



ART OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE NOVELS OF MONOHAR MALGONKAR AND R.K NARAYANAN

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ABSTRACT :

Characterization is a literary device that is used step-by-step in literature to highlight and explain the details about a character in a story. The final part shows how others in the story respond to the character's personality. Characterization is a writer's tool, or "literary device" that occurs any time the author uses details to teach us about a person. This is used over the course of a story in order to tell the tale. The way a character speaks can inform us of their background and personality, like how educated they are, or what they consider to be important. Even the way other characters speak to and about our characters is a form of characterization.

KEYWORDS : *Vivacious, Idiosyncrasy, Foibles, Praise, Narrative.*

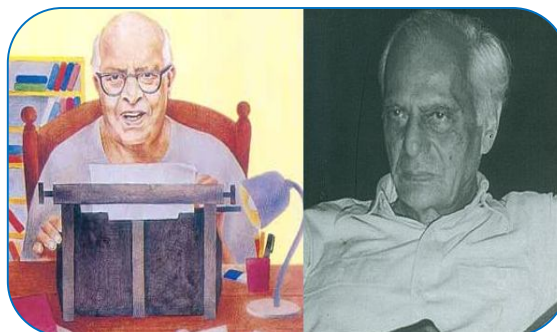
INTRODUCTION

R.K. Narayan belongs to the category of the greatest of Indo-Anglian novelists and as such he can be classed with major Indo-Anglian novelists like Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. Born of Tamil parents, Narayan spent most of his life in Mysore. After a brief period of working as a school-teacher and newspaper correspondent, he turned to the writing of novels and short-stories and became a whole-time writer. During his long writing career of about 50 years, he has produced about a dozen novels, above a hundred and fifty short-stories, a few autobiographical works and condensed prose-versions of the 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata' in English.

However, it is as novelist of rare distinction that he has won immense fame and praise both in India and in other countries. R.K. Narayan began his career as a novelist with the first novel of his 'Swami and Friends' (1935).

R.K. Narayan, one of the founding fathers of the Indo-Anglian fiction, is a story-teller par-excellence. His narrative art is his own and it has been highly praised by the distinguished scholars. Anthony West calls him "a first-rate story teller"; Henry Miller says that he is "a born story-teller". His narrative skill makes him popular and successful in India and abroad.

'Manohar Malgonkar' written by G.S. Amur published by Arnold Heinemann India, and 'The Historian as Novelist: Manohar Malgonkar' in perspectives in Indian fiction in English are certainly a



commendable work in the field of the proposed work in the sense that they attempt to analyze and explain the reasons that why he chose such untraditional themes and prototypes for his writing apart from these, 'Critical Response to Indian English Fiction' by M. Shyam Asnani, 'Manohar Malgonakar' by Y. James Dayanand, 'Malgonakar in Indo-Anglian Fiction : An Assessment' by P.P. Mehta, 'The novels of Manohar Malgonkar : A study in The Quest for Fulfillment' by M. Rajagopalchari are some of the major works done in the field so far.

ART OF CHARACTERIZATION:

Characters are the people in the world of the novel. They can be understood either as types or individuals. E.M. Forster has broadly classified the characters as flat and round. According to him the flat character is developed round a single idea. The flat character does not have a psychological depth, individuality and is mostly considered as a 'type'. For instance, the characters in the folk-tales are flat. They remain types, representing the virtues and vices. These characters do not change in the course of time and remain the same at the end. The flat characters are valuable within other value system.

The round character is one that changes in time and is capable of surprising the reader by unexpected behavior. The round character has a psychological depth and individuality. Most of the great characters in the novel are round characters. They are though great in certain value-system.

In the method of characterization, the reader has an access to the mind of the characters. As a matter of fact, there are two major methods of characterization: the Internal and the External. The Internal characterization focuses on the individuals and their individualities. The reader gets a direct access to the characters' mind. The External characterization focuses on the social organization in the form of social ethos.

ART OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE NOVEL OF R.K. NARAYAN:

R.K. Narayan's art of characterization in *The Guide* is very mature and perfect, in the sense that Raju, Rosie and Marco are portrayed as mature characters. Raju, Rosie and Marco have been drawn with gusto keeping the inner and outer facts of human personality in their portrayal. They breathe the modern air. The characters have been set both in the traditional and conservative mould, but in their matrix they shine with definite individuality. They surprise us by their action and not by the turn of the trait which is seen in modern novels.

Raju is drawn from the lower section of society. When he becomes a false Swami, he emits a different type of odour. Rosie is a vivacious character with a pathological aura in her background. The protagonist is present in the novel from the beginning to the end. He gains prominence by virtue of his idiosyncrasy. The change in the destiny of the hero is predetermined. The character of Rosie is mould in such a way as to keep pace with the hero. The traditional or the modern film villain is missing from the novels of R.K. Narayan. The characters move on the canvas with their individual foibles and problems.

R.K. Narayan has the faculty to portray the flesh and bloodlike characters in his novel. The objectivity with which he has painted the characters in this novel has enabled him to differentiate one character from another with distinct points. Raju's character is as flat as it can be, but Rosie is depicted as a subtle Soul. A few characters have been drawn cursorily. Psychological realism is not seen in the characterization of *The Guide*.

R.K. Narayan has not drawn three dimensional characters in the novel. He has portrayed two dimensional characters in Rosie. His characters on the whole are of single dimensional, yet they are not wooden. They are very convincing and life-like. After all, the characters in this novel are not types but individuals. Rosie and Marco are the memorable characters with their peculiar traits. Marco and Rosie suffer from their maladjustment. Raju is materialistic. His materialism is seen in his excessive love for money even at the cost of true love for Rosie. Velan is superstitious and Gaffur and Joseph have the dryness of life. Raju's mother and maternal uncle are tradition-bound and District Superintendent of Police is a mere mechanical force.

ART OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE NOVEL OF MANOHAR MALGONKAR:

Malgonkar's use of conventional linear plots and his talent in presenting well-knit plots are discussed. The writer uses the first person narration in his two novels to impart authenticity to the narration and Malgonkar's "Distant Drum" focuses on the success and the process of self realization in an ideal Indian Army Officer in the British Regiment. It is a human story of struggle and success and final achievement of a goal.

Distant Drum is read not so much as the story of an Indian Officer's growth and maturity but as an epitaph for the British Indian Army. As a matter of fact, it is the historical aspect of Distant Drum which has appealed to its reader, rather than its fictional content.

On one level Distant Drum is the story of one of the officers of the Regiment to live up to its code and on another a symbolic presentation of the Indian encounter with the British in the Army and its values for India. Distant Drum is not epitaph for the British Indian Army nor does it assume in unblinking Anglo-Philia.

It is a documentation of army life in its various aspects and a celebration of the army code as developed by the British in the Indian Army. There are many themes in Distant Drum the Indo-British relationship at a personal level, the theme of loyalty and friendship, the love of Kiran Garud and Bina and chiefly the all enveloping theme of self realization, the initiation of the hero Kiran Garud. The main theme of this novel is the growth of the protagonist; Kiran Garud is an army officer who, throughout the novel remains loyal to his profession as a duty bounded soldier. Malgonkar has been able to create a very realistic picture of the Indian Army in the theory of change-marked his the Second World War, the dawn of independence, the vivisection of the nation, the departure of many British Officers of the Indian Army, the division of the army, the quick promotion of the Indians to the higher echelons in the army, the Kashmir War the emergence of national spirit in the army.

CONCLUSION:

Narayan's characters do not change and develop and grow, but the development occurs as a result of the growth of awareness of one's responsibility towards others and obligation to the cosmic will, and is often marked by abrupt transitions as a character suddenly decides to move on to another plane in life. The ultimate goal is to transcend desire, and so selfhood is paradoxically achieved through negation of the self. His Characters step out of the individual to the archetypal-nay universal level. They are not mere types, for if a character gets typical, he loses all humanity and Narayan is never in a mood to try this costly experiment. Narayan's characters represent varied facets of human nature which are neither good nor bad. The characters in Malgudi novels "seem to achieve a sort of transmigration from body to body, name to name and ultimately to blur the sharpness of distinction under the haze of the general acceptance. There is no 'good' and no 'bad' characters in Narayan's novels. Human nature is presented veraciously and interestingly and memorably, there is no overt condemnation or praise."

Malgonkar introduces several characters in the novel to reveal the richness of life from many points of view and provide valuable background for the violent action of the novel. His characters are realistic and complex. They can't be categorized as good or bad. His characters have the force of life. They represent the complexity of life. They compel the reader's attention with their intense quest for identity of self discovery. Monohar Malgonkar is well known for his art of characterization, delineation of major characters; mainly make characters and portrayal of minor and women characters.

All Malgonkar's characters display an unexpressed thirst for some human values which lie beyond the reach of outward differences of caste, creed, color and religion. The novel has a double movement, one in terms of present action and another through the past reconstructed in memory. The first a circular and picaresque movement covers a period of about seven months from the middle of August 1949 to March 1950 and traces the sojourn of the hero. Distant Drum is an auto bio-graphical novel by Malgonkar. His craftsmanship, always competent, has attained the kind of sophistication, associated with the modern novel. He still prefers the closed form.

Though Distant Drum has been described as a symbolic presentation of the Indian character with the British in the army and its value to India, it is mainly a story of self realization-an individual's growing awareness of himself and his surroundings and the development of an assertive and practical philosophy of life.

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