

## MIT INDIA Suggested Reading and Film List

Revised 4/5/16

### India Reading Suggestions

*We urge you to read several of these publications to expand your knowledge of India and ease your adjustment to Indian culture. Many of these books can be purchased at your local bookstore, online booksellers such as Amazon.com, BN.com or may be available for reference at your campus study abroad office or local library.*

#### Travel Guide:

Menon, Indu and Joan Peterson. *Eat Smart in India: How to Decipher the Menu, Know the Market Foods & Embark on a Tasting Adventures*. Berkley: Gingko Press, 2004.

Gives tips on how to read menus in restaurants, shop in the supermarket or the bazaar in India.

Singh, Sarina. *Lonely Planet: India*. Melbourne: Lonely Planet, 2015.

The Best India travel guide.

Stott, David, Vanessa Betts and Victoria McCulloch. *Footprint Handbook: India*. Bath: Footprint Handbooks, 2016.

Includes information and suggestions for every budget on everything from transport and practicalities to history, culture, and landscape.

#### Non-Fiction: General Readings

Blank, Jonah. *Arrow of the Blue-Skinned God: Retracing the Ramayana Through India*. New York: Grove Press, 2000.

Retelling of an Indian epic combined with a vivid portrait of contemporary India.

Boo, Katherine. *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity*. New York: Random House, 2012.

A Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist and writer at The New Yorker, Boo turns her four years among the people of a Mumbai slum into an absorbing tale of the clash of India, new and old, prosperous and disenfranchised.

Bumiller, Elisabeth. *May You Be the Mother of a Hundred Sons: A Journey Among the Women of India*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1991.

A wonderfully written and fascinating portrayal of Indian women from Bollywood stars to Indira Gandhi to prostitutes. It's an insightful portrait of the country as seen through the eyes of its women.

Coll, Steve. *On the Grand Trunk Road: A Journey into South Asia*. London: Penguin Books, 1994.

Personal reflections by a Pulitzer Prize winning editor of *The Washington Post*.

Dalrymple, William. *The Age of Kali: Indian Travels and Encounters*. London: Flamingo, 1999.

These essays, reportage, and interviews, highlight the underside of Indian (post)-modernity, written by one of its most popular and knowledgeable Western observers. As he searched for evidence of Kali Yug, the “age of darkness” predicted by an ancient Hindu cosmology in a final epoch of strife and corruption, Dalrymple encountered a region that thrilled and surprised him. Venturing to places rarely visited by foreigners, he presents compelling portraits of a diverse range of figures

Dalrymple, William. *City of Djinnns: A Year in Delhi*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2005.

Dalrymple infectiously interweaves his own experiences over a year in Delhi with its art, architecture, history and literature.

Dalrymple, William. *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.

A series of snapshots exploring how traditional religion merges with modern life in India, told through personal stories. Haunting glimpses into aspects of life in India often hidden or misunderstood. Poignant, informative and beautifully written.

Das, Gurcharan. *India Unbound: The Social and Economic Revolution from Independence to the Global Information Age*. New York: Anchor Books, 2002.

This book outlines many of the political, economic and cultural changes that have taken place since Independence.

Devi, Gayatri, and Santha Rama Rau. *A Princess Remembers: The Memoirs of the Maharani of Jaipur*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1976.

Gayatri Devi, also known as the Rajmata of Jaipur, was born as Princess Gayatri Devi of Cooh Behar. She was the third Maharani of Jaipur through her marriage to HH Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II. She joined Indian politics post-independence and became an extremely successful politician.

Dreze, Jean and Amartya Sen. *India: Development and Participation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

A foundational work on development in India, Dreze and Sen’s book takes a freedom-centered analysis of development to consider a wide variety of India’s development achievements and failures. The perspective refreshingly emphasizes human agency as the central catalyst for change and growth and examines the interconnectedness of different institutions in the development process.

Eck, Diana. *Darsan: Seeing the Divine Image in India*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.

A brief and groundbreaking discussion of the role of visuality in Hindu religious practice. The role of the visual is essential to Hindu tradition and culture, but many attempts to understand India's divine images have been laden with misperceptions. Darsan, a Sanskrit word that means "seeing," is an aid to our vision, a book of ideas to help us read, think, and look at Hindu images with appreciation and imagination.

Eck, Diana. *India: A Sacred Geography*. New York: Harmony Books, 2013.

Professor of comparative religion and Indian studies at Harvard, Diana Eck turns her interest in temples and places of pilgrimage into a celebration of the diversity of popular religious traditions in India in this richly rewarding travelogue.

Fernandes, Naresh. *City Adrift: A Short Biography of Bombay*. New Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2013.

Short synopsis of Mumbai both historical and modern. City Adrift offers a compact overview of Mumbai's history and its current issues told through the concerned eyes and thoughts of a local. Simple to read and comprehend but with deceptive scope of subject.

French, Patrick. *India: A Portrait*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011.

Split into three parts, Rashtra (nation), Lakshmi (wealth), and Samaj (society), the booksets rich information about the country's political and cultural history with personal stories from mafia dons and Maoist revolutionaries with day labourers and self-made billionaires. Patrick French organises complex material and ideas in such a way that makes this book intensely interesting, engaging and hard to put down.

Gandhi, Mahatma. *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth* Boston: Beacon Press, 1968.

The story of the life of Mahatma Gandhi, in his own words – how he developed his concept of nonviolent resistance and how he went from a lawyer in South Africa to the one of the key figures in India's Independence Movement. Many representations of India's most admired, revered, and appropriated saint tend towards simplification and romanticization, but his own autobiography reveals a more ambivalent and complex, though still utterly inspiring, picture

Guha, Ramachandra. *India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2008.

A detailed, in-depth, well-rounded and fair account of the Indian Independence movement and the major social, cultural, and political events that have happened since. If you want to deepen your knowledge of modern Indian history and its major actors, look no further.

Iyengar, BKS. *Light on Yoga*. New York: Schocken Books, 1979.

The definitive guide to the philosophy and practice of yoga. In this most significant publication generated by post-1960's engagements with Indian religion and culture, Iyengar offers authoritative discussions of yoga philosophy before moving onto a comprehensive presentation (including pictures) of every major asana (position).

Kapur, Akash. *India Becoming: A Portrait of Life in Modern India*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2013.

Kapur returns to the country of his birth for this revealing and rich tapestry of contemporary India as told through the lives of ordinary people.

Knott, Kim. *Hinduism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

This short book is a reliable, authoritative, and accessible work on Hinduism, the religion practiced by eighty percent of India's population.

Luce, Edward. *In Spite of the Gods: The Strange Rise of Modern India*. London: Little Brown, 2006.

This is an accessible, clear, and insightful work on the New India. Fun to read, the work effortlessly stimulates thoughts for further discussion and investigation. A journalist and bureau chief for the Financial Times, Luce spent several years traveling around India and conducting interviews with Indians from all walks of life, from peasant farmers to heads of state. This recent work presents a probing and critical examination of the country's transformations and enormous complexity. Both scholarly and entertaining, the book is accessible to both the serious student of India today and the casual traveler. Ideas to get you started

Macdonald, Sarah. *Holy Cow: An Indian Adventure*. New York: Broadway Books, 2004.

An Australian ex-pat's memoir about her time in India.

Mehta, Suketu. *Maximum City – Bombay Lost and Found*. Penguin Books; New Delhi, 2004.

Nominated for the Pulitzer Prize for this work, Suketu Mehta presents a dramatic and gripping account of the realities of modern Bombay from a variety of perspectives. A native of Bombay, Mehta gives us an insider's view of this stunning metropolis. He approaches the city from unexpected angles, taking us into the criminal underworld of rival Muslim and Hindu gangs; following the life of a bar dancer raised amid poverty and abuse; opening the door into the inner sanctums of Bollywood; and delving into the stories of the countless villagers who come in search of a better life and end up living on the sidewalks.

Naipaul, V. S. *India: A Million Mutinies Now*. New York: Viking, 1991.

Arising out of Naipaul's lifelong obsession and passion for a country that is at once his and totally alien, *India: A Million Mutinies Now* relates the stories of many of the people he met traveling there more than fifty years ago. He explores how they have been steered by the innumerable frictions present in Indian society—the contradictions and compromises of religious faith, the whim and chaos of random political forces.

Qiron, Adhikary. *Feminist Folktales from India*. Oakland: Masalai Press, 2003.

Collection of folk tales about women's everyday lives in India.

Roy, Arundhati. *The Algebra of Infinite Justice*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2002.

A collection of essays that discusses several perspectives of global and local concern, Roy's political writing offers insight into the state of radical politics in India.

Sen, Amartya. *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian Culture, History and Identity*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2005.

Nobel-Prize-winning economist, Amartya Sen discusses India's history and culture across 16 essays as a means of showing the importance of the country's argumentative tradition. Chapters cover topics as diverse as China and India, Rabindranath Tagore's India, India and the Bomb, and The Indian Identity. Sen's rigor, as a scholar and as a great humanist, makes this book a compelling historical yet modern snapshot of the Subcontinent.

Sethi, Aman. *A Free Man: A True Story of Life and Death in Delhi*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2013.

Mohammed Ashraf studied biology, became a butcher, a tailor, and an electrician's apprentice; now he is a homeless day laborer in the heart of old Delhi. How did he end up this way? Sethi conjures Mohammed Ashraf and his indelible group of day laborer friends in the Old Delhi Railway Station in this searing portrait of life -- and injustice -- in contemporary India.

Shah, Tahir. *Sorcerer's Apprentice: an Incredible Journey into the World of India's Godmen*. New York: Arcade Publishing, 2011.

An amazing story of Shah's apprenticeship to one of India's master conjurers, Hakim Feroze, and his initiation into the brotherhood of Indian godmen. Told with self-deprecating wit, panache, and an eye for the outlandish, it is an account of a magical journey across India.

Tharoor, Sashi. *India: From Midnight to the Millennium and Beyond*. New York: Arcade Publishing, 2012.

Covers Indian history from 1947 until the present.

Tully, Mark. *No Full Stops in India*. New Delhi: Viking, 1991.

A collection of essays, which explore an array of topics from Calcutta and the Kumbh Mela in Allahabad to the televising of a Hindu epic. It combines analysis of major issues with a feel for the fine texture and human realities of Indian life. Particularly interesting for a new comer to India – a Western perspective on the peculiarities of Indian life.

Varma, Pavan K. *Being Indian: Inside the Real India*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2004.

An excellent look at what Indians have to offer the 21st century, Varma's book draws on both traditional and eclectic sources to understand what it means to be Indian today.

### **Historical Texts:**

Basham, A. L. *The Wonder that was India: A Survey of the Indian Sub-continent before the Coming of the Muslims*. New York: Grove Press, 1959.

A broad survey of India from ancient times up until the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This has long been the most-used classic text on ancient Indian civilization and culture.

Chandra, Bipan, Mridula Mukherjee, Aditya Mukherjee, Sucheta Mahajan and KN Panikkar. *India's Struggle for Independence*. New Delhi: Penguin, 1989.

This is the first and most reliable study of India's epic struggle for freedom. Designed for ardent history enthusiasts, it is one of the most exhaustive and precise account of the struggle of Indian Independence ever written in the literary world, beginning with the abortive revolt against the British in 1857 and culminating in the independence of India in 1947.

Choudhury, Chandras. *India: A Traveler's Literary Companion*. Berkley: Whereabouts Press, 2010.

Each of these 14 stories evokes place and landscape, providing an excellent introduction both to contemporary writers and to India's diverse cultures and history.

Denyer, Simon. *Rogue Elephant: Harnessing the Power of Democracy in New India*. London: Bloomsbury Press, 2014.

An astute examination of contemporary Indian politics and economics. Simon Denyer, former Indian bureau chief for the Washington Post, writes on the crisis of confidence in the world's largest democracy.

Keay, John. *Midnight's Descendants: A History of South Asia since Partition*. New York: Basic Books, 2014.

An illuminating history of South Asian countries India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, their interconnectedness and present challenges.

Metcalf, Barbara Daly, and Thomas R. Metcalf. *A Concise History of India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

In a challenging new history of modern India, the authors explore the imaginative and institutional structures that have changed and sustained the country. This history book combines the rigor and comprehensiveness of a standard history with a sense for variety and example that increases accessibility for a non-specialist audience.

Robinson, Andrew. *India: A Short History*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2014.

Robinson's inviting introduction to India chronicles the rise and fall of the India's kingdoms and the unified nation's eventual economic decline, which led to the British subjugation of the Mughal Empire in the mid-19th century.

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.

This classic explanation of Western attitudes (mainly toward the Middle East) has become one of the most important texts of cultural studies. Said's arguments are compelling and far-reaching and this book is essential for anyone seriously interested in Asian Studies.

Thapar, Romila. *Early India: from the Origins to AD 1300*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2002.

This book brings to life thousands of years of history, tracing India's evolution before contact with modern Europe was established: its prehistoric beginnings; the great cities of the Indus civilization; the emergence of mighty dynasties such as the Mauryas, Guptas, and Cholas; the teachings of the Buddha; the creation of heroic epics such as the Mahabharata and the Ramayana; and the creation of regional cultures. The author is one of the best-known historians of India.

Wolpert, Stanley. *India*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2009.

Wolpert's reflections on India -- its religion and philosophy, its art, culture and politics -- make for a literate, succinct primer.

## Religious Texts/Epic Poems in Translation:

Davies, Jonn. *The Bhagavad Gita; or The Sacred Lay*. London: Routledge, 2001.

A Sanskrit philosophical poem translated by John Davies, *The Bhagavad Gita* is a Sanatana Dharma or Hindu scripture produced from the colloquy given by Sri Krishna to Arjuna during the Kurukshetra War. Its philosophies and insights are intended to reach beyond the scope of religion and to humanity as a whole. It is at times referred to as the “manual for mankind” and has been highly praised by not only prominent Indians such as Gandhi but also Aldous Huxley, Albert Einstein, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Carl Jung and Herman Hesse.

De Bary, Theodore. *Sources of Indian Tradition: Volume One*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1958.

A standard source for many undergraduate courses in Indian religion, this book provides an excellent selection of foundational religious texts from Vedic times to the literature of the pre-modern devotional movements. All pieces are introduced and contextualized by the editor – highly recommended.

Hawley, John Stratton and Mark Juergensmeyer. *Songs of the Saints of India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

This research around the life stories and hagiographies of some of India’s most famous poet-saints introduces translations of representative pieces from Nanak, Mirabai, Tulsidas, and so on, provide a solid introduction to bhakti (devotional) literature.

Hess, Linda and Shukdev Singh. *The Bijak of Kabir*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1995.

This is a highly regarded introduction to and translations of one of India’s most broadly revered poet-saints, whose anti-authoritarian message rings clear today. Kabir was an extraordinary oral poet whose works have been sung and recited by millions throughout North India for half a millennium. He may have been illiterate and he preached an abrasive, sometimes shocking, always uncompromising message that exhorted his audience to shed their delusions, pretensions, and empty orthodoxies in favor of an intense, direct, and personal confrontation with the truth.

Narayan, R. K. *The Ramayana*. New Delhi: Vision, 1987.

Ramayana is one of the two great epics of India that depicts the duties of relationships, portraying ideal characters like the ideal father, ideal servant, the ideal brother, the ideal wife and the ideal kin.

Sharma, Arvind. *Classical Hindu Thought*. Oxford: Oxford India Paperbacks, 2000.

This book is divided into sections, which deal with the key concepts of Hinduism such as karma, dharma, maya, moksa and varna and the main gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon.



Swami, Venkatesananda. *The Concise Ramayana of Valmiki*. Albany: SUNY, 1988.

The tale of Rama and Sita is one of the root stories of South Asian civilization. This edition, from a reputable academic publishing house, is based on the 16th century version of the story credited to the poet-saint Tulsidas.

### **Fiction:**

Adiga, Aravind. *The White Tiger: A Novel*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008.

Mordant, funny, angry, horrifying, this Booker Prize-winning tale of a village pauper turned success (and murderer) skewers the ambition, inequity and corruption of 21st-century India.

Bhagat, Chetan. *Five Point Someone: What Not to Do at IIT, a Novel*. New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2004.

Set in the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, in the period 1991 to 1995, this a story about the adventures of three mechanical engineering students (and friends), Hari Kumar (the narrator), Ryan Oberoi, and Alok Gupta, who fail to cope with the grading system of the IITs.

Bhagat, Chetan. *Three Mistakes of My Life: a Story about Business, Cricket, and Religion*. New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2008.

This novel follows the story of three friends and is based in the city of Ahmedabad in western India. Govind dreams of starting a business. To accommodate his friends Ishaan and Omi's passion, they open a cricket shop. However, each has a different motive: Govind's goal is to make money; Ishaan desires to nurture Ali, a gifted batsman; Omi just wants to be with his friends.

Bhagat, Chetan. *Two States: The Story of My Marriage*. New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2009.

A story about a couple coming from two different states of India, who face hardships in convincing their parents and persuading them to get married.

Chandra, Vikram. *Red Earth and Pouring Rain*. London: Faber and Faber, 1995.

This magical realist tale alternates between a classically inspired story of love and heroism in the pre-colonial period, and the frame-story of a contemporary Indian student returning from America.

Chaudhuri, Amit. *A Strange and Sublime Address*. London: Minerva, 1992.

A Bengali boy spends his school holidays at his uncle's home in Calcutta. Also includes four short stories about the city itself.

Desai, Kiran. *The Inheritance of Loss*. New York: Grove Press, 2006.

This novel follows the journey of Biju, an illegal immigrant in the US who is trying to make a new life; and Sai, an Anglicized Indian girl living with her grandfather in India. The novel shows the internal conflicts in India between groups, whilst showing a conflict between past and present.

Lahiri, Jhumpa. *Interpreter of Maladies*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999.

This collection of short stories was awarded the Pulitzer Prize; it considers the experience of Bengali immigrants in Boston and the Indian diaspora in America.

Mistry, Rohinton. *A Fine Balance*. New York: Vintage 2001.

This tale of life during Indira Gandhi's State of Emergency uses the improbable overlap of four lives as a window on brutality, love, hope, and perseverance in the face of adversity.

Nagarkar, Kiran. *Cuckold*. New Delhi: Harper Collins Publishers, 1997.

This is a gripping, off-color portrait of Saint Mirabai, Krishna's greatest devotee, as seen through the eyes of her husband, the Rajput prince of Chittaur in pre-Mughal Rajasthan.

Narayan, R. K. *Malgudi Days*. London: Penguin Classics, 2006.

Four short stories from one of India's foremost writers about a fictional South Indian town populated by quirky characters whose unique approaches to tradition and modernity are the stuff of great tales.

Roberts, Gregory David. *Shantaram*. New York: St. Martin's, 2004.

A book about a convicted Australian bank robber and heroin addict who escaped from Pentridge Prison and fled to India where he lived for 10 years. While partially based on Roberts' own experiences, Roberts himself has clarified that the story and its incidents are largely fictional.

Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1998.

This novel was awarded the Booker Prize, which launched Roy into the international literary scene; it features a unique narrative voice and a complicated but gripping storyline. Equal parts powerful family saga, forbidden love story, and piercing political drama, it is the story of an affluent Indian family forever changed by one fateful day in 1969.

Rushdie, Salman. *Midnight's Children*. New York: Random House, 2006.

Centered on the Partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, this book has earned a nearly canonical status as the classic work of modern India fiction. Saleem Sinai is born at the stroke of midnight on August 15, 1947, the very moment of India's independence. Saleem grows up to learn the ominous consequences of this coincidence: his life is inseparable, at times indistinguishable, from the history of his country. Perhaps most remarkable are the telepathic powers linking him with India's 1,000 other "midnight's children," all born in that initial hour and endowed with magical gifts.

Seth, Vikram. *A Suitable Boy*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1994.

This epic novel is about love, marriage, and politics in post-Partition India, written by the most acclaimed author (and poet) of India's rising generation of writers in English. Set in the early 1950s, in an India newly independent and struggling through a time of crisis, *A Suitable Boy* takes us into the richly imagined world of four large extended families and spins a compulsively readable tale of their lives and loves.

Singh, Khushwant. *Train to Pakistan*. New York: Grove Press, 1981.

One of the most famous narratives of the horrors of Partition, this classic novel provides insight into the tensions that erupted between religious communities in Muslim-majority Pakistan and Hindu-dominated India after Indian Independence in 1947. *Train to Pakistan* is the story of this isolated village that is plunged into the abyss of religious hate. It is also the story of a Sikh boy and a Muslim girl whose love endured and transcends the ravages of war.

Sutcliffe, William. *Are You Experienced?* New York: Penguin, 1999.

This is a harsh but laugh-out-loud funny satire of the poverty-tourist trail in India, seen through the misadventures of a randy English schoolboy named Dave. Sutcliffe's ruthless and scathing skewering of the cult of slumming teens on their life-defining holiday also rings with the genuine twang of excitable, adventurous, vulnerable youth, and is sure to be a favorite with young world-travelers on the road in search of their identity.

Tagore, Rabindranath. *Gitanjali*. Mineola: Dover Books, 2011.

The poem cycle helped Tagore, India's most famous modern writer, garner a Nobel Prize for fiction in 1913. The tone is melancholy but vibrant, and the language enormously rich, even in translation.

## Academic and University Resources:

*Economic and Political Weekly*. <http://www.epw.in/>

This is a journal of social and political sciences published from Mumbai. It has research papers, book reviews, reports on current events both in India and abroad, and economic statistics.

*The Journal of Asian Studies*. Association for Asian Studies Publication. <https://www.jstor.org/journal/jasianstudies>

A U.S. quarterly journal of scholarly articles and book reviews. Library login required.

Library of Congress/Country Studies/Area Handbook Series: Country Studies. <https://www.loc.gov/item/96019266/>

The Library of Congress Country Studies home page presently contains area studies of 85 countries. The database is searchable by country name, keywords, and date.

*Modern Asian Studies*. Cambridge University Press. <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=ASS>

A quarterly journal of scholarly articles and book reviews. Library login required

*The South Asianist: Information on India*. Journal of South Asian Studies, University of Edinburgh.

<http://www.southasianist.ed.ac.uk/>

A rich source of bibliographies on the subject of India. Compiled by various universities.

## Films:

*With increasing popularity worldwide, Indian films are becoming readily available. These can be both a fun and informative way to gain exposure to Indian culture.*

*3 Idiots*. Directed by Rajkumar Hirani. Reliance Entertainment, 2009.

A coming-of-age comedy/drama about three Imperial College of Engineering students, loosely adapted from Chetan Bhagat's novel *Five Point Someone*.

*Aakrosh*. Directed by Priyadarshan. Zee Motion Pictures, 2010.

The Central Bureau of Investigation deposes an Officer to investigate the disappearance of three medical students. Based on the 1988 American film *Mississippi Burning*.

*Aarakshan*. Directed by Prakash Jha. Reliance Entertainment, 2011.

A renowned college is the setting for this drama about caste based reservations of Indian government and educational institution jobs .

*Bombay*. Directed by By Mani Ratnam. Madras Talkies, 1995

A Hindu man and a Muslim woman fall in love in a small village and move to Mumbai, where they have two children. However, growing religious tensions and erupting riots threaten to tear the family apart. A brilliant film made with the communal (Hindu-Muslim) riots of Bombay serving as a backdrop.

*Corporate*. Directed by Madhur Bhandarkar. Percept Picture Company, 2006.

A tale of corporate rivalry set against an Indian backdrop.

*Dil Chahta Hai*. Directed by Farhan Akhtar. Excel Entertainment, 2001.

Three inseparable childhood friends are just out of college. Nothing comes between them - until they each fall in love, and their wildly different approaches to relationships creates tension.

*Dil Se*. Directed by Mani Ratnam. Madras Talkies, 1998.

An award winning romance that deals with terrorism, conflict, and true love. The film's soundtrack also helped composer A. R. Rahman rise to international fame.

*Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*. Directed by Aditya Chopra. Yash Raj Films, 1995.

Known in India by the acronym DDLJ, this lighthearted comedy follows the budding romance between two young British Indians backpacking across continental Europe.

*Earth*. Directed by Deepa Mehta. Cracking the Earth Films, Inc., 1998.

It's 1947 and the borderlines between India and Pakistan are being drawn. A young girl bears witness to tragedy as her ayah is caught between the love of two men and the rising tide of political and religious violence. Released in India as *1947: Earth*.

*Fire*. Directed by Deepa Mehta. Trial by Fire Films Inc., 1997.

A controversial film exploring contemporary Indian mores of sexuality.

*Gandhi*. Directed by Richard Attenborough. Columbia Pictures, 1982.

Academy Award-winning account of the life of Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian independence movement.

*Heat and Dust*. Directed by James Ivory. Universal Classics, 1983.

Follows a young British woman as she attempts to uncover her great-aunt's past as the young wife of a British colonial officer in 1920s India.

*Hum Aapke Hain Koun...!* Directed by Sooraj R. Barjatya. Rajshri Productions, 1994.

A musical romantic-comedy about a married couple and the relationship between their families.

*Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India*. Directed by Ashutosh Gowariker. Aamir Khan Productions, 2001.

The story of a cricket game between a group of Indian villagers and a group of senior Raj officials that will determine the village's financial fate. Colorful depictions of Indian village during the Raj, interspersed with beautiful songs, music, and more, woven around India's national pastime/sport, cricket.

*Lage Raho Munna Bhai*. Rajkumar Hirani. Vinod Chopra Productions, 2006.

A Mumbai underworld don starts to see the spirit of Mahatma Gandhi and develops a lifestyle practice called Gandhigiri to help solve everyday problems.

*Lajja*. Directed by Rajkumar Santoshi. Santoshi Productions, 2001.

Focusing on the plight of women in India, this film tells the story of four women whose names are variations of Sita, the central female character of the Hindu epic *Ramayana*: Maithili, Janki, Ramdulaari, and Vaidehi.

*The Mahabharata*. Directed by Peter Brook. 1990.

Although not a Bollywood venture, Brook brilliantly adapts one of India's most famous and timeless epics.

*Matrubhoomi: A Nation Without Women*. Directed by Manish Jha. Diaphana Films, 2003.

Taking place in 2050, this film examines the potential consequences of the practices of female feticide and infanticide in a rural Indian village.

*Monsoon Wedding*. Directed by Mira Nair. Mirabai Films, 2001.

A delightful romantic comedy/drama set in New (and Old) Delhi in the days leading up to an enormous Punjabi wedding.

*Mr. and Mrs. Iyer*. Directed by Aparna Sen. MG Distribution, 2002.

During a bus journey, a devout Hindu Brahmin woman protects a Muslim man when communal rioting breaks out.

*Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* Directed by Rajkumar Hirani. Vinod Chopra Productions, 2003.

A gangster sets out to fulfill his father's dream of becoming a doctor. Based on *Patch Adams*, centered on the same character as *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*.

*My Friend Ganesha*. Directed by Rajiv S. Ruia. Koffee Break Pictures, 2007.

A lighthearted children's film about a young boy who is regularly visited by a jolly animated Ganesha, the elephant-headed son of Shiva and the remover of obstacles.

*Page 3*. Directed by Madhur Bhandarkar. Lighthouse Entertainment, 2005.

A contemporary portrayal of high society journalism in Mumbai.

*Passage to India*. Directed by David Lean. EMI Films, 1984.

Cultural mistrust and false accusations doom a friendship in British colonial India between an Indian doctor, an Englishwoman engaged to marry a city magistrate, and an English educator.

*Peepli Live*. Directed by Anusha Rizvi. Aamir Khan Productions, 2010.

A satirical comedy about an impoverished farmer who threatens to end his life, which ends up attracting attention from politicians and media.

*Salaam Bombay!* Directed by Mira Nair. Cinecom Pictures, 1988.

A raw account of the lives of street children in 1980s Mumbai.

*Sholay*. Directed by Ramesh Sippy. Sippy Films, 1975.

The highest-grossing Indian film of all time, *Sholay* chronicles the antics of a pair of village criminals who are hired to kidnap a cold-blooded bandit.

*Sita Sings the Blues*. Directed by Nina Paley, 2008.

A beautiful animated take on the classic tale of the *Ramayana*, told from Sita's perspective. Available for free download.

*Taare Zameen Par (Like Stars on Earth)*. Directed by Aamir Khan. Aamir Khan Productions, 2007.

Explores the life and imagination of Ishaan, an eight-year-old dyslexic child. Although he excels in art, his poor academic performance leads his parents to send him to a boarding school. Ishaan's new art teacher suspects that he is dyslexic and helps him to overcome his disability.

*Traffic Signal*. Directed by Madhur Bhandarkar. Percept Picture Company, 2007.

This film is about the lives and travails of people living around a fictitious traffic signal in Mumbai, centered on Silsila, the "manager" of the signal.



