

Narration on Place of Faith in Socio-Cultural Life of India by

R.K. Narayan

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Abstract

The imposter gains some material benefit, no doubt, but he also fulfills a social need. Hence the ambivalent quality of the novels those deal with this theme - while the blind faith of the people represents an essential moral weakness as well as a very elemental strength, the people who make a business of spiritualism certainly present an aspect of sin or evil. Sometimes the two issues impinge upon one another and the sheer force of simple trust transforms the evil of man's mind into a reservoir of goodness.

Key terms : Faith, Peoples culture, Place of Faith, Morals and values, R K Narayan

Introduction

Exposing the religious imposter has an aspect of social reform also, and one must remember that in the nineteen-twenties and thirties there was strong wave of protest and reform in the literature of every Indian language. The most recurrent technique in Indo-Anglican fiction has been that of the first person narrative. Moreover, a large number of recent novels are autobiographical in method, if not in substance. Choosing the central character as a narrator solves the problem of "the point of view," a problem which Henry James discussed variously in terms of the "large lucid reflector" and the "central consciousness". Since the theme of some of the best works is the quest for self [1], this technique is often the most suitable and has been applied in widely diverse situations by Indo-Anglican novelists.

The conscious use of myth for enhancing the effect of a contemporary situation is a device that the Indian novelist has emulated from the West but has naturalized it to the Indian soil [2]. A world view is required to make literature meaningful in terms of shared human experience, and the Indian epics offer the basis of such a common background which permeates the collective unconscious of the whole nation [3]. As such, the Indian writer gains greatly by basing his symbology on this rich mythic material. Also, since most of these myths are part of the heritage of all Indians regardless of their language, using myth as symbol for the Indo-Anglican novelist [4] is an excellent artistic solution of the problems arising out of the heterogeneity of his audience. The contemporary novelist is preoccupied with the idea of expressing the "whole of the modern life." In undertaking such a feat, [5] James Joyce turned to the traditional framework of the Odyssey in which he could work and achieve a "vital connection" between the demands of the individual creative personality and the influence of the total European literary tradition. For Indian writers, a preoccupation with the Radha Krishna legend or an allegory based on Draupadi's choice of husbands would provide a similar vital connection. The violence before and after partition, becomes a re-enacting of the Kurukshetra fratricide. This is one of the aspects of Indo-Anglican fiction worth study and analysis [6].

It is often said that the achievement of the novelist in some of the regional languages [7]. This may be true, especially in view of the late development and quantitative disadvantage of Indo-Anglican writing; but a thorough analysis of the existing material must precede any such comparative evaluation.

Assessment Of Work

The Guide is a story of a man who deceives a society by passing for a spiritual man in whom the man is carried away by his deception until a point comes when it is difficult to undo the enormous lie. Raju, the protagonist drifts into the role of a Sadhu willy-nilly and once he finds himself cast in the role of an ascetic he attempts to perform the act with gusto; partly for the sake of self-preservation, partly because it suits his personality wonderfully. His illustrious career as a guide began accidentally when he found himself escorting the tourists to the beauty spots around Malgudi. He gives them historical and geographical information and before he knew it he had become a full-fledged [8] guide and the stall in the railway station had become merely a part-time business.

The act that confirms Raju's career as a Sadhu is his establishment of a night school in the temple. This school becomes the nucleus around which the village people gather every evening to listen to Raju's discourses and story-telling [9]. These sessions grow in popularity until Raju becomes a public figure. But the idea of the school originates quite by accident. During his early days as a Sadhu when Raju is not very sure of the manner he should adopt, he tries to make conversation with the children in the manner of big people he has seen in the cities. When he undergoes fasting, people reach him for Darshan and brought him no food [10].

Raju is good at his histrionic talents. Part of Raju's success is his ability to identify himself completely with whatever role he is playing but Raju in his part of a saint he has at last reaches a stage when the situation is no longer familiar. When the shadow of famine stalls the country side and cattle begin to die, Raju for the first time confronts a situation in which he does not know how to act. However in the story of Raju, one can see the created object transcending its creator. The saint hood that Raju has created out of his deception ultimately transcends his control and obliterates his former self.

The ideal of asceticism runs through Indo-Anglican fiction as a recurrent and compulsive motif. The ascetic in a saffron robe is a readymade symbol in Indian literature and in the several uses of this symbol; the novelist reveals a great deal himself and his art.

Regarding Malgudi Days, Narayan has always observed Malgudi is changeless, little different from what it was in his *Swami and Friends*; it has become a kind of ancestral village for the whole literate world subtle and erroneously funny. Malgudi is a bend of oriental and pre-1914 Bangalore like an Edwardian mixture of Sweet Mangoes and Salt Vinegar. Malgudi the little town has always been central to his literary achievement. "I am a treacherous writer when I move out of Malgudi." So attached was Narayan to this town. A town like that has great possibilities. The town is the product of a particular coming together of social relations and above all some "psychic people who undergo transformations as they interact with one another. Malgudi is Coimbatore which has some of the landmarks – a river on one side, forests on the other, the Mission School and College and all the extensions mentioned in the novels of R.K. Narayan. It is an Indian Hindi language television serial based on the eponymous works of R.K. Narayan spanning over Fifty-four episodes. The serial is collection of short stories by R.K. Narayan. The work was published outside India in 1982 by Penguin Classics. It has Thirty-two stories all set in the fiction town of Malgudi located in South India. Each of the stories portrays a facet of life in Malgudi. Everyone in the town seems to have a capacity for responding to the quality of his particular hour. It is often a mosaic of life that seems to belong to a lost time. The collections possess a fable tale quality a sense of collective memory being shared with the reader much as an elderly relative might tell old stories to children around a fire at night. Most of the episodes are based on the stories remembered from previous times ranging from not long ago to decades earlier. In this work by R.K. Narayan seems to present us with bleak portrayal of India where live is very hard and there is very little human happiness; he means to reflect the triumph of the human spirit over the cruel circumstances of life. In India poverty and lack of education are discriminated against because they are very poor.

In *A Willing of Slave*, Ayah is discriminated against and treated badly because she is uneducated. When she comes back late for the first time after her visit home, her employers imagine the worst, thinking she has perhaps been run over by a car and killed. She must have taken it in her head to give herself a holiday. No one is indispensable. I will dismiss her for this. The same happens to Sidda in *Leda's Friend*. The characters Sahu, Radha, Sheela and Rama are portrayed as suffering individuals. Rama in the *Marty's Corner* is forced to become a waiter when his life starts downward spiral after his old spot was taken up by a statue of a dead political leader. In other stories also there are representations of suffering lives.

Summing Up and Conclusion

Without criticizing Gandhian discourse frontally, Narayan's narrative points to the perilous liberalism that the former is susceptible to when translated into the quotidian and the vernacular. The absurdity of attempting to emulate the Mahatma thought the performance of holiness finds its apotheosis in the interview Raju gives to an American television journalist during his accidental fast. Though the irony is aimed at the performance of spiritual leadership by this all too ordinary individual now trapped in own fabrications, a hint of gentle skepticism towards Gandhian methods for the masses

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