

CHAPTER - VII

C O N C L U S I O N

R. K. Narayan's outlook is primarily comic. It is comic in a broad philosophic sense, which enables him to weave all the bizaree events into a beautiful vision of life; in which every small event, every small acquaintance, however, insignificant and absurd it might seem, turns out to have a meaningful role in the eternal scheme of things.

Narayan's vision is shaped by a strong Indian sensibility that precludes any possibility of tragedy, because man here is safely placed in a cosmic hierarchy with relations extending not only to his fellow men but also to Nature and God, not only in time and space but also beyond time and space. In the scheme of things man is responsible to God as much as God is responsible to man. In hours of human helplessness God's grace comes to help, as it is symbolically affirmed in The Man Eater of Malgudi. In such a universe man is never driven to the 'boundary situation'⁽¹⁾ so as to feel completely abandoned. The Indian world view holds that the world and the various human attachments are 'maya', and failure on the mundane level does not necessarily bring any awful sense of tragedy. For the Indian, man is finally, not alienated from but united with the universe or with the source of all creation. With the cycle of cause and effect ('Karma') operating from birth to rebirth, and man assured of the ultimate spiritual reunion, no final pessimism is possible. Moreover, the Indian traditional society by means of its rigid social and moral codes maintains a keen sense of social cohesion thus making any

alienation or disintegration impossible.

Malgudi comedy underlines this traditional Indian belief in the ultimate integration. This also corroborates the views of critics like Potts and Northrop Frye with regard to the Comic. Potts believes that there is in man's character a compelling tendency which seeks integration with the life of his society, to merge with others and to be a part of something greater than the individual self :

The conviction that the individual is unimportant except as a part of something wider; the impulse to mix, and to seek common ground with the rest of one's kind ...⁽²⁾

Potts calls this, 'social sense'⁽³⁾ which forms the basis of comedy.

This social sense is the dominant motif in Narayan's novels. In them "the social and moral world are contiguous" and "the social world is properly conceived a moral world."⁽⁴⁾ The emphasis is not so much on puritan moral values as it is on a social consciousness rooted in traditional morality that nevertheless allows concessions to human frailties. To quote Northrop Frye :

Comedy usually moves towards a happy ending, and the normal response of the audience to a happy ending is 'this should be'; which sounds like a moral judgment. So it is, except that it is not moral in the restricted sense, but social. Its opposite is not the villainous but the absurd.⁽⁵⁾

Characters like Sampath and Vasu are dismissed because they become absurd in the Malgudi setting. At the heart of Narayan's comedy there is an awareness of absurdity. Even though in his novels there is a perceptible moral bias, "one feels that the social judgment against the absurd is closer to the comic norm than the moral judgement against

the wicked". (6) In his comic world the characters are purged of their absurdities and are integrated with the society.

But through these absurd characters -- printer, poet, man-eater, guide, financial expert, sweets vendor --- Narayan weaves his Malgudi comedy that follows the traditional comic pattern of order-disorder-order. Narayan's heroes, notwithstanding their stupidity, rebel against all social constrictions which thwart their freedom. Their actions embody their existential defiance against a hostile universe. But in the process they fall into incongruous and absurd situations in relation to their society. They overstep their limits and forget the reality of their stations like the pretty wife of the shoemaker in Lorca's. The Shoemaker's Prodigious Wife, or take to a hedonistic credo of living, ^{like} the Falstaff or like Don Quixote fighting imaginary battles. The characters work out their various schemes, pursue their grandiose ambitions in the orthodox, tradition-bound society of Malgudi. All these take place in a special world where the established roles of the society are in temporary suspension, upto the final comic resolution when various human forces are brought to the orbit of social equilibrium. The Malgudi society has tremendous resilience to withstand all these pressures because there is a built-in restorative mechanism in it that at the opportune moment gears itself back to order.

If the 'disorder' is due to man against his society, the ultimate order in the comic framework is due to man wedded to his society. In Narayan's fiction man and society are symbiotically related and the bliss that comes at the end is the outcome of this rela-

tionship. Not only man alone emerges chastened; the society also gets affected in the sublimation process. Narayan's comedies register this movement "from illusion to reality",⁽⁷⁾ and in the process characters as well as the society are born into a sort of new life. This is a form of the comic archetype of death-resurrection. Frye's comment on this ritual pattern in comedy is relevant in this context:

The ritual pattern behind the catharsis of comedy is the resurrection that follows the death, the epiphany or manifestation of the risen hero. In Aristophanes the hero who often goes through a point of ritual death, is treated as a risen god, hailed as a new Zeus, or given the quasi-divine honours of the Olympic victor. In New Comedy the new human body is both a hero and a social group.⁽⁸⁾

Narayan's novels can be said to be in the pattern of the New Comedy. The individual traverses along a path of follies and misadventures seemingly throwing the social stability into peril, and at last expiating for his blunders, returns to the fold of the society. In view of the assured security of the Malgudi society, the apparent disasters resulting from the unbridled impulses and instincts of the comic hero only serve to build up the comic tension. The narrative implies this sense of social security, and in the context of this awareness the erratic acts and adventures of characters in Narayan's fiction arouse laughter.

In all the chaos and confusion, in all the disorderliness that we perceive in his fictional world, Narayan systematically shapes the emotional response of his readers towards the final end.

He, by means of clever contrivance, weaves the disorderly episodes into a significant pattern within a framework of moral or aesthetic awareness. This pattern may suggest either a reintegrated society or a repentent individual. The individual's acts and aberrations are judged against certain pre-existing values implied in the narrative. The narrative shapes the reader's response or attitude, for it contains, as Bradbury suggests, 'a running act of persuasion'. Bradbury says :

Our means of engagement with that world is through a running act of persuasion which may be stabilised as a 'tone', a rhetorical wholeness or narrative posture devoted not only to convincing us that there is here a whole world operational and worth attention but that it is *assessable* and comprehensible only if a certain attitude is taken to it. (9)

This 'narrative posture' in Narayan implies an awareness of moral norms of social manners. And because of the subtle assurance of the narrative posture, the reader is able to laugh at the eccentricities and absurdities of the characters. It is worthwhile to quote Maynard Mack in this context:

Even a rabbit, were it suddenly to materialize before us without complicity, could be a terrifying event. What makes us laugh is our secure consciousness of the magician and his hat. (10)

Narayan's comic vision, like the magician, gives us the assurance that all *shall* be well despite all the follies and misadventures of his

heroes.

Narayan uses irony as a rhetorical weapon to wake his characters out of their dreams and thus to bring them back to the fold of the society. Narayan does this by an affectionate understanding of the various existential compulsions which confront his characters. It "accepts life and human nature"⁽¹¹⁾ and in that sense it is different from satire. Satire "does not accept, it rejects and aims at destruction"⁽¹²⁾ whereas Narayan's comedy aims at correction and integration as it evokes ridicule and laughter.

There is a distinct low mimetic bias in Narayan's comedy. It operates within a definite social framework with roots in traditional and moral values. The historical and geographical details about Malgudi and the behavioural details of its people convey a vivid impression of Malgudi's small, docile society. The reader can feel immediately its "weighty ecology"⁽¹³⁾ so that the human comedy that he witnesses here becomes a part of his intense, intimate experience. The characters who are brought to the stage of Malgudi are ordinary men and women with common human ambitions and flaws. Margayya, Raju, Jagon, Vasu and many others are bound to their obsessions and thus exist in states of 'ritual bondage'.⁽¹⁴⁾ These obsessions relate to either money or son or other common human aspirations. Because of these shared premises between the characters in the novel and the readers in terms of the ordinary human longings, Narayan's comedy is rendered affectionate and intimate. Rather than bear the satiric venom of Swift, it combines the good humour of Fielding and Wodehouse,

the moral awareness of Jane Austen and the humour and pathos of Chekov.

Narayan's comedy does not, of course, ignore the sad things of life which are at the very root of human existence. But these are woven into the very soul of comedy. It admits the painful fact of man's living in an ironical universe. Whether it is the painful process of ageing, or the death of a grandmother, whether it is the sad disintegration of Jagon's dreams and ideals or the compelling ordeal of Raju -- all these are woven into the fabric of comedy and as inevitable facts of life, these are accepted not with bitterness but with humility. The Comic always ensures a triumph of life over death, separation, over all that negates life in a social context. The sorrows make the characters humble and wise and this is the vision that the comic spirit reveals. With this humility and wisdom, it becomes again a family or social reunion or at times, as with Raju, a final transcendence.

Whether it is a story of children as in Swami and Friends or a story of an old man as in The Vendor of Sweets, the reader is straight carried into the heart of the scene without any aid of the author or the narrator. He wins the citizenship of this world and emotionally gets involved in the events and in the characters. Any authorial interjection or any comment of the narrator would have conditioned the reader's response creating a barrier between the reader and the fictional reality. Neither Narayan, nor his language which is a 'plain mirror', creates this barrier. In Mr. Sampath we accept Srinivas, the narrator, because of his close proximity to us. The narrative technique wants us to see things as Srinivas sees it. One

may say that the reader identifies himself with Srinivas as much as Narayan does it with the latter, that "The author is present in every speech given by any character who has had conferred upon him, in whatever manner, the badge of reliability"⁽¹⁵⁾. Through Srinivas, the human comedy is brought home to the reader. This is made possible by the occasional comments and the philosophical reflections of Srinivas. This technique has sometimes the danger of sacrificing the dramatic tension. Save The Maneater of Malgudi where Nataraj could well have been the narrator because of his proximity to the common reader, no other novel could have justifiably employed any of its characters as narrator. The case of Jagon narrating the story of his own life or Raju describing his last days would have reduced the comic tension to a great extent. In both the cases it would have slid into the sentimental or the melodramatic. But when there is no such medium as the narrator or the voice of the author to carry the reader, the scene is an open one where the reader can have a sweeping vision of all the things happening both inside and outside the characters without ever being biased or prejudiced or in any way conditioned by any particular point of view. He sees events in all their aspects and with an unclouded vision perceives the inherent comedy. In The Guide Narayan makes an innovation in his narrative technique. Through the autobiographical narration of Raju's life from his innocent childhood to the crucial turning point, we are persuaded to see the joys of his early days, the adventure of his adolescence through his eyes so that his willing martyrdom can be understood in the perspective of the spiritual journey of his life.

The 'authorial silence' in Narayan's fiction is not absolute void, for "though the author can to some extent choose his disguises, (16) he can never choose to disappear". The objective narrator always remains in the wings to guard us against going along blind alleys of judgment and enjoyment. In this context Narayan's neutrality is based on a strong sense of the traditions, on the accepted decorum and decency of life in a middle class family as well as in a small town. Through the very treatment of plot and particularly through his delicate irony, Narayan subtly communicates his point of view. Mr. Booth's words may well be applied to Narayan :

Everything he shows will serve to tell; the line between showing and telling is always to some degree an arbitrary one. (17)

The deep sense of humour which pervades all his novels springs from the recognition that our misfortunes are the consequences of our silly ideas and ambitions and can be accepted not with despair, but as a positive influence on our characters. The discomfiture of the individual is mainly of his own doing resulting from his absurd aspirations in a limited world. Thus "humour may be defined as the sense within us which sets up a kindly contemplation of the incongruities of life, and the expression of that sense in art". (18) Not only are the comic hero's confrontation with an unfriendly universe and the corresponding comedy depicted; but also are presented the numerous peculiarities of other men and women, their oddities and angularities in doing the various transactions of life. The Malgudi reality is based on stable social

values so as to contain these irregularities, these occasional eruptions of passions and emotions. Malgudi's presence is made vivid not only by mere geographical details; the reader also becomes emotionally aware of its enduring presence. The thousand small comedies of man's dreams and aspirations, of his revolts and retreats glow in their typical humanness, against the backdrop of the intimate and eternal presence of Malgudi. That in this docile yet vivacious setting of Malgudi, human suffering often has a humorous side, is illustrated by Narayan's delectable irony. It is because the religion of the comic asks to take pains and suffering in one's stride and laugh at one's own self as Raju and to a lesser extent Jagon do. By refusing to suffer in pain they deny the supremacy of pain and assert their indomitable ego. Narayan's comic vision not only deals with the joyous sides of life, but also with its serious and painful aspects. The odds of life are transmuted into meaningful experiences. In spite of the occasional sorrows and sufferings in the novels. Narayan's world does not present any picture of gloom and despair as the comic vision diffuses the assured warmth of life. Most of our problems are the result of our wrong understanding of this world and ourselves. Since disaster is not the ultimate fact in Narayan's fiction and since the Sarayu river the Taluk office gong, the Lawley statue the Puja rituals of the mother, the superstitions of the grandmother and a lot of other things convey the sense of the inevitable and the eternal reality of Malgudi, the individual's absurd designs and his

corresponding sufferings and embarrassments appear funny deserving to be viewed with a sympathetic smile. What Ian Watt comments while discussing Fielding's Tom Jones holds equally good in the case of Narayan's treatment of plot;

Fielding must temper our alarm for Sophia's fate, by assuring us that we are witnessing, not real anguish, but that conventional kind of comic perplexity which serves to heighten our eventual pleasure at the happy ending, without in the meantime involving any unnecessary expenditure of tears on our part. (19)

In a work of comic realism the fictional world must closely correspond to our impression of the real world. Minute details with regard to the way people eat, dress, worship, desire and do a lot of other things are described so as to create the successful fictional illusion. As David Lodge comments :

Fictional characters are, therefore, provided with a context of particularity much like that with which we define ourselves and others in the real world; they have names, parents, possessions, occupation etc. ordered in such a way as not to violate our sense of probability derived from the empirical world. (20)

Since Narayan's main concern is not with any social documentation, but with the depiction of the comic side of life, he has to provide an authentic locale in which he has to treat men and women in their various manners and moods. Rightly, therefore, he sharply chisels

out his characters in terms of their particular individualities. These characters seldom fall into the category of 'types' and are distinctly marked out from one another by their individual ideas and idiosyncrasies. The characters as well as the place Malgudi with its distinct features like the river, the hills, etc., convey unmistakably the impression of a living existence. The Malgudi experience is brought home to the reader through, what Ian Watt calls 'the individualization of its character', and 'the detailed presentation of their environment'⁽²¹⁾. These contribute to the 'feel', 'the atmosphere' of the novels, which as Brooks and Warren say, is also 'an element of the meaning'⁽²²⁾.

In Narayan's fiction there is no prolonged description of natural scenery. The topography has been rendered clear and vivid to the extent that it serves a meaningful role in the human drama. The Sarayu river is as much associated with the childhood play of Swami and his friends as with Raju, Jagon, Raman and so many others. Narayan is more concerned with the details of human actions, and the small geographical descriptions provide necessary authenticity to these actions. The river, the hills, the statue and the streets together with the Malgudians and their thousand small events and aspirations provide a vivid rendering of life, a community existence bound not only to one another, but also to the mute Mampi hills and the Sarayu river in an age-old emotional attachment. Sarayu particularly brings an intense nostalgic fervour to the novels, not because it is associated with the daily living of the Malgudians, but because it is an enduring company of the innocent days of childhood,

of the carefree adolescence and the long years of old age. The Sarayu is not only a fact of the immediate present, but as Srinivas muses in Mr. Sampath, mingles with the hoary tradition as its history stretches from the remote past to the present. Into this flux of time, the abiding spirit of the Sarayu brings in that compelling sense of the Eternal before which the serious transactions of the temporal world of Malgudi appear quite quixotic.

The characters journey through time. The journey is very often focused in a biographical perspective, that unfolds their movement from ignorance to knowledge in the comic framework of the narrative. 'Life by time' and 'Life by values', to quote phrases from E.M. Forster's Aspects of the Novel, are intertwined together.

In order to create a successful fictional illusion the local is to be properly identified. Narayan provides all the details of a traditional society in transition -- the age old superstitions, gods and grandmothers, the cricket club, the film actress and the family planning. Simultaneously, the values that sustain the Malgudi society are underscored implicitly as the plot advances. By the technique of 'formal realism' Narayan provides authenticity as well as credibility to his creations. This helps in directing all the narrative efforts of Narayan towards, what Malcolm Bradbury calls, 'the persuasive ends' of the novel:

the novelist undertakes so to shape and use the fictional transaction as to elicit from himself and the reader, the highest sense of meaning, relevance, sig-

nificance, of variation and richness but also of con-
(23)
cord and elegance...

In Narayan's human comedy, a sort of liberated awareness of life is inherent. This awareness is realized not through a moralising stance, but through aesthetically satisfying form and style that enable us to derive a meaning of life and things, for as Brooks and Warren suggest "We do not like to be preached at, but we do demand a sense of meaningfulness."
(24)

That there is a certain moral concern in Narayan's novels is generally accepted. A casual reading of his novels will acquaint us with, what F.R. Leavis calls, 'a vital capacity for experience, a kind of reverent openness before life and a marked moral intensity!'
(25) But the moral concern is not divorced from the form of the novel. Ordinary human transactions are transmuted into the beauty of living as these are described to us lucidly, with authentic circumstantial details, with ironic turn of events and understones, and with a unique sense of good humour permeating even the odds of life. We can safely apply here David Lodge's analysis of Emma, as he wishes to amend Leavis' comment on the novel:

When we examine the moral preoccupation that characterize Jane Austen's peculiar interest in life as manifested in Emma, we find that they can be appreciated only in terms
(26)
of the formal perfection of the novel.

Narayan's sensibility operates on various levels of human experiences and he does it in a style that can be called 'neutral'. He draws

from the vast spectrum of life -- from the ordinary details of daily drudgeries to high ambitions and passions, and all these are shaped and moulded by the comic sensibility of Narayan to find their due places in the Malgudi comedy. All these contribute to the unified impression of the Comic. It is made possible by Narayan's extraordinary sensibility, which is like, as Henry James points out while discussing the artist and the artistic process, "a kind of huge spider-web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness, and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue." (27). He gives vivid details of his men and women and in the process he subtly suggests the peculiarities involved. The trivialities, whether they have a direct bearing on the plot or not, build up the comic atmosphere of the novel. Narayan in treating these trivialities in a very simple and affectionate manner, transmutes them into significant aspects of life. His is not any grand theme of kings and emperors, of marvels and murders; his is a theme of the ordinary man trying to live life more meaningfully. Narayan's art takes cognizance of the fact that "some of the most interesting experiments of which it's capable are hidden in the bosom of common things". (28). Narayan chooses a style which is in perfect harmony with such a theme, a style that is simple yet dignified and graceful.

Narayan's narrative records the details not only of the physical states of being, but also of the psychic states of the characters. His language and the manner in which the narrative is laid out govern the tone of the novel. In this simple style, the style of a story-teller, the reader instead of remaining away from

the events becomes involved in it and is completely won over by the fictional reality, and becomes a citizen of the fictive town. Such privilege is denied to the reader of the comedies of Aristophanes or of Shakespeare. But Narayan makes it possible for he treats the actions and aspirations of the common man in a common language of the middle class and of the mediocre town. Malgudi is any small South-Indian town, experiencing increasing pressures of the modern civilization in its traditional set-up. Much of the sweet old way of living is still in tact. The language and the style convey an impression of intimate familiarity and there is a nostalgic fervour which springs from its unpretentious simplicity. With unfailing faith in human life, Narayan records the oddities and the beauty of the common man's existence.

A sense of good humour informs Narayan's narration. In a study of 'Good humour and Gaiety' F.L. Lucas remarks, "Johnson has summed up in two words that charm of Falstaff which covers (on the stage at least) all his sins ---" perpetual gaiety"⁽²⁹⁾. There is in Raju's character this 'perpetual gaiety' which springs from the comic defiance of all his misfortunes and which endears him to the readers. That is why the moral censure for Raju's sins and mistakes is not so immediate and severe. This warmth of life can be perceived in all his characters in varying degrees.

Narayan views life's lapses not with any missionary benevolence and zeal, but with the understanding and wisdom of an artist who admits life's various compulsions and whose vision of life is essentially comic. Hence in his novels, the treatment of any episode

or of any character hardly moves to an extreme. Even Vasu, the man-eater is very casually dismissed. The narrative treatment always keeps to the straight middle path, neither becoming chivalric nor churlish. Instead of the 'dreary and portentous solemnity', which F. L. Lucas finds much 'oppressive', there is in Narayan's novels a sobriety of style that corresponds to the flow of life that is recorded. Narayan never sounds pompous or pedantic. His language has the charm and magic of ordinary speech that persuades us to the fictional reality because of our intimate kinship with the language.

Good humour is a way of living where life's occasional sorrows and sufferings are not only accepted but also are transmuted into meaningful experiences. A sportive spirit dominates over the defeats and disillusionments of life. This sense of good humour pervades all the descriptions of Malgudi life where man's sins and mistakes even though disapproved of, are also loved, for these sins and mistakes are intensely human. The characters of Sampath, Raju, Jagon, Margayya and of all others are affectionately drawn. Humour in Narayan's novels serves an aesthetic purpose in terms of shaping the reader's response of various situations -- capturing nostalgically a lost childhood in Swami and Friends and an adolescence in The Bachelor of Arts, disapproving the pseudo values of the modern civilization in The Financial Expert and The Vendor of Sweets, realizing the various compulsions of life with Raju in The Guide, and partaking of the timidity and innocence of

ordinary humanity and negating an aggressive individualism in The Maneater of Malgudi.

In order to bring a sense of immediacy as well as of intimacy to a recognizable Indian theme and setting, Narayan not only harps on the traditions, its beliefs and superstitions from time to time in the course of his narration; he also draws broad mythic parallels to his plots. While analysing Indo-Anglian fiction from the standpoint of Myth as technique', Meenaskshi Mukherjee comments.

If a world-view is required to make literature meaningful in terms of shared human experience, then the Indian epics offer a widely accepted basis of such a common background which permeates the collective unconscious of the whole nation. (30)

The Guide and The Maneater of Malgudi are very close to the Valmiki and the Bhasmasura myths respectively and thus bring an easy credibility to the actions and their consequences in the context of an Indian ethos. Dr. Mukherjee in an extensive discussion of The Maneater of Malgudi notes that "the battle between the gods and demons, the sura and the ashura" happens to be a "recurrent motif in Hindu mythology." (31) Narayan, in addition to finding well defined mythic parallels to plots, often weaves the narrative with allusions from ancient scriptures. In Mr. Sampath Srinivas muses about the god Nataraj. In The Maneater of Malgudi an anxious, worried Nataraj prays to Lord Vishnu who had saved the elephant. This is what Dr. Mukherjee calls the 'digressional technique', by means of which the (32)₂

novelist serves to illustrate a point, or make the realization more vivid. Equally significantly, the mystic reunion of Krishnan with his dead wife, the renouncement of Jagon, the penance of Raju to save a village from drought are age-old beliefs and ideals that have percolated to the very bottom of our psyche. These Indian myths and the traditional rituals, beliefs and superstitions not only create an authentic Indian locale, but also contribute to the effective communication of experience. The use of myth whether as a broad parallel to plot or as a 'digressional technique', has made Narayan's style of story-telling lucid and amply communicative.

As has already been suggested in Chapter II, Narayan's plots move in a pattern of order-disorder-order, and this pattern becomes a "part of his world-view". This 'world-view' is typically Indian as it owes to our traditional concepts of creation. The forces of Evil which from time to time appear in the world disturbing its peace and stability are ultimately undone by themselves or are destroyed by the Incarnation. The stability returns with a renewed assertion of moral and spiritual values. This theme is recurrent in Narayan's novels with an astonishing degree of accuracy. But while the battle is fought between the force of Evil and the force of Good on an ethical plane, on an existential plane the focus is on Man's comic predicament. With the exception of The Guide, Narayan's novels evoke a feeling of traversing a circular path of life's various experiences, reaching at last, the ordered world at the beginning. "That is why, most of his novels do not have decisive conclusions as there is in The Guide.

Narayan's comedy does not move to any height of fantasy as in the comedies of Aristophanes, nor does it bank explicitly on satire as Swift does in his novels. His forte is the commonplace -- the commonplace events and aspirations of people in a small South Indian town. For this Narayan uses a language that can well bear and provide ample testimony to the reality of ordinary lives. He treats not only individual's experiences, but also a collective, social experience. It is not only the life story of Swami, Chandran, Raju, Jagon and others; it is the saga of vast Malgudi experience. He portrays the diverse experiences of an average human existence -- dreams, anxieties, actions, frustrations and so on in a manner in which,

.... it is not the phrase that lingers in the memory as the thing itself Words are merely a plain glass through which one sees the things. (33);

Narayan's style encompasses many diverse facets of life and experience, which are all subject to one Malgudi ethos that is constant or eternal in spite of the seeming changes. His canvass is limited in the sense that he treats a small group of people in a small geographical setting; but at the same time he gives details of the innumerable equations in which they exist with one another and with the society.

Narayan not only focuses on the universal through the particular or tells a story and conveys an allegorical meaning as in The Man-eater of Malgudi, but also takes the comic to the deepest

human level. His human comedy bases itself on the comic incongruity arising from man's peculiar reactions to his society. The eternal world thwarts the desired way of living of the individual and in this conflict between the individual and the world, an ambivalent attitude is generated. In spite of his violation of the moral codes of the society, the individual is not wholly condemned. This incongruous relationship with the world, is a fundamental fact of our existence. Narayan's genial humour, which permeates his narrative, embracing the innumerable small triumphs and tragedies of life, forms the anchor of his comic vision.

The novels of Narayan illustrate the fact that despite all the odds and frustration we encounter and experience, life has an indefatigable persistence and charm of its own. Within the bizarre events of Malgudi, Narayan subtly focuses on the beatific side of human life. As Narayan's comic vision embraces an intense humanism, his comic mode constitutes of the grace of a language of the everyday world, of a style that simply but truthfully tells the story of the common humanity as they live in the small town of Malgudi. Thus his style while embodying his vision becomes an inalienable part of it.

CHAPTER - VII

References:

1. Richard B. Sewall : The Vision of Tragedy (New Haven : Yale Univ. Press, (1959), p. 5.
2. L. J. Potts, Comedy (London : Hutchinson's University Library, (1948), p. 18.
3. Ibid.,
4. Malcolm Bradbury , Possibilities, (London, Oxford, 1973), p. 32.
5. Northrop Frye, Anatomy of criticism (New Jersey, Princeton Univ. Press, 1957), p. 167.
6. Ibid., p. 168.
7. Ibid., p. 169.
8. Ibid., p. 215.
9. Malcolm Bradbury, Possibilities (London, Oxford, 1973), p. 57.
10. Maynard Mack quoted in James, R. Kincaid. Dickens and the Rhetoric of Laughter (London, Oxford: 1973), p. 5.
11. L. J. Potts, Comedy (London Hutchinson's University Library, 1948), p. 155.
12. Ibid.
13. Malcolm Bradbury, Possibilities (London, Oxford, 1973), p. 59.
14. Northrop Frye : Anatomy of Criticism (New Jersey Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 168.
15. Wayne, C. Booth; The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago, The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 18.
16. Ibid., p. 20
17. Ibid.
18. Encyclopaedia Britannica Vol. II (London Encyclopaedia Britannica Ltd., 1956, p. 885).

19. Ian watt, The Rise of the Novel (London Chatto and Windus, 1960), pp. 264-265.
20. David Lodge , Language of Fiction, (London and Routledge and Khegan Paul, 1970), p. 42.
21. Ian watt, The Rise of the Novel (London Chatto and Windus, 1960), p. 18.
22. Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren.
Understanding Fiction (New York : Appleton - Country-Crofts, 1971), p. 79.
23. Malcolm Bradbury. Possibilities (London, Oxford 1973), p. 285.
24. Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warrne, Understanding Fiction, p.82.
25. F.R. Leavis, The Great Tradition (Peregrine Books, 1962), p. 17.
26. David Lodge, Language of Fiction (London and Routledge and Khegan Paul, 1970), p. 68.
27. Henry James : The House of Fiction ed. Leon Edel (London, Rupert Hart Davis, 1957), p. 31.
28. Ibid., p. 36.
29. F. L. Lucas, Style (London : Cassel, 1969), p. 142.
30. Meenakshi Mukherjee, The Twice Born Fiction, New Delhi, Heinemann, 1971), p. 135.
31. ⁴bid., p. 152.
32. Meenakshi Mukherjee, The Twice Born Fiction (New Delhi : Heinemann, 1971), p. 136.
33. P.S. Sundaram, R. K. Narayan, (New Delhi Arnold Heinemann India, 1973), p. 135.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

Works of R. K. Narayan

1. Narayan R. K. : Swami and Friends (1935). 1st Indian ed. 1944; rpt. Mysore Indian Thought Publications, 1977.
2. _____ : The Bachelor of Arts (1937). 1st Indian ed. 1965, rept. Mysore Indian Thought Publications, 1977.
3. _____ : The Dark Room (1938), New Delhi, Orient Paper backs, 1976.
4. _____ : The English Teacher (1946), 1st Indian ed. 1955; rpt. Mysore Indian Thought Publications, 1978.
5. _____ : Mr. Sampath (1949), 1st Indian ed. 1956 rept. Mysore, Indian Thought Publications, 1973.
6. _____ : The Financial Expert (1952). 1st Indian ed. 1958; rept. Mysore, Indian Thought Publications, 1978.
7. _____ : Waiting for the Mahatma (1955). rept. Mysore, Indian Thought Publications, 1978.
8. _____ : The Guide (1958). 1st Indian ed. 1963. rpt. Mysore Indian Thought Publications, 1975.
9. _____ : Next Sunday (1960), New Delhi, Orient Paperbacks, 1956.
10. _____ : The Man Eater of Malgudi (1962). 1st Indian ed. (1968). rpt. Mysore Indian Thought Publications, 1973.
11. _____ : The Venor of Sweets (1967), rpt. Mysore, Indian Thought Publications, 1971.

12. Narayan R. K. : My Days, Mysore, Indian Thought Publications, 1975.
13. _____ : The Painter of Signs, Mysore, Indian Thought Publications, 1977.
14. _____ : A.I.R. Interview, writers workshop Miscellany, 8, (1961).
15. _____ : A Tiger for Malgudi, New Delhi, Allied Publishers, 1983.

Books and Journals on R. K. Narayan.

1. Abbas, K.A. : Tomorrow is ours, Delhi, 1946, Inquilab, Bombay, 1955.
2. Abraham : A Glossary of Literary Terms New York, 1965.
3. Alphonso, J.B. : Indo-English Fiction, Indian Book Reporter, Vol. 3, No. 6, 1957.
- Indo-English Fiction, Literature East and West, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1964.
4. Alphonso Karkala John, B. 'Symbolism in Financial Expert'. Indian Writing Today, Vol. IV. No. 1. January-March, 1970.
5. Annish Gowdo, H.H. - "R.K. Narayan", Literary Half yearly, 6 No.1 (1965) 25-39.
6. _____ "Contemporary creative writers in English in India". The Literary Half-yearly 10:1 (January 1969) 17-39.
7. Argyle, Barry. Narayan's "The Sweet Vendor", Journal of Commonwealth literature, June, 1972.
8. Badal R. K., Indo Anglian Literature : Bareilly, Prakash Book Depot. 1975.

9. Bakhtiyar, Iqbal (ed.). *The Novel in Modern India*, Bombay, The P.E.N. All India Centre, 1964.
10. Bakshi Chandra Kant - *Quest for Indianess*. The Indian P.E.N. 41-8, Feb. 15.
11. Berger Peter and Thomas Luckmann. "The Social construction of Reality, A Treatise in the Sociology of knowledge, New York, Dubbleday, 1966, p. 143.
12. Peter with Brigitta Berger. Hansfried Kellner, *The Homeless Mind : Modernization and consciousness*, New York: Random House, 1973.
13. Beerman Hans, "R.K. Narayan", *Fulbright News letter*, 15, No. 2 (1967), 7-10.
14. Bhagavad Gita - *The Son of God*. (Trans. Prabhavananda & Isherwood, London, Phoenix House, 1947.
15. Boulding Kenneth - *The Emerge*. Ann Arbor : University of Michigan Press, 1956.
16. Brown D. Mackenzie- *The Nationalist Movement*, Bombay, Jacis Publications, 1964.
17. Brunton T.D. - *India in Fiction, Critical Essays on Indian writing*, Dharwar, 1968.
18. Chalapati Rao, M. - "The Indo-Anglian". The Illustrated Weekly of India, May 26. 1963.
19. Chew, Sirley - "A proper Detachment : The Novels of R. K. Narayan," in William Walsh ed. *Reading in Commonwealth Literature*, London, Oxford University Press, 1973.

20. Coomarswamy Anand K. - The Transformation of Nature in Art, New York, Dover Publications, 1965.
21. Dale James, "The Roothless Intellectual in the Novels of R.K. Narayan, University Windson Reviews I (1965),128-37.
22. Datta, J. "Indo English Creative writers" Quest, Winter, 1960
23. Derret, M.E. The Modern Indian Novel in English, A Comparative Approach, Brussels, 1966.
24. Desai Anita, - The Indian writers problems, A.C.L.A.L.S, Bulletin IV Series, No. 2.
25. Ezekiel, Enright and - "Modern Indian writing"; A discussion on Sudhin Ghosh. writers'workshop. Miscellany, No. 28, August, 1968.
26. Fischer Louis - Gandhi - His life and Message for the world.
27. Forster E.M. - A Passage to India (London, Penguin, 1935).
28. Friedmann, John "Intellectuals in Developing Societies in Kyklos, Vol. XIII, 196.
29. Geeno Edwin, Quintessential Narayan, Literature East and West XI, 1-2 (1966).
30. Ghai, T.C. - Pattern and significance in R. K. Narayan's Novels". Indian Literature Vol. XVIII, No. 31975.
31. Gokak, V. K. , English in India. Its present and Future, Bombay Asia Publishing House, 1964.
32. Gorden David, C. - Self Determination and History in the Third world, Princeton University Press, 1971.

33. Goyal Bhagwat, S., From Picaro to Pilgrim : A Representative on R. K. Narayan's "The Guide" Indo-English Literature : A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. K.K. Sharma, Ghaziabad, Vimal Prakashan, 1977.
34. Greene Graham, - Introduction to The Bachelor of Arts and The Financial Expert : India Thought Publication.
35. Hayden M. Williams - "R.K. Narayan and Tuth Praver Jhabvala : Two Interpreters of Modern India" in Literature East and West, Vol. XVI, June 1972.
36. Hemenway, Stepen - The Novels of India, 2 Voltas writers workshop, Calcutta- 1973.
37. Herrex, S.C.- R. K. Narayan's 'the Painter of Malgudi', Literature East and West 13: 1-2 (1969), 87-90.
38. _____ "R.K. Narayan's Grateful to life and Death". The Literary Criticism, Winter, 1968.
39. _____ The Modern Indian Novel in English. Writers Workshop, Calcutta.
40. Holmstrom, Lakshmi : The Novels of R. K. Narayan. A writers Workshop publication, Calcutta. 1973.
41. Iyenger K. R. Srinivass, Indian writing in English, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1973.
42. _____ Indian writing in English Literature in Modern Indian Language, A.I.R. Symposium, 1957.
43. Jha, Akhileshwar, Intellectuals at the Cross-Roads : The Indian Situation, New Delhi, Vikas, 1977.
44. Jain Susil Kumar - Indian Literature in English : A Biography Vol. 3, Fiction, Regina, Sask, Canada Regina

Sask, Canada, Regina Campus Library, University
of Saskatchewan, 1965.

45. Kachru, Dr. Braj - The Indianness in Indian English, Word XXI,
December, 1965.
46. Kantak, V.Y., "The Language Indian Fiction in English". Critical
Essays on Indian Writing in English, Dharwar,
1968.
47. _____ "Indo English and the New Morality". Indian Lite-
rature, Vol. XXI, No. 5, September, - October, 1978.
48. Karanth K.S., - "How to deep in Western Influence on Indian
writers of fiction ?" Literary Criticism (Summer,
1966).
49. Kaul, A.N., "R. K. Narayan and the East-West Theme". Considera-
tions, ed. Meenakshi Mukherjee, New Delhi, Allied
Publishers, 1977.
50. Krishnamurthi, M.G. "Indian Fiction in English," Humanist Review,
1:4 (1949) 435-45.
51. Krishna Rao, A.V., "Significant National Symbols in the Novels of
R. K. Narayan". Literary Half Yearly, 8 No. 1-2
(1967) 80-84.
52. Kumar Swamy, S.R.K. Narayan's 'The Guide' : (In Raghavachayala
DVK ed. Two fold Voice : Essays on Indian writing
in English.
53. Kumar, Shiv. K., "Some Indian writers of English Fiction Modern
Indian Languages ed. Gokak, New Delhi, 1957).
54. Lal, P., "Indian writing in English", Harvard Educational Review,
34:2(1964), 316-19.

55. Lal, P., Literary Traditions : "Indian writing in English",
The Illustrated Weekly of India, October 25,
1964.
56. Mahood, M. M., The Colonial Encounter, Totowa, New Jersey :
Rowman and Littlefield, 1977.
57. Malhotra, Tara, "Old Places, Old Faces, Old Tunes -- A critical
study of Narayan's latest Fictions". Banasthali
Patrika, 13 (1969), 53-9.
58. Malikiyogendra, K.Ed., South Asian Intellectuals and Social
Changes : A Study of the Role of Vernacular
speaking Intelligentsia, New Delhi, Heritage,
1982.
59. Mannoni, O., Prospero and Caliban : The Psychology of Coloniza-
tion, New York : Praeger, 1964.
60. MC Culchion, David, Indian writing in English : Critical Essays,
Calcutta : Writers Workshop, 1969.
61. Mehta, P.P., Indo Anglian Fiction : An Assessment, Bereilly,
Prakash Book Depot, 1968.
62. Mehta Ved., "Profiles : "The Trains had just Arrived at Malgudi
Station", The New Yorker, September, 15, 1962.
63. Mukherjee, D.P., "The Intellectuals in India" in Confluence,
1956.
64. Mukherjee Meenakshi, "Awareness of Audience in Indo-English
Fiction" Quest, 52 (1967) 37-40.
65. _____ "Four Indo-Anglian Novels", The Miscellany,
39 (1970), 27-33.

66. Mukherjee Meenakshi, "Style in Indo-Anglian Fiction" - Indian Writing To-day 11 (1970), 6-13.
67. _____ Twice Born Fiction, New Delhi, Heinemann, 1971.
68. Mukherjee Nirmal, "Some Aspect of the Technique of R. K. Narayan's "The Guide" Western Humanities Review (Salt Lake City) 15 (1961) 372-73.
69. Mukherjee Sujit, "The Indo-Anglian Novelists as Best seller", Literature East and West 13, 1-2 (1969)
70. Nagarajan K., "The Development of the Novel in India" Arts and Letters 23 (1949).
71. Naik, M. K., "Irony as stance and as vision, A comparative study of V.S. Naipaul's The Mystic Masseur and R. K. Narayan's The Guide. The Journal of Indian writing in English Vol., 6, No. 1, January, 1978.
72. Naipaul, V.S., An Area of Darkness, London, Andre Deutsch, 1977.
73. Nanda Kumar Prema, "Achievement of the Indo-English Novelist" The Literary Criticism, Vol. 1, Winter 1961.
74. Nandy Ashis, At the Edge of Psychology, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1980.
75. Narasimhaiah, C.D. "Indian writing in English - An Introduction" Journal of Commonwealth Literature, July 1968, pp. 3-15.
76. Narreth, Peter, "R. K. Narayan, Novelist", English Studies in Africa (Johannesburg) 8 (1965).
77. Pandey Prabhakar, "Indo-Anglian Literature"- Indian writing To-day, January-March, 1971.

78. Parameswaram, Uma, "Rogues in R. K. Narayan's Fiction in Literature East and West, Vol. XVIII, March, 1974.
79. Paul Verghese C.- Problems of the Indian-Creative writer in English, Bombay, Somaiya Publications, 1971.
80. Fye, L.W., "The Emergence of the Professional Communicators" in L.W. Fye ed. communications and Political Development, Princeton, Princiton University Press, 1963.
81. Raizada Harish, R. K. Narayan : A Critical Study on his works. New Delhi, Young Asia Publications, 1969.
82. Rajam, B., "Writing in English", The Illustrated Weekly of India, May 26, 1963.
83. Rao, A.V. Krishna "Significant National Symbols in the Novels of R. K. Narayan" Literary Half Yearly 8 No. 1-2 (1967), 80-84.
84. Rao, K. Subba, "The Guide: A Glimpse of Narayan's Attitude and Achievement" Triveni, 36 (1967), 65-67.
85. Rao, V. Pandurenga, "The Art of R. K. Narayan", Journal of Commonwealth Literature, No. 5.
86. Rosenthal A.M., "Talk with Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayan of Malgudi India", New York Times Book Review, 23 March, 1958, pp. 5-44.
87. Rudolph LLOYD I, and Susan Hoerber Rudolph, The Modernity of Traditions, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1967.
88. Sarma, Govinda Prasad, Nationalism in Indo English Fiction, New Delhi : Sterling Publishers, 1978.

89. Seal Anita., "English Writing in India", The Miscellany, 19(1966),
41-46.
90. Shils Edward, The Intellectuals and the Powers and other Essays,
Chicago Press, 1972.
91. Sing, H., "A Tribute to R. K. Narayan" Quest November 10, 1957.
92. Sio Kewlian, "Meeting R.K. Narayan, Writers Workshop, 5 (1961),
21-22.
93. Singer, Milton, When a great Traditions Memorizes, New York :
Preager, 1972.
94. Spencer Dorothy M., Indian Fiction in English, Philadelphia :
University of Pensylvania Press, 1960.
95. Sundaram, P.S., R. K. Narayan, New Delhi Arnold Heninemann India,
1973.
96. Syal, Harshbala, "Narayan and the Emerging Indian Fiction"
Busara (Nainobi) 2 No. 1 (1969), 52-54.
97. Thawaite Antony, "The Painter of Signs" in Times Literary
Supplements, June 20, 1976.
98. Times Literary Supplement "Indian Episodes" September 23, 1949.
99. _____ "Waiting for the Mahatma, Sept. 9, 1955.
100. _____ "Well met in Malgudi " May 9, 1958.
101. _____ "My Days" in The New Years Times, Book Review,
June 30, 1974.
102. Venkatachari, K., "R.K.Narayan's Novels : Acceptance of Life".
Osmania Journal of English Studies, 7, No. 1
(1969), 51-65.
103. Verghese, C. Paul, "Raja Rao, Mulk Raj, Narayan and others" Indian
writing Today vol. III, No. 1 January-March, 1969.

104. Venden Driesen Cynthia., "The Achievement of R. K. Narayan" in
Literature East and West, Vol. XXI, January, 1977.
105. Walsh William, A Human Idiom; Literature and Humanity, London,
Chatto and Windus, 1964.
106. Walsh H. M., Indo-Anglian Literature (1800-1970), A Survey,
Madras, Orient Longman, 1976.
107. Walsh William ; A Manifold Voice, London: Chatto and Windus, 1964.
108. Walsh William : Commonwealth Literature, Great Britains, Oxford
University Press, 1973.
109. Walsh William : "The Intricate Alliance", Review of English
Literature, 2, No. 4 (1961).
110. Walsh William, "Sweet Mangoes and Molt Vinegar", Indo-English
Literature, A Collection of Critical Essays, ed.
K. K. Sharma, Ghaziabad : Vimal Prakashan, 1977.
111. Zimmer, Heinrich., Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization.
tion (New York, Harper Torch Books), 1967.