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INDIAN ENGLISH AND THE FICTION OF NATIONAL LITERATURE

During the twentieth century, at the height of the independence movement and after, Indian literary writing in English was entrusted with the task of consolidating the image of a unified, seemingly caste-free, modernizing India for consumption both at home and abroad. This led to a critical insistence on the proximity of the national and the literary, which in turn led to the canonization of certain writers and themes and the dismissal of others. Examining English anthologies of “Indian Literature,” as well as the establishment of the Sahitya Akademi (the National Academy of Letters), and the work of R. K. Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand among others, Rosemary George exposes the painstaking efforts that went into the elaboration of a “national literature” in English for independent India, even while deliberating the fundamental limitations of using a nation-centric critical framework for reading literary works.

ROSEMARY MARANGOLY GEORGE is Associate Professor in the Literature Department at the University of California, San Diego. She is the author of *The Politics of Home: Postcolonial Relocations and Twentieth Century Fiction* (Cambridge, 1996) and editor of *Burning Down the House: Recycling Domesticity* (1998).

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*For my very own
Jayshree Marangoly Badrinath
and
Swaminathan Badrinath*

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