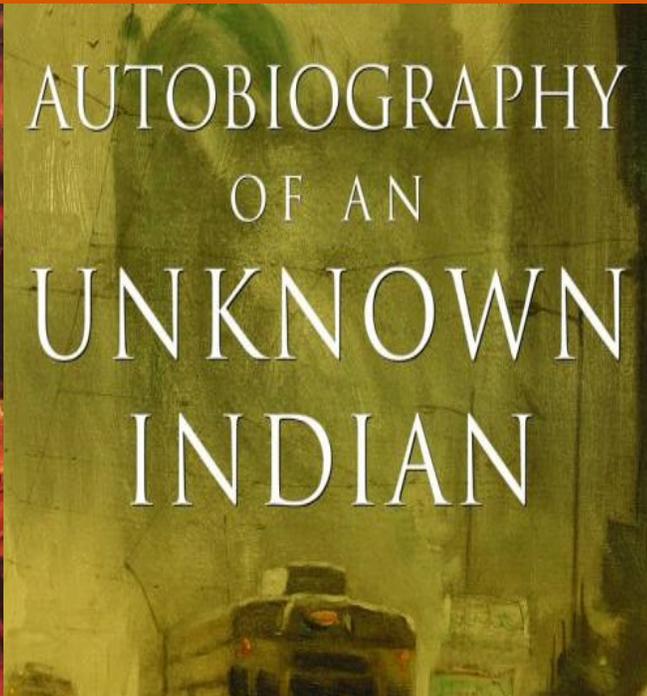
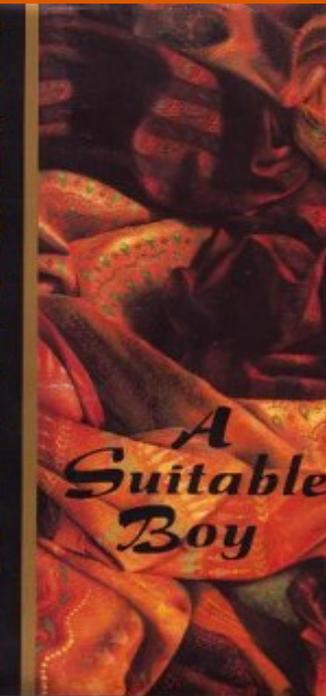
"Should Indian writers write in English at all?
To admit that one thought in English was
somehow to admit that one's mind still wore
the uniform of the departed conqueror.
To use English at all was seen by some to be
a betrayal of the Indian consciousness..."

“IWE” Debate:

- Why write in the language of the oppressor?
- Is IWE literature inferior to Indian literature written in Hindi or another Indian language?
- Is IWE writing “un-Indian”?
- Can IWE literature reflect India in an authentic way?



VIKRAM SEIH
a novel



V. S. Naipaul

- ~Born in Trinidad & Tobago in 1932
- ~Currently lives in Wiltshire in the U.K.
- ~First of Indian descent to win Booker Prize

In a Free State (1971)

A Bend in the River (1979) –Post-colonialism

Half a Life (2001) - Nobel Prize for Literature!





Anita Desai

~ Born in Mussoori, India in 1937

~ *Clear Light of Day* (1980)

In Custody (1984)

Fasting, Feasting (1999)

~ Currently lives in Massachusetts,
and has taught at among others
Mount Holyoke, Smith, & Girton.

Kiran Desai

~ Born in Chandigarh
India in 1971

~ *The Inheritance of Loss*
(2006) won Booker Prize



Currently lives in
Brooklyn, NY.

& National Book
Critics Circle Award.

Salman Rushdie

~ Born Mumbai in 1947

~ Lived in the UK, Pakistan, & NYC

~ *Midnight's Children* (1981)

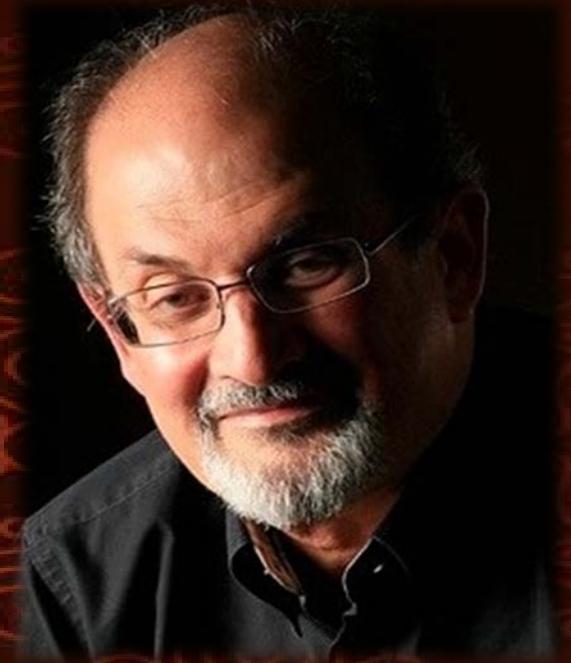
The Satanic Verses (1988) – Fatwa!

The Moor's Last Sigh (1995)

~ Political activist, mentor to writers, & prolific writer

~ Collaborated with U2 on *The Ground Beneath her Feet*

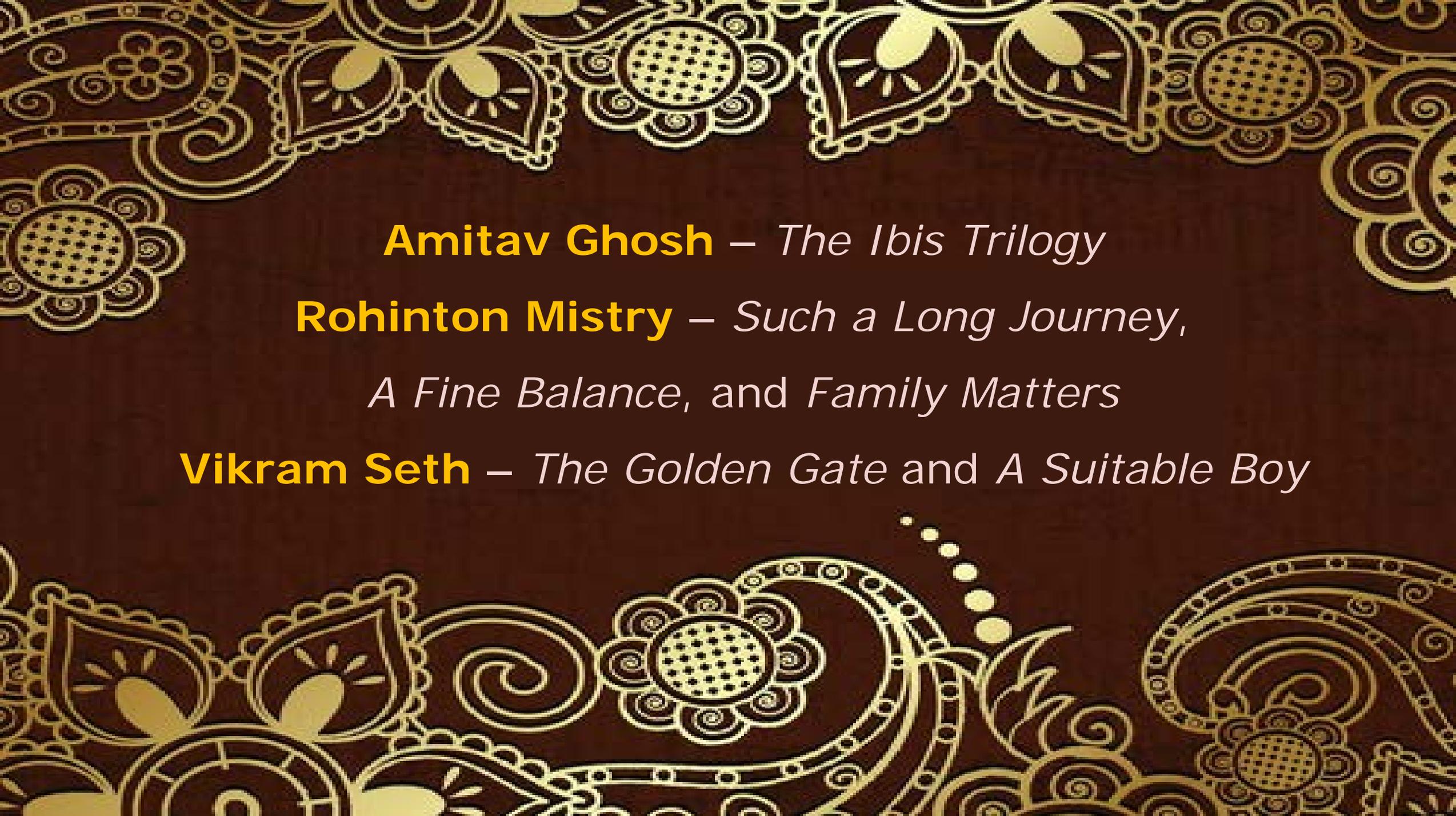
~ Worked with Deepa Mehta on film of *Midnight Children*



Jhumpa Lahiri



- ~ Born in London in 1967, but moved to the USA as a child.
- ~ Attended Barnard College & Boston U.
- ~ *Interpreter of Maladies* (2000)
- ~ *The Namesake* (2003)
- ~ *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008)
- ~ *The Lowland* (2013)
- ~ Currently lives in Brooklyn

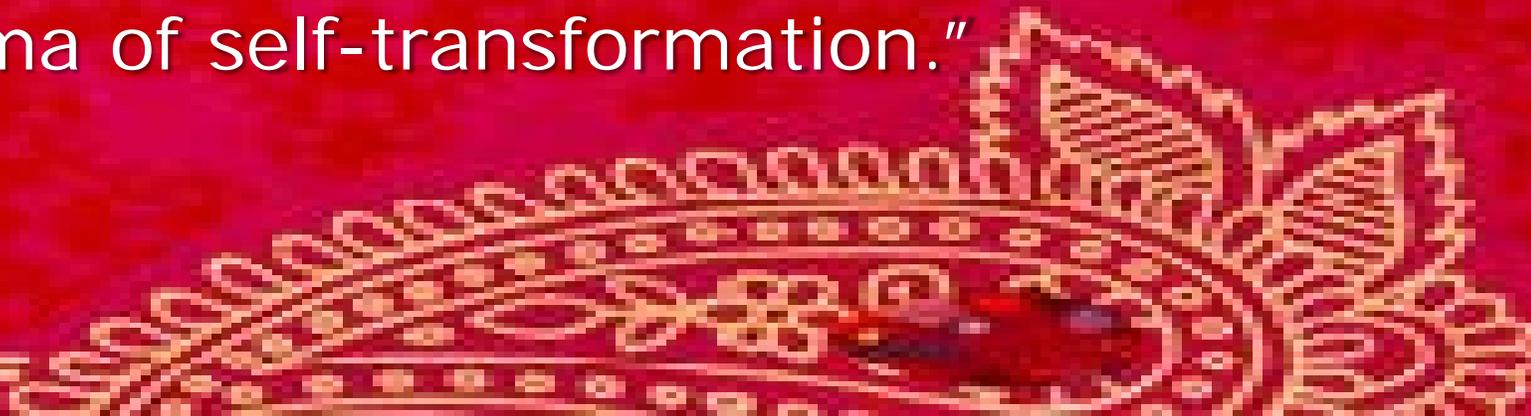


Amitav Ghosh – *The Ibis Trilogy*

Rohinton Mistry – *Such a Long Journey,*
A Fine Balance, and Family Matters

Vikram Seth – *The Golden Gate and A Suitable Boy*

Bharati Mukherjee: "By choosing a husband who was not of my father's selection, I was opting for fluidity and self-invention. My books have often been read as unapologetic texts for cultural and psychological '**mongrelization**.' The price that the immigrant willingly pays, and that exile avoids, is the trauma of self-transformation."



Indian Immigrant Writers straddle two cultures, providing a bridge between the disparate cultural norms of their two countries.

A silhouette of the Taj Mahal in Agra, India, set against a vibrant orange and yellow sunset sky. The reflection of the monument is visible in the water in the foreground.

...and yet, they will never belong again.

They can never truly go back again, for they are changed forever.

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