



## Portraits of Women in the novels of R. K. Narayan : A Review

Poonam Devi

Extension lecturer in English at G.C.W. Madlauda, Panipat

kaushikpoonam106@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

R.K. Narayan is one of India's best English-language authors. The inhabitants of Malgudi, a fictional South Indian town in Narayan's mind, are the core of his writing. Writings by him have included both male and female protagonists. Rosie, a female character that plays an essential role in *The Guide*, is one of several in this author's novels who has an important position in the tale. A contemporary woman, educated and ambitious, she aspires to become an independent economic entity based on her own taste and aptitude, even if she has to pay a high price for doing so. Besides Raju's mother and Velan's sister, the tale also has two additional strong female characters. Women like Raju's mother are conservative and conventional, adhering to their family's traditions and values. She is a good mother and a good wife.

**Keywords :** The roll of Woman, Fiction, Family, Storyes, Novels ,General Literature

### INTRODUCTION

It's impossible to separate literature from life. People, or what E.M. Forster refers to as characters, are the most important part of a story. As a result of other people's acts or of circumstances in their own life, individuals have reactions and responses. It is apparent that the characters in R.K. Narayan's writings take precedence over the events. His books are excellent character studies.

As a matter of fact, she's an Indian woman who proudly wears a sari and sports long hair. As a classical Bharatnatyam dancer, her Indian heritage is solidified. Raju has given Rosie's spouse the name Marco as a spoof of the famous explorer. Even to the point where it's impossible for him to care about his wife's needs and wants because of this obsession with decoding ancient art from known or undiscovered remate cave and temple artefacts. He describes himself as "a strange, ancient abstraction of a guy." ..."

R.K.Narayan's works are the subject of this investigation. Narayanan's depiction of female characters is often considered to be characteristic of Indianness. Women characters in R.K.



Narayan's works have been dubbed "insignificant creatures" by several reviewers. Because R.K.Narayan discourages free discussion of his works, drawing any firm conclusions about his characters is fraught with peril. He is a well-known author with a large following. Nearly 900 books, monographs, and essays have been published in response to his literary works. Many may ask why R.K. Narayan, a renowned social writer, chose to focus on the 'Feminine' instead of the human experience. A simpler and more straightforward approach would be to concentrate just on "human experiences," which in turn would have led to an examination of "masculine experiences," which is what this research was designed to achieve.

After Marco's relentless questioning, she breaks down and confesses to her extra-marital affairs with Raju at the Peak House during one of her visits. Their husband-and-wife relationship is irreparably damaged as a consequence of this betrayal of the nuptial trust. She apologises profusely for her error and swears to him that she would never again show any interest in dancing. For thirty days, she relentlessly pursues him up and down the Peak House and into the tunnels. They don't exchange a single word. Every time she attempts to assist him, he pushes her away. He has no patience for her. Marco leaves her at the Malgudi train station and tells her that he only has one ticket for himself when he departs for Madras. Uday Trivedi writes about Rosie's plight.

With her behaviour with Chris, Radha establishes a new standard for extra-marital romance. Just like any other typical spouse, Shyam kept tabs on her behaviour via his employees and even attempted to exert some control over her at times, but to no avail. After realising that he can't control Radha's intellect, Shyam chooses to rule her body instead. The virility of a spouse is immediately questioned when a woman is uninterested in him and seeks out another guy for love or sex. As a result, Shyam had to 'mark his territory' and reestablish his claim to Radha. To show that he was the husband and had full legal authority over his wife's body, he performed the act. It is clear from the novel's depiction of the deed that Shyam is driven by a primal need to demonstrate his masculinity and affirm his role as the husband. While his one act of rape leaves Radha permanently scarred, he feels no remorse for what he has done and feels no remorse at all.



## 1. women and family

In India, a family is made up of a web of connections amongst its members. Each character is introduced against a scene that depicts a member of their own family. An important part of author Narayan's literary art stems from his constant curiosity in the people—especially those who are typical and ordinary—and their infinite potentials. As a result, each character has a distinct personality. The family creates its own universe inside the confines of its own home. Parents, children, grandparent and grandchild are all included. Narayan explores human nature and interpersonal connections through the lens of the family and family problems. Narayan's writings are replete with references to the author's own family. Females place a greater emphasis on the importance of their families than males do.. Narayan portrays the struggle between good and evil in *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*. It opens with a lengthy description of Nataraj's family and their history. As the protagonist and the storyteller, he is the focus of attention. There he lives with his wife and their little kid, Babu, in the family home. They have a pleasant and cheerful existence. Nataraj grew up in a huge family of five brothers, their spouses, and their children, all of whom lived together. As long as his grandma was there, the brothers remained close. It was my father's elderly mother who had served as a glueing force in the family.

Velan is devastated by this news. He seeks Raju's opinion on the matter. The following day, she is brought to Raju's attention under his direction. However, Raju is unwilling to engage with her because he is preoccupied with the question of what he would do now that he has been released from prison. On coming home, the girl has a change of heart. It is with sadness that she accepts Velan's proposal to marry the guy of his choosing. Velan's belief in Raju as a saint who can do miracles is further reinforced by the girl's miraculous transformation. The first time Raju is shown as a saint in the book is in this episode with Velan's sister. Conclusion To sum up, R. K. Narayan depicts a wide range of female characters in *The Guide*, both conventional and contemporary. Though they have many similarities, these women characters are quite different from one another. Diversity in the novel's characters and plot lines create a complex work of art that reflects many facets of human nature and human existence. Narayan has a keen eye for the psyches of his people. The depth of his knowledge of human psychology lends realism and life to his characters.



He's done an outstanding job of delving into the emotional landscape of women and analysing it. He is sensitive to the pain and turmoil that women experience on a deep level. In the end, his female characters exhibit their confidence in traditional family values despite their struggles to break free of social and familial responsibilities. Narayan has a keen eye for the psyches of his people. The depth of his knowledge of human psychology lends realism and life to his characters. He's done an outstanding job of delving into the emotional landscape of women and analysing it. He is sensitive to the difficulties women face and the emotional turmoil they experience. His female characters try to break free of the social and familial expectations placed on them, but in the end, they return to the values that their families instilled in them.

“

In Narayan's writings, the characters, particularly the men and women, deviate from the conventional route. When it comes to Indian culture, the male characters choose unorthodox paths in their search for respite from the suffocation or tyranny of married life. They look sad, foolish, and amusing as they defy the established norms of a conventional culture. Eventually, their whims and fancies are no longer able to keep up with them. Eventually, their delusion will disintegrate and the world will return to normal.

## 2. The guide

The Guide by R.K.Narayan was released in 1958. There can be little doubt that The Guide, Narayan's best-known and most widely read book, is the most critically acclaimed and extensively read of his works. The author's mastery of ambiguity and irony is on full display here, as is the use of a more adventurous narrative method and some modern satire. Reviewing three women's stories from a feminist perspective uncovers several aspects that are shaped by the masculine gaze. The novelkeeping Raju at the heart of The Guide has drawn the attention of both readers and reviewers. While Raju's image rises due to the use of ambiguity, irony, and satire, the pictures of the female characters are projected in a lower light. 60 At the same time, the depiction of Raju's mother's portrays the conservative Hindu lady and maintains this image. The author has made no effort to alter the usual portrayal of a Brahmin mother. The depiction of Rosie is designed to promote and maintain the Devadasi tradition, in which women are seen as beautiful and sexual objects. This depiction of a lady has remained unchanged since it was first created. On the other side, Raju's misfortunes are attributed to her. It's really the other way



around; Rau is to blame for Rosie's demise. Velan's sister is shown as a typical picture of a rural lady. In society, these ladies are the stereotypical representations of what a woman should be. As a result, The Guide's portrayal of female characters follows to the stereotypes engendered by foundationalism.

Narayan has a keen eye for the psyches of his people. The depth of his knowledge of human psychology lends realism and life to his characters. He's done an outstanding job of delving into the emotional landscape of women and analysing it. He is sensitive to the difficulties women face and the emotional turmoil they experience. As they fight to break out of the roles placed on them by society and family, his female characters exhibit their trust in traditional family values. In Narayan's writings, the characters, particularly the men and women, deviate from the conventional route. When it comes to Indian culture, the male characters choose unorthodox paths in their search for respite from the suffocation or tyranny of married life. They look sad, foolish, and amusing as they defy the established norms of a conventional culture. Eventually, their whims and fancies are no longer able to keep up with them. Eventually, their delusion disintegrates and reality returns to normal.

With her anti-male hatred, scepticism of marriage, desire to break free from the constraints of family life, and conviction that education might enable a woman to pursue an independent, solitary, but fulfilled life, the English feminist influenced the new generation of women."

When it comes to women, Narayan has shown their metamorphosis from submissive and timid to educated and independent. Realistic, but classic, characters are the hallmark of his work. With a progressive attitude on life, they are all strong-willed people who are confidently going forward in their lives.

### **Conclusion**

Among the women characters shown in R. K. Narayan's writings, we see a variety of ladies. They sometimes rely on the prevailing discourse for support, while at other times they choose to rely on their own internal confirmation in the quest for their own authentic selves. It is evident that R. K. Narayan reflects the era in which he wrote, and that the position of women had changed dramatically throughout the time period in which he wrote. In addition, he maintains an objective distance from the topics and people in his stories. As a result, drawing any conclusions about his worldview or set of values from his works is fraught with peril. Narayan's reluctance to discuss his own beliefs makes it much more difficult to get a sense of what he thinks. In spite of his distance from his characters, it's nevertheless feasible to discern



a distinct idea and presentation of female characters in his writings. Novels written by Narayan have been given a new depth because of his knowledge of women in Indian culture. Narayan also investigates the fusion of traditional and contemporary women, their strong notion of uniqueness, and their uncompromising attitude, which includes a grandmother, a wife, or a mother. In the Indian middle class, his ladies find their place in the world. We can infer, based on our examination of the many ways in which women are portrayed in R.K. Narayan's writings, that R.K. Narayan was aware of the undeniable.

### REFERENCE:

1. Narayan R.K, (1935) Swami and Friends, Chennai : Indian Thought Publications, 2013 in print
2. Gour K.K. \_Women in R.K.Narayan's Novels, Ed Amarnath Prasad, New Delhi:Sorup and Sons, 2003. in print.
3. Narayan R.K.,(1937) The Bachelor of Arts, Madras: Indian Thought Publications, 2007. in print
4. Singh Harinder, R.K.Narayan and His Social Vision, New Delhi : KK Publication, 2006. in print
5. Gour K.K. \_Women in R.K.Narayan's Novels, Ed Amarnath Prasad, New Delhi: Sorup and Sons, 2003. in print.
6. Naik M.K.,(1982) A History of Indian English Literature, New Delhi: Sahitya Academy, 1997. in print
7. Narayan R.K The Dark Room. 1938. Mysore: Indian Thought Publication, 1992.
8. Narayan R.K The English Teacher. 1946. 1st Indian ed. Mysore: Indian Thought publications, 1955.
9. Narayan R.K Mr. Sampath – The Printer of Malgudi. 1949. 1st Indian Ed. Madras. Indian Thought Publications, 1965.
10. Narayan R.K Waiting for the Mahatma. 1955. 1st Indian ed. Mysore: Indian Thought Publications, 1964



11. Narayan R.K The Guide. 1958. 1st Indian ed. Mysore: Indian Thought Publications, 1958
12. An Interview with R. K. Narayan - Indian Writing in English - India Weekly (London), 25 June 1970.
13. An Interview with R. K. Narayan. Indian Literary Review 1.2 (1978): 6-9.