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**GLIMPSE OF NEW HISTORICAL ERA IN SHASHI THAROOR'S
*THE GREAT INDIAN NOVEL***

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ABSTRACT

*Shashi Tharoor is the former UN diplomat and a member of Indian parliament. He depicted history in his novels. His intellectual writings question a postcolonial challenge to western notion of history. He represented history of the nation from the eyes of the common people. The present research paper portrays history in Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel*.*

Keywords: Myth, history, nationality, allegory

Modern Indian English novelists such as Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Rukun Advani, Rohinton Mistry, and Shashi Tharoor represented history in their works to make rupture in the colonial perception of history. Shashi Tharoor explored the socio-political and cultural realities in his fictions. His works deal with past, present and future of India. Related to it, Tharoor says: "...my fiction seeks to reclaim my country's heritage for itself, to tell, in an Indian voice, a story of India" (Tharoor, 2012: 25). Since he was the student of history, he included history, mystery and fiction. His writing questions a challenge to western convention of history, fiction and historiography. His works explore endless possibilities of history. He includes reality, history and myth all into one in fictional work. His fiction continues "Rushdie task of chutnifying history of representing post-colonial Indianness in self-reflective post-modern texts" (Plotz 29). While charting out the history of twentieth century India *The Great Indian Novel* "rejects some old assumptions, derived as much from the colonial view of India as from our own uncritically accepted versions of our past" (Tharoor, 2012: 23).

The Great Indian Novel is a satirical novel. It was published in 1989. The novel brought him Federation of Indian Publishers' Hindustan Times Literary Award in 1990. Khushwant Singh admired the book and said: "Perhaps the best work of fiction written by an Indian." *Sunday Observer* called it "a masterpiece of Indian writing" *Financial Times* described it as "A real tour de force only an Indian could write" (TGIN back cover). The fictional story was taken from *Mahabharata*, an Indian epic. Tharoor accept it as: "Many of the characters, incidents and issues in the novel are based on people and events described in the great epic the *Mahabharata* ..." (419). The writer intellectually resets the novel in the context of the Indian Independence Movement.