

MALGUDI AS A PLATFORM IN R. K. NARAYAN'S WORKS

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ABSTRACT

R. K. Narayan is known as the best story teller of human behavior in Modern Indian literature. He has a good knowledge of the life of middle class Indians. The tension, conflicts in human relations within the domestic circle of this class are thoroughly described in his novels and short- stories. He is one of the most popular literary figures along with Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. These three Indian novelists have the credit of bringing Indian English Literature into world's notice.

Keywords: Myth, Tradition, Malgudi, Modern Society.

Introduction

Malgudi is the fictional setting of R.K. Narayan's novels and stories. This place has equivalent average to the other writers of English Literature. It is associated to 'boarder countries' of Sir Walter Scott, *Lake District* of William Wordsworth, 'The Wessex' of Thomas Hardy, or *five Towns* of Arnold Bennet. Malgudi is an imaginary South Indian town round which Narayan has interlaced the multifaceted shape of the lives of his characters. The booklovers are engaged to this make-believe land to laugh, sympathies, and share the variations of its populations. This make-believe setting came to Narayan's mind instantaneously: I remember waking up with the name Malgudi on Vijayadashami, the day on which the divinity of learning is celebrated. Malgudi was a shaking finding for me, because I had no mind for facts and things like that, which would be necessary in writing about Malgudi or any real place. I first pictured not my town but just the railway station, which was a small platform with a banyantree, a station master, and two trains a day, one coming and one going. On Vijayadashami, I sat down and wrote the first sentence about my town: 'the train had just arrived at Malgudi station.'

R.K.Narayan an award winning novelist, essayist and short story writer is generally considered one of the greatest Indian. He is popularly known the creator of the **Malgudi Society**. Malgudi is located in South India. R. K. Narayan presented a glimpse of India in Malgudi. He showed life is very hard in Malgudi and there is very little human happiness. He said in his works that poverty and lack of education, prejudices are the cause of lack of happiness.

Objectives

- To study R.K. Naryana as a prominent writer
- To study the role of place Malgudi in his works

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Myth in Malgudi

The Man Eater of Malgudi based on myths. The story of the peaceful Printer Natarej who must overcome the demon like Vasu is structured very much like a myth. There are presented various Hindu myths in this book. The battle between Vasu and Natraj is framed perfectly in the context of myth. The action that occurs in the novel have many similarities to other myths that is in Ramayana and the Bhasmasura.

In *The Quite Town of Malgudi*, there lived Savitri and her husband, Ramani. They have three children- Babu, Kamala and Sumati. Here also showed some traditional values which came into internal conflict between husband and wife.

The Guide it is also set by R.K. Narayan in his fictional town Malgudi. Here also showed the conflict between the modern and the tradition. It begins with realistic settings and everyday happenings in the lives of a cross section of Indian society with characters of all sections. Here showed the fate and fortune of Malgudi peoples. The characters accept their fates with an equanimity that suggests the faith that things will somehow turn out happily. This, in a way implies the basic viewpoint of the novelist and depicts the approach towards life he seems to advocate. Raju, like a leaf drifts away with the wind of circumstances, reaches his lowest point when he gets imprisoned, is given a second chance and then hopes for a better tomorrow.

Malgudi Days it is a collection of 32 short-stories. All these stories set in the fictional town Malgudi. All stories showed the fact, myth and life of Malgudi.

The New York Times: -described the virtue of the book as "everyone in the book seems to have a capacity for responding to the quality of his particular hour. It's an art we need to study and revive.

The Swami and Friends is the simple and charming story set in the 1930s of ten-year old Swami Nathan and his experience of growing up. Swami lives in a world of "bossy adults" parents and teachers, as well as his friends in school. Pleasing his demanding peers as well as the adults is a tough job indeed. But Swami tries to manage. Swami is impulsive, mischievous and innocent. And he has a very warm heart. Through his eyes reflected a complete picture of South India during the pre-Independent era. We come to know how simple folk lived in the colonial days and how it affected their uprisings.

Bachelor of Arts, set in Malgudi, is the second novel by Narayan in his literary works. It is a story about a young man, Chandran, tracing his college days, a failed love, a flight, a stint of asceticism, a revival and return, employment, and finally his marriage. The novel deals with the theme of Chandran's love affair with Malathi. It underlines that Malgudi does not allow Chandran to communicate with Malathi before marriage. When Chandran decides to marry Malathi the mismatch of horoscope becomes the great problem. In this novel showed the customs and traditions of Malgudi.

In *The Dark Room* Narayan has realistically drawn the picture of Indian middle-class family with all its complexities. He has displayed the husband- wife relationship in a simple manner. It is a picture of a traditional Hindu house-wife, her silence during the suffering. Savitri said in the sense self-evaluation: **"We are responsible for our position. We accept food, shelter and comforts that you give, and are what we are...I don't possess anything in this world."**

- **A Tiger for Malgudi:** It revolves round Raja, a tiger who spends most of time in captivity, and later part of his life in serenity, on the hills. Raja recounts the time he was captured by the owner of a circus, and how he would manage to escape. Then he enjoys his youth in the wild jungles of India. R.K. Narayan not only presented human beings of Malgudi but so many other things also. In this novel showed how Raja captured by hunters and circus men and forced to perform some tricks in the circus. R.K. Narayan presented the hardship of the lives of Malgudi. It presents an insight into the animal world.

Narayan is at his best giving his fictional setting of Malgudi a reality of his own. His energy has been spent over the details of the characters and the manners of the people moving over the canvas of Malgudi. Their individual traits and habits have been depicted with certain relevant details. Narayan portrays –Marco of *The Guide* intensely interested in his own researches. He is also very particular about the vouchers. Raju's father takes keen interest in talks regarding litigation. The manners of Raju from tourist guide to the holy man change according to the exigencies of the situation, but his manners remains almost the same throughout. In this way the reality of Malgudi is directly or indirectly the reality of the manners of characters, their places, their attitudes, their taste and poise of their personalities. Narayan's reality of Malgudi is the presentation of different human attitudes individually differing in their

environment in a most realistic manner. It is usually built round Indian beliefs and superstitions. The smells, sights, sounds and flavors form the part of the experience of Malgudi. They are conveyed to all of us with extraordinary vividness.

Conclusion

It is clear that the themes of R. K. Narayan's works move around Hindu myths and legends. It vivifies Indian social reality. He has an extraordinary power of presenting the multiple facets of life. Though not a critic of society, he is certainly a keen observer of life and manners. His novels present problems and conflict of day-to-day-life of contemporary society. It is not the struggle in the experience of protagonist life. It is day-to-day experience of all suffering humanity. We feel too close to men and women facing life and challenges in his novels that it creates a feeling of identification the modern world. Most of the brief tales in *Malgudi Days* are remembered from previous times, ranging from not long ago to decades earlier. These little stories seem naïve and simple. Here, however, is where their strength may lie. They do not pretend to be anything other than what they are. In their clean prose and simple attitudes, they may well achieve a power and a truth that many more fashionable works miss.

Narayan's characters adhere to or violate the ethical and moral system which is the major component of Indian philosophy and thought. R.K. Narayan is one of those great writers, few in numbers, who have achieved recognition and acceptance. He believes in 'art for art's sake', but it does not mean that he is a writer without any vision of life.

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