CHAPTER – IV

TREATMENT OF HINDU MYTHOLOGY

The greatness of R.K. Narayan as a writer of prose lies in the fact that he has deep knowledge of Hindu Mythology and Indian Philosophy. Even as a student he had strong faith in the principle of the Vedas, the Upanishad, the Ramayana, The Mahabharata, The Gita and the Purans. His prose epics and novel consist frequent references to these works. He seems to be the messenger of God who came to the earth to translate the Godly works like, The Vedas. The Ramayana, The Mahabharata and the Upanishads which consist the message of God so that it may be reachable to all people of God. After a reader has studied his works he reaches the conclusion that the artist had full faith in the fundamental principal of Indian philosophy such as Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Once he remarked:

Every one knows what the hero achieves by God’s grace, an also what the end of the demon is going to be. The tales have such again and again, and no one has ever been known to remark in this country. “Stop! I have heard that one before. “They are heard or read and pondered over again and again, engendering in the listener an ever-deepening understanding of life, of life, death and destiny!”
In this leisure hours he analyzed the various characters of The Ramayana, The Mahabharata because he found philosophical significance in every story and there is also a difference between good and evil. He was surprised to see how the good people like Rama, Laxmana, Sita, Yudhistira, Bhima, Arjuna, Draupadi, Kunthi and Vidura etc. suffered in this world of Maya. The demons got victory at several stages. Then he also realized that God sets everything right in the end. Ultimately the good triumphs over evil and people all over the world had to accept the law of Karma in every generation.

R.K. Narayan has clearly expressed to his readers that there is an unbreakable relationship between Hindu mythology and literature and any attempt to separate the two will bring bad results. He remarked:

Everything is interrelated. Stories, scriptures, ethics, philosophy grammer, astrologer, astronomy, semantics, mysticism and moral codes – each forms part and parcel of total life and is indispensable for the attainment of a four-square understanding of existence. Literature is not a branch of study to be placed in a separate compartment, for the edification only to scholars, but a compressive and artistic medium of expression to benefit the literate and the illiterate alike.

He observed the Hindu people minutely and found that they got joy whenever any Pandit came to their locality and explained the
different stanzas from *The Ramayana, The Mahabharata, The Bhagvat Gita and The Purans* with mythological references. To his surprise he found that the classes as well as the masses followed what the Shastras prescribed. People still have faith in four – Krita Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dwapara Yuga and Kaliyuga. They accept that righteousness prevails everywhere in Krita Yuga. Secondly, people attach importance to sacrifies and ceremonies in Krit Yuga. Unfortunately, righteousness diminishes by half in Dwapara Yuga. However, goodness declines and ceremonies increase in number. Like other people, R.K. Narayan also believes that Kaliyuga is the worst. The people of Kaliyuga are bad because hunger and disease and other evils are found everywhere. The rulers are not interested in public welfare and use their political power for professional interest. Yet R.K. Narayan did not lose heart and hoped for a better world order, he asserted his faith in the Supreme God.

......who is untouched by time and change, and in whose reckoning creation and dissolution have occurred in the twinkling of an eye. He is ultimately Godhead, called Narayan, Ishwara, or Mahashakti. From this timeless being all activity, philosophy, scripture, stories, gods and demons, heroes and epochs, emanate and in him everything terminates.3

He described his faith in the form of a Trinity of Gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva or Mahesha, each with his own particular function.
Brahma is universally regarded by all as the Creator; Vishnu, the protector or nourisher and Shiva or Mahesh the Destroyer of all. The Hindus believe in many Gods, which are continually tortured by evil powers known as demons or asuras. Various Hindu mythological tales confirm that he saints spend their lives in the forest to seek life of liberation through meditation. But the demons also acquire unlimited powers through intense penance and harass mankind. But great respect has been shown to those kings and saints who adopted the policy of renunciation and goodness. The artist himself regarded Lord Rama and Lord Krishna as incarnations of Vishnu.

In fact, R.K. Narayan accepted the theory of creation, protection and dissolution. He believed that the god is all pervasive and everything in creation takes its origin from him. Even the wild beasts, poisonous trees and demons are his creation. The demons may get victory for a moment but then are punished in the end. He accepted the mythology facts about The Earth, The Sun, The Moon, Venus, Jupiter, Mars, Dhurga, Mahar Loka, Satya Loka etc. and says:

All the world are protected by a divine cosmic shell. Around the outer shell lies water equal in extent to ten times the diameter of the earth. The waters in the turn are surrounded by fire, fire by air, air by mind, and mind by he origin of the elements. Enclosing the whole is the Supreme Principal
which guides all these, and which is infinite and measureless.\textsuperscript{5}

As R.K. Narayan's deeply interested in Hindu mythology and given numberless on the novels of R.K. Narayan and there are numberless references to it in his novels, it becomes essential, at this stage, to analyze the fundamentals of \textbf{The Vedas, The Upanishad, The Ramayana, The Mahabharata} and \textbf{The Baghvat Gita}.

Like the Vedic saints, he accepted the importance of penitence prayers, simple diet, gentleness in thought etc. and condemned agreed, hypocrisy, pride, anger, callousness etc. He also believed that every man has to suffer the consequences of the action of his previous life in this life. According to Vedas, 'the true essence of the gods is only one'. God pervades everywhere and he is full of supreme bliss. His soul is detached, immortal and self-dependant. The theories of Karma Kanda and Janana Kanda were later on developed by the saints who accepted \textbf{The Upanishad’s} and \textbf{The Baghvat Gita}.

The prose epics of R.K. Narayan confirm his faith in the instructions of \textbf{The Upanishads}. According to \textbf{The Upanishad}, introversion is necessary for the realization of the self. Here importance has been attached to thinking, concentration and meditation for spiritual
growth. Like the vedic saints Vidura believed in the ultimate reality of Brahma. Brahma is infinite, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient and self-consciousness. It is sell of all. Brahma is existence and natural powers art the parts of Brahma.

The Baghvat Gita, is a part of The Mahabharata and it is still regarded the best treatise to get happiness and delight. Here Krishna told Arjuna what is his duty in this material world. He explained him the real meaning of Niskama Karma. Through his speech, Lord Krishna told Arjuna that fighting was his supreme duty, and hence activism is the essence of The Gita. When Arjuna did not feel convinced with Lord Krishna's message, the latter showed him his cosmic form to confirm the fact that the real order is the god himself. So the ideal man must have synthesis of knowledge, devotion, action, thought, emotion and will to identify himself with God. To realize God. Social good is also to be attained. Lord Krishna showed the path of liberation and Karma Yoga and prescribed the principal of the 'union with divine'. Lord Krishna also described the theory of incarnation.

Even as a young student, R.K. Narayan took keen interest in the different mythological figures and legends. His stories and novels illustrate different Hindu beliefs and he presents them in a life-like
manner. His stories and novels help us to understand the ancient Indian traditions and way of life. Like a traditional Indian pandit, he interprets the modern India in terms of ancient Hindu mythology. Many Hindu legends and fables gave him ideas to develop his novels. Several mythological characters have been described by him through new conditions, though the basic idea is the same. The incident conflict between the gods and asuras or between good and evil dominates the theme of almost every novel. In spite of everything his stories and prose epics have their roots in the Indian social order.

R.K. Narayan believed that this universe is without a beginning and is infinite. It can be destroyed, through it changes and the change is a continues process. One must understand six objects to get the meaning of the universe. These six objects are – soul, matter, motion (Dharma), rest (A dharma), space and time. Except the soul, other five objects are non-soul. But all the six objects have got to be understood properly for knowledge and liberation. The soul is capable of getting knowledge and faith. A human being has five indriyas (Sense) and anything related to these five senses and is visible, is matter. Anything which helps the soul and matter to move is motion. If something stops the working of the soul, it rest. The space is instrument in enveloping all objects and time changes all objects, without going into the details,
not related to my topic of researcher, it is necessary to concentrate on soul and matter. Religion, according to most of the Hindu saints, helps people in coming out of worldly misery and tells them the path of the highest bliss. Only the soul is related with happiness or misery. Matter has also got to be understood to understand the soul and to control the indriyas.

Karma has much to do with the matter. Karma sometimes obstructs knowledge and faith. It gives different experience to human beings and may cause delusion. It gives life span and a name.

whenever Vidura advised the king, the latter became conscious of his duty as a king. But alas! It used to be a temporary phase as the king always found himself under pressure of Duryodhana. The king became helpless whereas he should have become bold. He could not help the Pandav as though he had a strong desire to do so. The king ultimately realized that he himself was powerless in the hands of fate. He made lame excuses as he lacked the boldness to follow the path of righteousness. Ultimately the king suffered terrible agony and it was due to his Karma. Duryodhana, Dussasana, Sakuni and other evil doers adopted foul means to fulfill their ambitions and the result was tragic. Vidura aptly told Dasaratha:
youthful damsel would spurn my advice. He said, ‘Go away or ever. I shall not need your guidance or advice to rule the world. Go where they will heed your words – anywhere you may choose except here. Now go away immediately. And there I am.'

After the horrible destruction in the battle field of Kurukshetra Vidura tried to console restless Dasaratha and explained him the fundamentals of life. Vidura said that all human beings die one day. After all death is the end of life and all have to die one day, whether they fight or not. Why to lament for those who have died? Lamentation is useless because the dead cannot be revived through lamentation. Lamentation does not melt the tears of death. The Shastra’s emphasize that those who fight bravely in the war, die a glorious death. Even the gods and proud of their bravery. Hence, it is wrong on our parts to lament for the death of brave warriors. Man and woman establish various earthly relations thousand of times through birth and death but nobody actually belong to us. There are moment of sorrows and fear at various places in the schemes of creation but only the fools feel baffled with them and not the wise. Nobody can control death and all are equal before the Lord of death. Everyone has to suffer according to his Karma sometimes early and sometimes late.
Through the tale of a Brahmin Vidura told Dasaratha that his earthly life is like a dangerous forest. The people living here are all violent and are victims of various sufferings. Old age is terrible. The body of man is a well and time is sitting like a dangerous snake at its bottom. However, there is a hope for life. Day and night are like white – black rats to cut the roots of the three of life. Human desires are bees and the honey is the pleasure which man gets from earthly comforts and luxuries. The wise people suggested only the way to escape from this world of illusion and this method is the way of detachment. Detachment is the only method to cut oneself from any bondage. The path of right knowledge can make a person free from all earthly bondages and problems and problems renunciations, self-discipline and fearlessness lead people to real joy.

Thus, Vidura can be safely called the prophet of Hindu philosophy. The most important feature of his personality was that he practiced what he taught. Dasaratha accepted his philosophy after a few years and left Hastinapur for retirement. Learned Vidura had no allurement for royal life and retried to the forest to enjoy the company as saints. It was not meant for him. Even in Hastinapur he led a detached life. Dharma, righteousness, right conduct, right philosophy, detachment etc. Valmiki and Ved Vyasa emphasized in The Ramayana and The
Mahabharata the importance of Dharma. Dharma is a compressive term and it refers to the varied aspects of life. The word Dharma is used in The Vedas and The Upanishad also, but it requires a vast and all-inclusive significance in its usage in the two Indian epics. Dharma in Paradise Lost refers mostly to righteousness, a triumph of virtue over vice and the need for man to have unquestioned faith in God. In the two Indian epics dharma relates to religious ordinance and duties, principal of conduct, truth and the duties peculiar to the four stages of life. Dharma presuppose an eternal moral order, which is based on cosmic archetypal idealization. As we read these two Indian epics we realize that there is a high ethical purpose embedded in them. Both the Indian epics and Paradise Lost introduce the cosmic concept of the conflict between good and evil, right and wrong, justice and injustice. On the whole Dharma is a transcendentonal norm.

Rama regarded Dharma as the best truth and follows it without caring for his sufferings. His determination to respect his father's promise to Kaikeyi, his ideal of monogamous marriage, his unhesitating acceptance of responsibility to protect the Rishis from the Rakshas, all these make Rama an example of dharma. Even though Bharata comes to Rama in Chitrakut and request him to return to Ayodhya and rule the kingdom, he does not swerve from him his own principal of conduct. He
his solemn pledge to Kalideyi that he will accept banishment. He thinks of the trivarga, Dharma, Archa and Kama, the latter two should lead to dharma finally. While Artha, acquisition of wealth and Kama, pursuit of pleasure, may be desirable goals in life, any excess of them is unbecoming of man. Ram firmly believes in reviving dharma so that Artha and Karma can be enjoyed within reasonable limits. He is the embodiment of a happy domestic life and his in consolable grief on being separated from Sita in the forest is extremely human and laudable as an ethical code of conduct.

In the forest Rama found the saints in great consternation and panic. They appeal to him for deliverance from the evil forces. He readily agrees to destroy the Rakshas. Sita mildly suggested that Rama should not have promised help to the sages. Especially when the Rakshas have not done them harm, it is preposterous to kill them. Sita tells Rama – it is not proper to kill any creature unless it does some grave injury. While appreciating Sita’s contention. Rama maintains that it is his Kashatriya Dharma to rescue the pious and holy sages from the malicious clutches of the Rakshas. Yet she says that they have come to the forest to lead the life of the ascetics. But Rama if firm in his faith and he does what is ethically correct and morally justified. So he tells Sita that once he has
what is right and truthful even thought it means hardship and trial of moral strength for him. M.V. Rama Sharma remarks:

Valmiki presents Rama as an ideal man, a perfect man. Who is not susceptible to the weaknesses and faults of ordinary human being. The Ramayana like The Mahabharata is a Dhramasastra, a source of perennial ethical wisdom and righteousness. In the two Indian epics varied aspects of dharma, the loukika dharma, grihastha dharma, varnasrama dharma and kula dharma are presented as the a sum total of life. Rama’s great ideal, raja dharma, kingship, envisages a benevolent monarch who will rule his kingdom with equity and justice. Ramarajuya is synonymous with religious observances, prosperity to the nation, social harmony, prevalence of goodness and righteousness.8

So The Ramayana is not simply a book of adventures. It is more than a religious book. Here Valmiki asserts that dharma is the highest truth in the world. Valmiki with his insight into human nature revels how even among Rakshas who are generally given to evil design, there are some who eschew the path of malevolence. Vibhishana tells Ravana in unmistakable terms that robbing Rama of his wife is unethical and he should send Sita back to Rama and seek his pardon. Among the Rakshas who are commissioned to be cruel to Sita, there are few who realize the essential purity of Sita and take a liking for her.
Like Valmiki, Ved also asserted the fact that the evil has to be put down, and how it is done is not to much concern or consequences. Lord Krishna’s instruction on the battlefield to Arjuna, Bhima and Yudhistira to slay their foes without concern or consequences are equally unethical and even unchivalrous. But the primary obligation is to root out evil and establish dharma.

The Mahabharata is intended to serve even the common man with the rules of ethical conduct. It is considered to be a work of authority of conduct and social order. It deals with the religious, philosophical and political beliefs and practices of the day. Bhisma lying on bed of arrows answers Yudhistira’s questions elaborately and patiently. They are read like a document of moral values and ethical conduct ethics as The Mahabharata presents is the pursuit of dharma. Dharma is mostly and ethical code and it has social implications. It is an accepted bond that keeps social laws inviolable. At every stage in the epic we are given a valid interpretation of dharma saw something that has to be scrupulously followed for the ennoblement and edification of man.

The philosophy of Ved Vyasa is exhibited through the conversation between Yaksha and Yudhistira. Here dharma appears before Yudhistira in the guise of Yaksha. Yudhistira answered all the
One has to admit that these questions were profound and thoughtful. His brothers were lying dead before him and it was the worst that could happen with him. Yaksha asks: “What is important for those who say? What is important for those who seek prosperity?” Before Yudhistira could complete his sentence with “Rain”, he also had to be answering the next question….with of spring….” The Yaksha went on to ask, “What is weightier than the earth?”

“Mother”.
“Higher than the heavens?”
“Father”.
“Faster than the wind?”
“Mind”.
“What sleeps with eye open?”
“Fish”.
“What remains immobile after being born?”
“Egg”.
“Who is the friend of the exile?”
“The companion on the way”.
“Who is the friend of one about to die?”
“The charity done in one’s lifetime”.


“Who is that friend you could counts as God given?”
“A Wife”.
“What is one’s highest duty?”
“To refrain from injury”.

To another series of questions on renunciation, Yudhistira gave the answer: “Pride, if renounced, makes one agreeable; anger, if renounced, brings no regret; desire, if renounced, will make one rich; avarice, if renounced, brings one happiness. True tranquility is of the heart.... Mercy may be defined as witching happiness to all creatures...... Ignorance is not knowing one’s duties.... Wickedness consists of speaking ill of others”.

“Who is a true Brahmin? By birth study or conduct?”
“Not by birth, but by knowledge of the scriptures and right conduct. A Brahmin born to caste, even if he has mastered The Vedas, must be viewed as of the lowest caste if his heart is not pure”.
There were a hundred or more questions in all Yudhistira felt faint from thirst, grief and suspense and could only whisper his replies. Finally, the Yaksha said, “Answer four more questions, and you may find your brothers – at least one of them – revived...... who is really happy?”

“One who has scantly means but is free from debt; he is truly a happy man”.

"What is the greatest wonder"?

"Day after day and hour after hour, people die and corpse are carried along, yet the onlookers never realize that they are also to die one day, but think they will live for ever. This is the greatest wonder of the world?.

"What is path?"

"The path is what the great ones have trod. When one looks for, one will not find it by study of scriptures of arguments, which are contradictory and conflicting."

The above conversation reveals the very gist of life. R.K. Narayan was much impressed by the conversation. Therefore, he illustrated the importance of Dharma and truthfulness. The answers of Yudhistira pleased the God of dharma and a result; all his brothers were restored to life. After studying the above conversation one can aptly realize that, the importance of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha have been asserted here. Yudhistira emphasizes the importance of liberation from a mundane existence. He rightly believes that divine illumination is attained through devotion to God. Like R.N. Tagore and Sarojini Naidu, R.K. Narayan describes the importance of intense love of God in the life of man.
When Arjuna reached the battlefield of Kurukshetra, he refused to fight against his relations, teachers and cousins. Lord Krishna taught him the lesson of Karma, detachment and liberation for attaining Moksha. This long lecture is known as The Gita. As a matter of fact, Arjuna failed to understand the mystery of the world. Krishna removed all his doubts through his purposeful message, solved all his problems, and at the same time inspired him for right action. In the presentation of Lord Krishna, we perceive the process of synthesizing the plurality of Vedic gods into on ultimately reality, the supreme being, the manifestation of God into man. The Gita is obliviously an ethical treatise, a Yoga Sastra. The Gita was formulated in the period of ethical religion. The Gita accept the need for several approaches for god civilization. It upholds the three methods, Jñana, Karma and Bhakhti that enable man to achieve the highest goal of becoming one with God. Through Jñana, wisdom, pursuit of knowledge and acquisition of spiritual enlightenment one can transcend the limitation of physical existence. Or one may do one’s duty as an act of worship to God, unmindful of the rewards. This Nishkama karma leads to piety and ascendance to a nobler state.

So true knowledge was imparted to Arjuna by Lord Krishna. Krishna explained Arjuna the ‘discipline of Knowledge’ and the ‘discipline of action’ to remove his doubts. He asked him to understand
the permanence of the self-alone. Lord Krishna asked Arjuna not to be afraid of his own death and that of others. It is only the body that dies with death. The atman, that real self is free from all change. No body can kill the soul.

He know it as the slayer, and also he who knows it as the slain, they both know not rightly; it kills not, nor is killed.

(The Gita, II, 19)

Arjuna is encouraged to get the fire of knowledge and realize only his karma. He is asked not to have any fear of the result of battle. Hence, he is exhorted to fight or doubt. Arjuna wanted to renounce everything of this world out of disgust. But Krishna rejected this proposal. Why should he renounce action? All created beings are bound by the theory of Karma and are saved by knowledge. It was not the time for Arjuna to become a Sanyasi. Of course, he was supposed to forget the fruits of action. Let Arjuna become a yogi – man of action. Arjuna still wanted to choose the path of renunciation. But Krishna told him that the yoga of action would lead him towards highest bliss. One should keep in mind that a yogi should keep himself detached and liberated from bondage while performing his action in the right manner. If one wants to assimilate truth, one has got to perform right action. Right action leave good impressive and elevate one’s character. On the contrary,
evil actions leave bad impression and degrade one’s character. Since one has got to lead one’s worldly life, one cannot abstain from action. Nature is constantly at work and one cheats oneself if one fancies that its process can be checked.

Lord Krishna further said:

Having known me, you will always be happy. Those who direct their mind with full faith towards me without any other preoccupation like the embryo in the womb, those to whom nothing is dearer in this world than myself and who continue to exist for myself, and those, who think of me with the singleness of purpose and devote themselves to me, are served by me in the same manner...... I have to undertaken the whole burden of their anxieties.... Like the mother knowing the thirst and hunger of the child, devoting herself always to the task. I do everything for them, who have thrown themselves fully on me.\textsuperscript{10}

Then, Krishna preached liberation through activism. The Gita advocates the principle, which are meant for all people. People of all temperaments can attain peace through them. The central teaching of The Gita were practiced by R.K. Narayan with full faith. He understood that The Gita presented the path of Nishkama Karma Yogi in which the knowledge, devotion and action are synthesized. Equal importance was attached to intellect, emotion and will. Before the origin of The Gita, two different paths were advocated by the saints. Some saints followed
synthesized activism and renunciation. Hence Lord Krishna talked of a via-media between this world and another.

Lord Krishna explained Arjuna the concept of the immortality of soul. But his arguments did not convince Arjuna easily. Now Krishna had to show him his cosmic form. This made Arjuna realize that the real doer is God himself and man is merely an instrument in his hands and so his duty is only to follow divine commands.

Lord Krishna understood the agony of Arjuna as this warrior had ailed to realize the world of Maya. He told him that birth and death are the result of illusion, but in reality the soul is imperishable. Childhood emerges into youth and though all this transformations, the body survives. Same is the case with the soul. Though the bodies are often changed, the soul is eternal.

Now Arjuna reached the conclusion that all will die one day whether they are kings, queens, ministers, godlike human beings or great warriors. Father, brother, sister, wife etc. will die positively. All grow old and then die. So why to be afraid of death or matter!
Lord Krishna further tells Arjuna that he is all pervading and he is to be found in the whole universe. He says, “I am the beginning, the middle and the end. I am the knowledge of things spiritual”. Passages of this type abound in The Gita giving the picture of personal and impersonal godhead.

The intellectual, the man of action, the common man, all get their goals of life fulfilled by practicing any of the three methods mentioned in The Gita. The Gita, full of religious speculation, discloses the efficacy of faith, of unquestioned faith in God. Lord Krishna assures that all are loved by him indication his sublime love for mankind.

In the latter part of The Mahabharata, dharma is questioned though R.K. Narayan just makes passing references to this aspect. Was it dharma to kill Bhishma after placing Sikandi in front of Arjuna? Was it dharma to misuse the mane of Aswathama to make his teacher nervous? In the last moment of his life, Duryodhana blamed Krishna for adopting foul means to get victory. Why did Krishna hint Bhima to smash the things of Duryodhana? Karna was cut down by Arjuna though the former tried to free his wheel on the ground. Was it ethical? Was Krishna really immoral, irreligious and unethical? Krishna also restores – was Abhimanyu not killed in an unethical manner? Why
does Duryodhana want to escape from the result of his evil deeds? Will he not suffer for his agreed and ambition?

According to a few versions of The Mahabharata, a few spirits appeared in the sky and dropped fragrant flowers on the head of Duryodhana and blessed him for his glory. It was a shameful moment for the Pandavas. But Krishna clamed them and reminded them of his powers of Maya. Had he not used his Maya, the Pandavas would not have survived.

This above explanations of dharma as given by Krishna may not be appealing rather it may appear puzzling to the scholar. But it was Krishna’s dharma to rid the world of demonic forces. God comes in the human form as he explains in The Gita to deliver the holy to destroy the sin of the sinner. To establish righteousness, Lord Krishna, unlike Lord Rama, establishes dharma of justice.

In the novel The English Teacher R.K. Narayan, describe the relationship between life and death. The hero Krishna has a few questions in his mind – what is man? What is destiny? How does he overcome destiny? How does destiny overcome him? What is fate? What is free will? After the death of his wife, Krishna comes to know the mystery of death. With the help of a Pandit, Krishna communicates with the soul of
his wife and gets the answer of his questions. With a lot a psychic experiments Krishna got peace of mind and he realized that he had lost her only in the flesh. She promised of psychic communication with him and it clamed his mind:

......this communication will restores to your health and better verves because of the greater harmony that later he realized:

There is no escape from loneliness and separation....wife, child, brother, parents, friends.....we come together only to go to apart again. It is one continuous movement. They move away from us as we move away from them. The law of life can’t be avoided. The law comes into operation the moment we detached ourselves from our mother’s womb. All struggle and misery in life is due to our attempt to arrest this law or get away from it or in allowing ourselves to be hurt by it. The fact must be recognized. A profound unmitigated loneliness is the only truth of life. All else is false.\textsuperscript{12}

Some readers who fail to understand the principle of Hindu philosophy feel are wildered while reading the second half of the novel \textbf{The English Teacher}. As mentioned earlier, the novelist accepted this book not as mere ‘fiction’. He has accepted Leela’s death as a fact as he had understood the concept of life. Though the novelists continued living and planning, the realized that some instinct was driving him on. Like the characters of Browning, he realized that death was not the real end
of life. And Krishna, like R.K. Narayan, realized that there is life after this life. It is true that there is a difference between life and death and there is a separation between body and soul with death but the influence of the divine cannot be ignored. After having revealed the mystery of the murder of Hamlet's father, the ghost inspired Hamlet to take revenge from the evil doer but not to torture Gertrude. Similarly, Sushila comes from the other world to console Krishna and also advise him to take interest in his work. Sushila tells him:

I have watched you since we met last and seen your mind. I saw the doubts crossing and re-crossing your mind regarding identity. Naturally, how can you believe what you cannot see? It might be me or someone else; was that not the line of thought going on in your mind? Correct me if I am wrong.\(^\text{13}\)

The 'Indian sensibility' as understood and described by R.K. Narayan has been admired by William Walsh.

.....we have to understand the wholly different set of assumptions governing the difference between life and death, the separation of body and spirit, the influence of the divine, the continuity of life, the forms under which life secures, the similarity of substance and the variety of appearances, the differences, that is, between these things, as we understand the, and as the Indian sensibility apprehends them.\(^\text{14}\)
This mystical experience gave inner strength to Krishna. The number of their meeting increase and Krishna finds himself spiritually illumined and says:

We stood at the window, gazing on slender, red streak over eastern rim of the earth. A cool breeze lapped our faces. The boundaries of our personalities suddenly dissolved. It was a moment of rare, immutable joy – a moment for which one feels grateful to life and death.¹⁵

Although Krishna’s psychic experiments helped him in getting peace of mind, yet he realized that this was not enough for inner peace. He had already trusted many strange spiritual forces and the old schoolmaster had changed his outlook of life. Although he had enjoyed teaching Shakespeare, P.B. Shelley, Keats etc. Yet he was against the system of education now. As it could produce only efficient clerks. He resigned his job as a college lecturer and decided to work with old schoolmaster just for twenty-five rupees a month. Here I find a man who could control his lust for money for his inner peace.

Thus, R.K. Narayan had great interest in Indian philosophy and Hindu Mythology. A lot legendary figures gods and goddesses and human beings have been described by him in The Ramayana and The Mahabharata and other works. He has got to be admire for describing
the contemporary realities, and at the same time linking the readers with THE VEDAS, THE UPNISHADAS, THE RAMAYANA, THE MAHABHARATA, THE GITA etc. There is no denying fact that he was interested in human nature and the human values remain the same everywhere at every time. It is true that industries and educational institution have given a new shape to our social and our economic structure. But our fundamental values remain the same. All kinds of people read The Ramayana and The Mahabharata with great interest and still respect the ethical values prescribed by these mythological books. It is also a well known fact that the people consult epics to get consolation in moments of agony and cries. R.K. Narayan himself asserted:

With the impact of modern literature, we look at the gods, demons, sages and kings of our mythology and epics, not as some remote concoctions but as types and symbols possessing psychological validity even when viewed against the contemporary background .....passing inevitable, through phase of symbolic, didactic or over dramatic writing, one arrived at the stage of valuing realism, psychological and technical exploration and technical virtuosity.16

So, R.K. Narayan condemned greed, lust, avarice lechery, sense of possessiveness, violence, egoism, etc. through these prose epics and at
the same time admired virtue, wisdom, truth, non-violence and dharma as prescribed by various Hindus saints at different times. He undoubtedly has his roots in Indian philosophy. The prose epics of R.K. Narayan answer the questions how to live with right knowledge, right conduct and right faith.
REFERENCES

4. Ibid., P. 4.
5. Ibid., P. 6
6. Ibid., P. 11.
7. Ibid., P. 240.
8. Ibid., P. 188.
11. Ibid., P.P. 34-35.

15. Ibid., P.P. 187-188.

16. Ibid., P. 141.

17. Ibid., P. 145.


aggrandizement in the guise of social service, but also, curiously enough, strengthen him in his quest for identity. We find in the novel good and evil, gravity and ludicrity, sublime and ridiculous inextricably juxtaposed. A.V. Krishna Rao’s evolution of the novel is worth considering:

It is, in the first place, a novel of education, embodying the traditional spiritual images; and secondly, a picaresque story of a scoundrel, typical of a war-torn world with its floundering values even in such a quite as Malgudi.4

The first and perhaps the most pretentious man Srinivas some across is the sordid, old, house-owner whose house he rents. Himself an unhappy man, with his family scattered from north to south, the old man seeks secret pleasure in torturing the sentiments of others, especially his tenants whose protestations and request for genuine facilities he always keeps in abeyance. His only pleasure is to squeeze as much money as possible from his discontented tenants and in putting his earnings in the Saraju Bank, spending nothing on him. He has a regular public bath on the public tap, keeping others waiting for he takes too long a time in his ablutions. For free food, he gets cooked rice “distributed as charity in a nearby temple”. The old man thinks he is virtually an ascetic, for like him. “The true Sanyasi has no need to live on anything more than the living of God.”5 Probably casually reminiscing Lord Krishna (in the 13th verse of ch. III of The Gita) enjoying to “partake of what is left after sacrifice” to

15. Ibid., P.P. 187-188.

16. Ibid., P. 141.

17. Ibid., P. 145.


