



## A STUDY OF R.K. NARAYAN'S traditional Indian themes in the novel 'THE GUIDE'

Navjot Gill

email: drnavjotgill06@gmail.com

### Abstract

R.K. Narayan, a well-known South Indian author born in Rasipuram in 1906, is from that city. Characters move on a psychological level in his works. The Guide, by R.K. Narayan, is the book's most prominent title. The film's protagonists accurately portray the socioeconomic landscape of India. When it comes to depicting Indian folklore and the rituals, blind loyalty, and religious characteristics of its people, Narayan is an excellent choice because of the way he incorporates folklore components into his books. In his writings, he depicted the difficulties faced by Indians. The author's unique perspective on India's poverty and mythology is evident throughout this work. As stated before, the primary goal of this research is to examine the novel's folk components, namely how they relate to Indian life and traditional culture. Author R. K. Narayan is now well-known within the literary community for his works on many subjects. Despite the fact that he passed away a few years ago, many people are still interested in reading the books he wrote. The Guide is one such outstanding book. It has a wide range of nuances. The topic I've chosen for my article is Raju as a Poly-Guide — a tour guide for tourists, a prisoner's leader, and a spiritual guide for prisoners. Railway As a result of his heroic actions on behalf of the underprivileged, Raju was hailed as a saint. It is Narayan's vision of human infallibility that Raju represents..

**Keywords:** The Guide, Customs, Folklore, Realistic elements, mythical elements.

### Introduction:

The famous Indian writer r was born on October 10,1906 Chennai. After the completion of bachelor degree from the University of Mysore, R.K.Narayan's went to the United States in 1956 at the invitation of. He started to write the short stories in newspaper 'The Hindu' in this way he began his literary career. He published 14 novels over 200 short stories, two travelogues, a memoir, essays and two plays. ' Was his first novelbeing his last work. The main themes included exile and return, education, women and her status, myths and the cultural tradition of the Indian Society etc. He never wrote to achieve fame. He viewed and recorded Indian life artistically. 'The Guide' that appeared in 1958 was the consequence of an American tour organized by the Foundation. He received Sahitya Academy Award for 'The Guide' in



1960 and four years later he won Padma Bhushan. In 2001, he passed away. Narayan has touched the topics such as casteism, injustice, gender inequalities etc. Raju is the protagonist of the novel. He was the son of a shopkeeper and after his death of his father, he took the job of his father. Meanwhile he did the job of a tourist guide. During this time, he met Rosie and her husband Marco and from there his life changed. Rosie was passionate dancer who came there for studying the culture of the place. In between, her husband returned to his hectic schedule. Raju and Rosie became attracted each other. Rosie went on with her performances. But once Raju forged Rosie's signature and he was arrested. Life in the jail changed the mind of Raju. He never returned to his village. His past deeds began to prey on his mind and he resolved to leave Malgudi for good. Raju found a shelter in an ancient shrine on the bank of Sarai. There he met Vela to whom he disclosed his story. He spent time by reading Gita and transforms as a swami. His life undergoes a strange twist and turn when a drought overtakes the village. The villagers believe that swami can bring rain to the village. For that he took fasting for showering rain. On the twelfth day, Raju's condition grows critical. Before he falls down, he tells Vela that it is raining on the hills, for he can feel it coming up under his feet. With these words the novel comes to a close in 'The Guide' we can find a mixture of the serious and the comic, the real and the fantastic elements. The growth of the protagonist from rags to riches, materialistic gains to spiritual aspiration such as boy to young man as lovers. The second stage is entirely different as a Swami after his release from jail. The novel can be regarded as a fictional biography. The readers or spectators are taken into the present situation of the hero, and the past is narrated as a background which helps in the development of the hero's personality. It starts with a spirituality and ends with a culmination. In another aspect the whole novel can be treated as a drama in three parts. Raju's love for Rosie, his life in prison and the ultimate reward he gets for his virtues. The novelist has introduced the technique of double narration. The technique keeps the readers on their toes and makes the character of the hero real. The complex personality is developed and made credible with the technique of double narration. The novelist has portrayed the rural India. The character in the novel are all real pictures of the people in India. Even the description of the appearance of Marco the other character uneducated villager governed by his superstitions. The way in which the villagers react when there was no rain. India, the home of wizards and swami has inculcated in her citizens the belief that water for agricultural purposes can be obtained only through rains, and rains by prayers and fasting. The temple, the village, the town of Malgudi the river etc. stands as a culture and traditions of India.



The temple is the place where all the faith and disbelieves are occupied. In the novel temple is the place where Raju the sinner, transforms his character as asaint.

### **The Guide:**

The Guide, directed by R. K. Narayan and nominated for the Sahitya Academy Award in 1960, is a mature work of art that deftly examines the nuances and intricacies of human relationships. The work has been translated into a number of key languages because of his enormous popularity. In this work, the use of cinematographic techniques has resulted in a successful movie of the novel. The novel's worldwide acclaim is owed in part to the novel's incorporation of traditional Indian themes and symbols within a Western visual medium. Indian heritage and contemporary culture are juxtaposed against Malgudi in his imagination in the Guides. He uses mild criticism, excellent humor, great observation, and compassion to show the soft humanity of India. Though he isn't a philosopher, he paints his characters in half-tones to get the desired effect. He sees things from a different angle, as though from the outside looking in. Because of this, The Guide is a work of art. Other notable writers include Raja Rao. To understand the lives of the common middle-class guy, Narayan's books play a critical role. He has a wry sense of humor about everyday life. He scathingly mocks the hypocrisy of the middle class. He's fascinated about everything that goes on around him. He is an objective observer of our everyday pursuits. Flashback-based novel The Guide is one of Narayan's most intriguing and popular works. Throughout this story, Raju is the narrator, recalling his past and sharing his thoughts and emotions. Raju resumes his recollections of his history in the midst of a flash black. Finally, the railway track is laid, and a station is built at Malgudi. The tale is made more realistic by Raju's recollections. The reader's curiosity and attention are piqued by the usage of flashbacks. It also demonstrates Narayan's natural ability to narrate stories. As the plot of The Guide unfolds, readers will experience a dizzying array of time jumps. Narayan was able to use cinematic techniques such as jump out, flashback, flash forward, and montage since he was familiar with the South Indian film industry. As a result, the tale progresses in a single coherent arc from the beginning through the middle and to the finish rather than following a linear storyline as is more common in novels. Rather of following a linear storyline, The Guide's narrative jumps from the past to the present and back again, as well as from Malgudi to the Memmi Hills to Mangal. The Guide, which is broken into two sections, tells the story of Raju's youth, love, incarceration, and transformation into a swamy. The first section takes place in Malgudi, despite the fact that the streams travel at the same time. Raju's history and present are



intertwined in the second act of Mangle, Raju. Unlike Raju's history in Malgudi, the author narrates Raju's present in Mangle. A author who writes about ordinary people in ordinary settings is R.K. Narayan. The Guide's storyline is based on material and events that are neither heroic nor extraordinary. His romance, his desire for money, his guilt and redemption all feature in The Guide. It tells the narrative of every man's transformation from the ordinary to the extraordinary, from the train conductor to the spiritual counselor. In Narayan's story, the real and the surreal coexist in comical harmony. Narayana shows Indian civilization navigating the contemporary world in his novels complicated 's terrain.' In this way, Malgudi becomes a testing ground for many hypotheses and perspectives. the essence of an old Indian institution, that of the guru, which in fact has no precise definition in Narayan's most well-known work The Guide as a story set in contemporary India In the same way, in English As a result, the usage of the term "Guide" by R. K. Narayan in the novel's title is significant. Without resorting to extravagant or unnecessary description, Narayan has a talent for drawing pen-pictures that bring persons and places to life. Narayan's language is simple, yet it hides a high degree of artistic sophistication. As if language were a super-versatile instrument, Narayan uses it to express the particular as well as the symbolic and the universal with equal ease. The Guide has a low-key demeanor. Thus, Raju's and the novelist's use of flashback, everyday living, humour, language, and the double viewpoint, Raju's and the novelist's, make the book unique, exciting, intriguing, and fascinating. Narayan also employs imagery and symbolism, which are deeply entrenched in Indian culture yet have an attraction to people all around the world. When Raju is about to drown, his gaze is riveted on the mountains, as a magnificent sun rises above him and the locals watch in awe. Narayan masterfully expresses Raju's death as a picture of optimism, keeping with the Indian belief in death and rebirth, by contrasting the basic backdrop of the Indian hamlet at daybreak. Characters such as Gaffer, the driver and Joseph, the steward of the bungalow in where Marco slept are all examples of the traditional Indian culture and ethics that Raju's mother and uncle portray. Raju and Marco, on the other hand, are more like to those in the Western or Modern world. It is clear that these individuals' behavior and discussion show a clash between tradition and modernity or an influence of one over another throughout the work. Here are a few examples of personalities with postcolonial characteristics: To the Hindus, it was normal or conventional to bend low and touch the feet of elders and reverends. He refused to allow Vela to do so following his release from jail, when he was sitting alone on the riverbank. "Vela rose, bent low, and sought to touch Raju's feet," the passage



reads. Raju reacted angrily when he saw what was going on. 'This will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Only God has the right to be bowed down before. If we try to steal His authority, He will annihilate us.' She went to Raju's place after Marco left Rosie and went to Madras via rail. Raju's mother was awestruck when she saw her daughter arrive home alone at night. 'Who's with you, Rosie?' was the first thing she asked. A flushed and hesitant Rosie gazed at me. I took a few steps backward so that she would only be able to view me faintly and not in all of my filth. 'I guess she's here alone, mum,' I said. My mother was floored. 'Girls today!' What a strong person you are! We wouldn't dare go to the corner of the street without an escort in our day. And the only time I've ever gone to the market was when Raju's father was still alive.' Here we may witness the disparity in outlook and temperament firsthand. A traditional Hindu lady, Raju's mother is not allowed to be seen in public. As a result, she's frightened to go out on her own, while Rosie is a free-spirited contemporary lady. Her demeanor, behavior, and temperament are clearly influenced by her upbringing in the West. She isn't frightened to go out on her own. From a societal perspective, *The Guide* not only demonstrates Indian society's customs, traditions, culture, ostentation and superstitions, but also illustrates a clash between the traditional and contemporary ideals that are symbolized by Raju's mother and his maternal uncle. Old values have to make way to new ones, and thus Raju's mother gives up her house to accommodate Raju and Rosie in this fight. " A clash between Eastern and Western culture is also shown in the story, which synthesises the two via the transition of Rosie into Nalini. Narayan agrees with Anand that the only way to return to the East is to go to the West.

### **Conclusion:**

The plot of *The Guide* unfolds through a disorienting series of temporal jumps. In the building of his storyline, he might use cinematic techniques such as jump out, flash back, flash ahead, and montage. As a result, rather of following a straight line from the beginning to the finish as most novels do, this one follows an episodic pattern. Within and between chapters of *The Guide*, the story's unique structure jumps back and forth in time, taking readers from Malgudi to the Memmi Hills to Mangal in what seems to be a completely random order. The authors of *Indian Writing in English*, including Narayan, were heavily affected by modern European and American literature. *The Guide He Who Rides a Tiger*" deals with the baked Sadhu theme and displays the picaresque storytelling. In addition, '*The Guide*' delves inside the mind of a fictitious Sadhu. According to Meenakshi Mukherjee, "the surface likeness conceals a very



basic divergence. When a guy wearing a mask is the central premise of both stories, the protagonist in one of them returns to where he started by removing the mask and walking away. It becomes more harder to remove the mask until finally he realizes that it has become his face, like the opposite case. Deception is a planned act of retribution in Bhaban's work, Kalo. The Guide's Raju, on the other hand, takes the position of a Sadhu by the scruff of the neck, and he does so enthusiastically, both for his own purpose and because he thinks it fits his personality well. 'The Guide' has a saint in the conclusion, but 'He Who Rides a Tiger' has a scamp.

**References:**

1. Narayan R.K. The Guide, Indian Thought Publications,2004.
2. Srivastava. Ramesh. K. Symbolism in Indian Fiction in English, ABS Publications,1997.
3. Naipaul V.S. India: A Wounded Civilization, Wantage Books,1977.
4. Mukherjee, Meenakshi: 'Twice Born Fiction', Arnold-Heinemann Publishers, New Delhi.
5. Narayan, R.K: 'The Guide', Indian Thought Publications, Chennai, 2011.
6. Iyengar, Srinivasa: 'Indian Writings in English', Sterling Publishers PVT Ltd. New Delhi,1994.