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**Title of Thesis: Representation of Muslims in Select Indian English Fiction: A Critical Study**

**Keywords: Misrepresentation, Identity construction, Stereotyping, Discourse, Implicit bias, Minority, Otherness**

### **Findings:**

Indian Muslims often appear, in both popular as well as academic discourses, as an anomaly in an idealized monolithic nation. This holds true for most literary expressions as well. However, the question of Muslim representation in Indian literature has gone largely ignored in the critical debates about the same. No serious attempt has been made to critique the stereotypical constructions of Muslim characters or question the absence of a significant section of the population from its fictional universe. Except for a few passing remarks by critics, there is a conspicuous neglect of this issue in the intellectual discourse of the country. In this context, the primary objective of the proposed research thus has been to intensively examine different contours of Indian Muslim identity as represented in select texts. The thesis has not limited its analysis to underline the explicit and deliberate instances of stereotyping in these texts. It explores the possibility of building a neutral, unbiased narrative given the implicit cognitive and linguistic bias, which are the reasons why negative stereotypes associated with Indian Muslims are replicated in the works of unreservedly democratic and inclusive writers like Anita Desai, Arundhati Roy and Khushwant Singh. While speaking for the 'Other', their novels, in different ways, contribute to the discourse of otherness. This predicament seems inevitable and writers cannot escape engaging in the established discourse of duality if they want to write about the margins. This happens because the semiotic framework into which the author translates her ideas is steeped in the nomenclature of stereotypes and cultural subjugation.