CHAPTER-I

R. K. NARAYAN'S FICTIONAL HERITAGE
Chapter I
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A. Origin and Development of Indo-Anglian Fiction

Indo-Anglian novel is a product of East-West encounter, particularly in the twentieth century context. India is a land of multicultural heterogeneous inhabitants. On the other hand, the Britishers who ruled India for two hundred years are relatively homogeneous people of the nation state. Quite naturally the British carried with themselves the stigma of colonial subjugation and exploitation. It is only in the first half of this century that there emerged a resistant group of people, who recently acquired for themselves the idea of nationalism in this East-West encounter, as Esha Dey rightly points out, "A full blown mythology of East-West confrontation" (11). The Britishers, who came as merchants introduced in the sub-continent Railways and English education. Inspite of the fact that the Britishers introduced them in order to facilitate their rule, they ultimately contributed for a sort of a geographical unification and cultural awakening.

As a matter of fact the tactics acquiescence of the common people of the subcontinent could pave the way for a handful of merchants to establish their rule of law. The people of the subcontinent are awfully fragmented by their caste and creed on one hand, and the demographic variations and differences on the other hand. Moreover, the erstwhile local feudal heads very often proved to be worse tyrants than even the British rulers. The Hindu upper classes and the medieval theological training of the Muslims really did not do anything worth mentioning for the creation of a dignified culture on the main line. The polytheistic complexities of Hinduism and the monastic Quranic excurbance of Mughals, progressively added for the fragmentation of the people. Some prominent
personalities, with their education in the British universities, prominently contributed for the Indian National Movement. The Britishers themselves with their proud claim of 'Whitman's burden', systematically established the primary, the secondary and the University educational system. It is this advent of this broad-based English educational system that contributed for an understanding of the relationship between the literature and life. The earlier literary conventions of Indians were exclusively patronised by the kings and local lords. As a result, the literary tendencies, both in Sanskrit and in the vernaculars, turned out to be psychofantastic in spirit. Therefore, it was all mostly romantic coupled with fantastic and aurotic. Needless to say, that this kind of literature did not contain much in the name of understanding life, the British formula of education is certainly for more broader-based education system, than any other system of education in the subcontinent. All the fundamental basis of the Western educational system took their formal shape from out of the growth and development of humanism and the humanitarian prospects of life. English language with its various forms of poetry and prose presented a spectacular opportunity to the students of literature in the subcontinent.

An average educated man of India, in addition to the English literary culture, inherited two prominent local literary cultures, one is Sanskrit, Pali, Prakurt, Ancient Tamil type and the other concerns with the modern vernacular languages. The innovations of modern English literature prominently contributed for a dignified bliss for English as a second language. The supremacy of the first language, that is the mother tongue is always held superior to the second language status of English. But, even then some of the prominent writers, particularly in the middle of the twentieth century preferred to creatively involve themselves in the English language. Almost all the forms of literature...
Like poetry, drama, fiction and short stories are taken up for original creative experiments. But, however, it is fiction and short stories that attracted the modern intelligence in a sort of original manner. Why do some of these Indians, may be a very small number, write in English? This is a very difficult question to answer. It is just possible that some of them write in English because of the historiographical circumstances that forced them to regard English as an international language and not their first language. Moreover, a modern cultural set up of India contributed for a great mobility and migration of the educated masses to almost all states and regions. For these migrating generations, it is this English language that was feasible as a lingua communis (language of communication), and also as a prominent source of self-expression. Some of the writers like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R K. Narayan, particularly got impelled by the idea of translating the ideal Indian experience through English language. At the same time, there was a prominent overpowering desire of a convenient form of expression that saved the ideal Indian experience from Anarchy. In order to acquire a formal prominence they have actually marched into the English sensibility through English language.

For about two hundred years, English imagination prevailed in India as a matter of experience. Infact, the very themes that they considered for creative exposition where formal adaptations from the English literary convention. Writers like Narayan and Raja Rao, go to the extent of conforming the English sensibility into a metaphor of human experience itself. As fit mantras of translating English sensibility into the Indian experience and the Indian sensibility into the English language, they had before them the great and internationally famous writers like Rudyard Kipling, E. M. Foster, L. H. Meyers, Ruth Prawer, J. G. Farrell and Paul Scott. Scott considered India itself as a metaphor of innocence.
like Malgudi is a metaphor for R.K. Narayan. The intellectual discipline and the literary sensibility are certainly shaped on the modern base, with its call for liberal humanism. Sometimes in imaginatively migrating into the modern western cultural milieu, almost all the creative writers in India suffered in their heart of hearts the prominent pranks of alienation. But, then this cultural alienation from their own inherited habitat, automatically contributed for a sort of needful objectivity in perceiving and experiencing the subtle relation between the literature and the language. The erstwhile foreign rulers’ contempt towards the prevailing Indian culture on the one hand, and a colossal lack of alacrity on the part of the Indians themselves provoked the Indo-Anglian novelist to retaliate the very English sensibility by way of adopting for themselves English itself as the source of experience and expression. In one form or the other, it is the nationalist pride that started taking shape, tone and tenor during the Non-cooperation Movement that led these writers to make their fictional experiments in English.

B. Indian Writers in English

R.K. Narayan as a fictional writer made his profound contribution in English. An Indian writer in English is born of the confluences between the British colonial and the native traditions of India. While the British colonial are the homogeneous people of the nation called-The Great Britain, the people of India, as such are multilingual and heterogeneous inhabitants of the subcontinent called-The Bharat. The very encounter of the West (The Great Britain) and the East (India i.e. Bharat), turned out to be a progressive innovation in the creative field of fiction, more prominently in the twentieth century fiction writers like Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan, more or less at par with the great writers of the West like Charles Dickens and Graham Greene.
England and Mark Twain of America. The British encounters with the Indian subcontinent originally carried with it the stigma of colonial subjugation and exploitation. Under the threat of this subjugation and exploitation, the erstwhile heterogeneous inhabitants of India gradually learned the lessons of resistance with the help of the newly acquired idea of nationalism. The oppressors are from Europe and the oppressed are from Asia.

Within this atmosphere of oppressed and oppressors philosophy of life, there emerges what Dey calls "A full blown mythology of East-West confrontations" (11). Both in the East as well as in the West, there are innumerable intellectual distinctions concerning the ditto nature of East-West confrontations, in the last two hundred years. Writers like Rudyard Kipling is of a dogmatic confirm opinion that 'East is east and the West is west'; and there can be no possibility of a possible innovation and confluence of these two cultures. E. M. Forster in his A Passage to India, prominently declared that there can be no possibility of friendship between the people belonging to the East and the West. To some extent the basic philosophical systems of the East and the West are not only variant but also antagonistic towards each other in certain metaphysical formulas of faith and belief.

The backbone of the Western philosophy is progressive historicism, in the context of which the three unities of time that is the past, the present, and the future are consecutively advancing into what they call material progress, with an ultimate perfection of humanity at the end. This is called the historical process, and with the help of this human civilisation itself advances progressively from time to time towards, what they call, the ultimate human perfection. By the ultimate human perfection, the Westerners mean to imply that human beings are becoming progressively human from time to time.
from the pre-historic Caveman of Java and Neanderthal man, to the evolution of the modern twentieth century man, is a matter of steady and slow civilisational progress, and this process of progress is a continual phenomenon, both in nature as well as in the social and cultural institutions. While the seeming properties of the Western historicism apparently seemed to be leading towards the progress, the fact remains to be said that the so-called progress of civilisation in its essence is only a matter of change and alteration in the modalities of life.

The Eastern philosophy, is what is generally called as the metaphysical system. It is altogether different and even contrary to the Western ideas of culture and civilisation. Not entering deep into the philosophical and the metaphysical argumentations of the Eastern philosophical system, it is sufficient here to state that man's destiny in this world is in close affinity with what they call primitive animism, in the context of which everything in the world, including the human mind, is just an animated assemble of nature itself in its varying degree of affecting the created world. Man is best at home in the closed affinity and protection of nature, and this exclusive dependence on nature and its devastative and destructive dimensions could not be solved properly in the Eastern metaphysical context. The Eastern philosophical system, with its exclusive dependence on nature never paid its intellectual attention towards, what can be called the idea of human progress.

With the advent of the East-West confrontation of the last two hundred years, there emerged a kind of cultural aspiration towards material progress, coupled with a sense of acquiring the requisite human satisfaction and happiness through restrain and refrain. While the West hastens man towards a possible material process, the Eastern metaphysical philosophy compounds in man a typical self-sanctioned, self-emitted and self-
satisfactory survival within the skeletal and limited means of survival. Aspiring for the utmost comforts and luxuries (Western) and restrained and remaining relented to the worldly progress (Eastern), together compounded in the psychology of average Indian, a typical philosophy of life that prefers to remain with stagnant, illiterate and ignorant pursuits of life.

R K Narayan tries to trace the struggles of the modern Indian man and his context, by way of fictionally creating a backward region-Malgudi, with its people struggling hard and suffering greatly, both socially and psychologically in an atmosphere which gives no feasible hope of great material satisfaction. Almost all the inhabitants of Malgudi from Swami (Swami and Friends) to Raju (The Guide) through Rajam, Krishnan, Chandran and all other such innumerable characters are performing themselves as urchin children and suffering for the errors they commit. That way Malgudi, the imaginary fictional landscape of R K Narayan, is struggling hard to fall in the mainstream of modern civilisation, but the habits of people die hard, and the individual characters that R K Narayan creates profoundly represents a cross-section of people arduously struggling to make adjustments in the quick changing modalities of life, in the context of Malgudi.

It gives an immense artistic pleasure to R K Narayan in conceiving his aspiring characters, and placing them in this backward region, in order to fictionally compound for himself, a typical primitivist habitation. In the context of people, as individual characters are suffering in one form or the other. This is exactly the strange mythology of the East-West confrontation, and R K Narayan looks at it from his child’s eye-view of central intelligence straddled and surprised at the ignorant manners in which people are living in the context of Malgudi.
intelligence straddled and surprised at the ignorant manners in which people are living in the context of Malgudi.

C. English Language: Growth and Its Development In India

At the outset, the Britishers came to this subcontinent as merchants. Whatever the colonial masters introduced, from Railways to English education, was originally intended to serve their mercantile purpose. Since the invaders were capitalist of the sort, they successfully introduced into the Indian mainland, typical capitalistic tendencies and attitudes in a few select people. But, otherwise, the Indian subcontinent is prominently inhabited by common people, who are prominently divided into castes and creeds and who are absolutely susceptible for exploitations by the feudal lords. These feudal lords quite successfully kept the ignorant masses of the land under subjugation.

But, however, the introduction of English education and propagation of literacy, continually contributed for a resistance towards, both, the mercantile invaders as well as the native feudal lords. Neither the establishment of railways, nor the introduction of the British kind of education could really destroy the original religious and cultural institutions of India. But, however, these religious and cultural institutions, which are many in number, originally restricted the ideological institutions of the invading merchant class.

The British invaders are very prudent, and they did not directly interfere with the institutional progress of the Indian mainland, which are prominently the Hindu and the Muslim institutions. Neither the Hindu upperclass nor the Muslims medieval academic or theological institutions, where directly tempered by the Britishers. But, quite intelligently and intriguingly they introduced an alternative mode of education through English and oriental mediums, in the model of the primary, secondary and higher education.
however, the new system was not at all forced on the people to start with. But, the intellectual advantages of the British system of education automatically attracted the attention of the growing children of India. The new educational system is not only broad based in its intellectual parameters but also offered new avenues of livelihood. As a matter of fact, the new educational system, inspite of the fact that it was originally introduced to facilitate the mercantile and business interest of the invaders, gradually turned out to be a status symbol, in the otherwise outdated and decadent feudal system that was present in the Indian mainland.

The introduction of the British type of education also contributed for the emergence of a professionally competent and economically self-sufficient middle class. Needless, to say, it offered a potential change in the very quality of life. Above all these things, it is the British education that acquainted the people of the country with profound examples of a very great literature, with various forms of prose and poetry in the English language. It is not at all an exaggeration to state that this English education, with its rich literature, ultimately consolidated in the minds of the people the progressive idea of nationalism. The great writers of the East, who acquired the proficiency in the English language, always exhibited their critical and literary potentialities, by way of introducing the great Indian values into the conspicuous literary forms. They enriched both, in the local languages as well as in the English language.

Our primary concern here is with the literary aspect of the situation. All the great writers of the Indian origin in English, from Michael Madhusudan Dutt to Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R K Narayan, through Fana Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore and Sarojini Naidu, had the enviable privilege of sharing their cultural animations in the two ears.
cultures i.e., the Western and the Eastern. These cultural intimations of the East and the West prominently contributed for a great literature. The Western sociological importance lies in the humanistic enlightenment, which invariably heads towards a material progress and the ultimate perfectability of humanity in the course of time. This is called the Western Historicism. On the other hand, the Eastern metaphysical ideas and ideologies, both, of the Hindu and Muslims institutions of India, always maintained in themselves a typical spiritual and metaphysical manner of comprehending the world and the life of a man in it as a mysterious wonder, never offering the necessary thrills and jolts of life, which are in the nature of compounding existential life and values in living like humans.

Our special concern here is with the literary aspect of the situation. As a matter of fact, every writer of the subcontinent inherits two literary cultures. The ancient Indian culture through the local languages (i.e., mother tongues), and the European culture through English, Spanish, German, and Italian etc. All admit, the mother-tongue as an appropriate vehicle for all the expressions of experiences, emotional, spiritual and intellectual. This involvement ultimately becomes a central factor in the growth of national consciousness. When this national consciousness becomes the ground of aesthetic exposition, the language differences automatically vanish, as it happens in R.K. Narayan, English is his second language and his first language is Tamil.

It is interesting to note that all the non-conspicuous features of Narayan’s mother tongue gets transposed into the English language, through his fictional characters. The most common feature that subsists in his fictional characters is the pulsative primitive animation that subsists as a source of survival and existence. Therefore, Narayan’s characters are excellently abounding in the primitive animistic pulsation. Needless to say,
that these primitive animistic pulsations are universally found in all children, anywhere and everywhere in the world. It is interesting to note that R.K. Narayan’s characters are profoundly influenced by the naturalistic surroundings, amongst which they are born and brought up. The grown-up characters, even when they are resorting to crooked and intriguing manners of life, like Raju (The Guide) or Margayya (The Financial Expert), perform themselves in such a foolhardy and foolish manner, that provokes in the reader a kind of Puckish reaction as, “What fools this mortals be?”, as Shakespeare has written in his The Mid Summer Nights Dream. It is this Puckish reactionary element that compounds itself in the grown-up characters, that becomes all the more interesting part of a childlike comprehension of the world.

It is, therefore, very important to note that R.K. Narayan created a few significant and unique characters that go to fulfill his fictional world of Malgudi, by compounding a kind of dilution, both in space and time, from the ordinary world of existence. R.K. Narayan provides a special and unique identity for his characters, which are particularly magnified in the Indians, who grew to maturities, under the influences of the Western institutions like Democracy, Capitalism, Secularism and the like. It is also important to note that a rare nationalistic enthusiasm was becoming conspicuous in the characters as a fallout of the nationalist struggle for independence. As a matter of fact, nationalism as an ideology was borrowed from the West. Therefore, the very content of Indian nationalism of our times, has been determined by two major Western attitudes, one is the colonial rulers condemn for the Indians, particularly the Hindus, and the other is the scholarly demonstrations of the great writers of both, the East and the West. Both the reactions are the motivating factors behind R.K. Narayan in creating his Malgudi world.
with all its quaint personalities and quixotic incidence, which go to arrestingly engage the reader's mind, by way of effecting an easy transport into a rare mainland.

D. Indo-Anglian Novel and Its Structural Growth

Indo-Anglian novel is altogether a new literary form, that took upon itself the onerous task of upholding and evaluating the Indian mainland with all its traditional values, coupled with modern innovations. The East-West cultural innovations forms the most important part of Indo-Anglian novel, both in its thematic counters and in its characteristics behavioural pattern of the individual characters. The Indo-Anglian novel has an original form and can be divided into two phases: The first traditional phase, with Bakimchandra Chatterjee, Sharadchandra Chatterjee, and Rabindranath Tagore as pioneering creative writers, brought forth and fragmented the Western representative novel into the Indian cultural surroundings and circumstances.

Thematically speaking, the main importance was always on the secondary concerns, which promulgate formulas of locality towards own traditions, traditional institutions, and age old customs and practices and the like. As mature individuals upholding the modern humanistic values, they very often criticised and satirised the old back looking traditions of India. They even went to the extent of destroying and denouncing the most harmful cultural traits that are entrenched in the Indian soil, as a result of centuries of illiteracy, ignorance, and digomaticism. It was during the second phase, that the Indo-Anglican novel prominently enhanced its thematic innovations and experimental directions, as envisaged by the modern psychologists, sociologists and philosophers.
In both the phases of development, Indo-Anglian novel mainly remained as a social commentary and ethical mouthpiece. But in the second phase, it has prominently taken up the conflicting issues that are complexly attaining modern man and his concerns. In this context, the primary concerns is 'Life is better than death', 'Love is better than hatred', and the like. The second phase formal in which the Indo-Anglian novel grew can as well be called as the experimental phase, in the context of which the writers made a sort of experimental churning of all the modern values in their positive, as well as negative dimensions. It can always be arrived at a conclusion that the second phase of growth in Indo-Anglian novel is substantially original and characteristically Indian in its tone, tenor and structure. Indo-Anglian novel, with all its European legacy and dimensions, came into emergence in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The introduction of British education system is mainly responsible for the growth of fiction, first in the regional languages and then in the English language. The Western impact is prominently available in the development of formal written prose. Originally, it was all meant to be functional exposition for the propagation of the Western values. But gradually a typical artistic temper started growing in the Indian creative writers. The traditional English novels were progressively translated into local languages, wherewith novel writing as such was becoming a very popular medium of understanding. The first formal attempts of Indo-Anglian fiction took place in Bengal. Bankimchandra Chatterjee published his Rajmohan's Wife in 1864. Almost all the novels written by him were translated into English subsequently. It was Rajasmi Devi that initiated the Indian domestic novel in English through her The Hindu Wife. Subsequently Toru Dutt, Kal Krishna Leelu.
II Dutt, and Khetra Pal Chakravarti progressively attempted novel writing in English but all these novels have a mere peripheral historical interest today.

The Western influence on the Indo-Anglian novel is prominently traceable in comprehending the social and domestic themes. In the social context, there was always a laboured attempt at vindicating the social evils and traditional shortcomings. But at the same time, the domestic novels made a conscious attempt at upholding the values of individualism and individuals' self-respect. In this context, Rabindranath Tagore made a prominent effort on both these counters. At the same time, he also introduced the themes of social and personal responsibilities of people, particularly in the context of India's struggle for freedom. Even then the Indian novel, taking its thematic lead from Rabindranath Tagore turned out to be a great experimental attempt at exposing, denouncing, and destroying some of the traditional evils like child marriage, sati and the like. But more than this exposition of social evil, the Indo-Anglian novel started a significant lead in co-ordinating and compromising the far extended demographic variations and differences.

A new interest started growing in the Indian writers towards the Western individualism, coupled with a rare sense of liberty and freedom in the individuals. The Indo-Anglian novel, particularly after Independence, prominently aimed at concentrating on the new values of nationalism and social interest of materially equipping people with the necessary properties of life that are important for maintaining human dignities. And the focal length being focussed on the human dignities in a social system that never maintained a system with values like equality, fraternity, and liberty and the like. On the other hand, the traditional cultural picture of India is prominently segregated into castes.
and creeds. With the modernist awakening, a sort of conflict and strife started burning in the Indian mainland amongst the castes and creeds, which were newly learning the primary lessons of individualism and human dignities.

With the advent of independence, there emerged a passion for unifying India into a self-conscious and self-sufficient nation. With the emergence of this national interest and zeal, Indo-Anglian novel took a great leap. The traditional representative novel gave way to a new novel substantiating altogether as a novel medium of upholding both the primary and the secondary concerns of life.

In this context, the contributions of Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan are very important. These three writers contributed for the novel that can come up to the international standards of fiction writing. These three novelists, while maintaining the original representative character of the Western novel within the framework of a fable, with a central character called hero, and the attendant characters with the purpose of reflecting and highlighting the great qualities of the hero himself, prominently made certain experimental innovations that are necessary for the Indian context.

Mulk Raj Anand gave a weaving imaginative picture of the socialistic values or valuelessness of a society entrenched in the self-centered exploitation of the innocent and helpless humans. He is one important author that has progressively upheld Marxism and Marxist literary ethics and commitment. Raja Rao, on the other hand, potentially started upholding the ancient Indian (or Hindu?) metaphysical values of the needful strategies for one's own spiritual enlightenment. While the present day social concerns are substantially represented in his novels, his ultimate thematic perception always remained on the ancient Hindu percepts of 'moksha' or the Buddhist concepts of 'Nirvana' as the ultimate possible
goal of individuals. In this sense he is writing, more or less, what can be called anti-novel, with its presuasive attempt at demolishing the modern industriatisation, mechanisation, urbanisation and civilisation.

For Raja Rao the Western cultural properties of material progress, through a gradual perfection of humanity, along with the personal profits attaining to it, are not at all important or attractive for a individual chasing his spiritual destiny. In a social system prominently marked with aggressive scienticism and unheeding experimentally, Raja Rao strikes a prominent spirituality with drawing nodes from, what all that can be called modern, in its negative and harmful sense for the whole humanity in course of time.

It was R K Narayan that upheld all the positive values of social, ethical, moral and secular values through his ordinary and real characters. The Indian demographic realism, with all its variations, innocent pursuits, and humanistic impulses, gets represented in the form of Granny’s tale, intended to arrestingly attract the child’s innocent passion for understanding the world around him. Both Raja Rao and R K Narayan, in their novels strike at two different clauses. While Raja Rao made an effort to make a sense of the world within him, R K Narayan aims at making the sense of the world around him. They both together attributed to this European form of novel a rare felicity of Indianess in all its prominent social, ethical, moral and even religious counters. All these aspects are dealt with as an attaining qualities of the characters that they built out of their imaginary landscapes. For this purpose, R K Narayan fictionally confectioned an imaginary region called Malgudi and stuffed it with the real, universal character types, which very often come out with their Indianess as a prominent and even superior characteristic disposition of their characters.
India is a geographically vast land, with innumerable demographic varieties and
topographical necessities. A novelist with an observant eye and an understandable heart, the
material for Narayan’s writings is literally inexhaustible. Most of the novels are concerned
studies of social life by way of transforming the racy idioms and true life of the people into
English language. We have here countrysides, the hill-sides and the sea-sides, where life
usually stands unchanging despite its industrialization, urbanisation, and civilisation all
around. There are of course a few alterations and mutations in the lives of the people from
time to time and from place to place. But these changes are very slow, spasmodic and
even imperceptibly minor in nature.

Otherwise what the Indian novelists have preserved and depicted in their writings,
is only a matter of overload curiosity shop visited, revisited, renewed and re-renewed,
writer after writer. Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore and Sharad Chandra
Chatterjee originally concocted, the tapestry of this old curiosity shop called the Indian
novel. They followed virtually the representative techniques of novel writings, coupled
with various types of characters, as may be discovered and invented in Indian
circumstances. The themes and techniques are more or less repetative. It usually concerns
with the manners and constrains of poverty, deprivations in the context of which the
Indian masses are usually found.

It is only with the big three (Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand and R K Narayan) that
certain experimental technological variations of the novels came into the forefront. Even
these three great artists formally resorted to depicting the lives of the people, with all the
oriental colour and character. But, however, they can be considered as social criticism and
social protest, much on the lines of Ramesh Chandra Dutt, T. Ramankrishna
S. and C. R. Das.
and S. N. Mitra. All these are Bengali oriental writers in the first decade of the twentieth century. Some of the novelists like Sir Jogencha Singh, constantly exposed the vanity filled and self-indulgent Nawabs and feudal aristocrat of the past. There are many other prominent writers, both in the Indian English and in the local languages that constantly and consistently, appraised from time to time, the lives and life styles of the local people.

Of all the Indo-Anglian novelists, Mulk Raj Anand and R.K Narayan have shown a great creative capacity to handle their novels and render them in the conspicuous landmarks in the Indo-Anglian fiction. Earlier novelist prominently directed their fictional activities towards telling nice stories with surprising characters or surprising stories with nice characters.

Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R K Narayan are the three great writers who did not just tell the stories but equipped their narrative art with a great sense and urgency of technical innovativeness of form itself, as a great aesthetic medium. The formal significance in both the authors emerges out of their strong dedication for certain ideological context encounters. Mulk Raj Anand is a dedicated writer with a commitment for the Leftist ideologies. In this context, his Untouchable (1935), Coolie (1936), Two Leaves and a Bud (1937), The Village (1939) and Across the Black Waters (1940), are profound exposition of Marxist aesthetics. He associated himself prominently with the Progressive Writer's movement in India and after independence the Leftist 'Peace' Movement found in him an ardent supporter.

Raja Rao, inspite of the fact that he is in affinity with Mulk Raj Anand and R K Narayan, in choice of the themes, sometimes had his own unique way of telling his stories, by way of introducing certain new technical innovations of the modern novel.
the stream of consciousness and the prominent James 'central intelligence' performing his
job like a mouth piece. He was originally very sensitive towards the Gandhian Revolution
But then he immediately reverted to the past Indian (may we say Hindu ?) philosophical
dimensions. His Hindu philosophical learnings are born of the two prominent quest in him:
to make a sense out of the outer world and to make a sense out of acquainting himself into
the inner world. The constant and continual manner of balancing the relative importances
of the outer and the inner lives of man, prominently weighing on the vacillating balances of
his heart.

Raja Rao is a metaphysician struggling hard to find a meaning or discover the
meaninglessness of life, particularly in the context of cultural conflicts between the East
and the West. His passionate love for Eastern Hindu and Buddhist metaphysics and
mysticism ultimately turned him into a unique novelist. He is not concerned with the
representation of the life and life-style like Mulk Raj Anand and R.K.Narayan. He is at
ardous pain to unearth the contingent interior crevice of anxiety and unrest in the human
situations particularly in our times. His five important novels are Kanthapura (1938), The
Serpent and the Rope (1960), The Cat and Shakespeare (1965), The Chess master and His
Moves and Comrade Kirillov (1976). In addition to the above, he published three short
story collection : The Cow of the Barricades (1947), The Policeman and the Rose and On
the Ganga Ghat. In almost all his writings, there is a special metaphysical zeal that
complexity becomes an individual revelations of certain apocalyptic Visions of spiritual
life, involuntarily achieved through deep mediations into the context of outer and inner
lives of man. Raja Rao is a great philosophical writer. He is an Advaitin envisaging the
above forces of quest quite seriously.
Unlike Raja Rao and Mulk Raj Anand, who had a golden opportunity spending their precious parts of lives in Europe, R K Narayan was born and brought up in India and in the exact Indian circumstances seeped in economic deprivation. Rasipuram Krishnaswamy lyer Narayan swamy (which is shortened to R K Narayan on the advise of Graham Greene) was born of Tamil parents in Madras in 1906. Until his teens he grew up in his grand mother’s house in Madras, where onwards he went to Mysore to live with his parents. We are told by S Krishanan that Narayan was “not a particularly good student and he took longer than most of his peers to get a B. A degree” (vii)

It is a matter of great surprise that Narayan, with his middle class background and without any affluent opportunity to study aboard, could in course of time became the most prominent fiction writer of India. His early life was quite ordinary and uneventful, except for an event of falling in love with Rajam in 1933, who he just happened to see filling water from the street tap in Mysore. In spite of objections from his parents and from the astrologers, he married Rajam and had a girl-child quite soon after his marriage. As God would have destined it, his marital bliss was very shortlived. His wife died of typhoid in 1939, leaving his daughter to be exclusive cared by him. there onwards

Later he published some short reviews and essays for publication in various periodicals and newspapers, including one in Punch. It was during this period that he wrote his Swami and Friends. Innumerable British publishers refused to publish the same, quite fortunately, the manuscript fell into the hands of Graham Greene. Greene was highly impressed with the novel and sent it to Hamish Hamilton for publication. Initially, Narayan’s Swami and Friends could not acquire for itself any impressive readership.
Subsequently Greene helped him to publish two more novels of Narayan: *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The Dark Room*.

Indian writing in English, particularly during the world war period and during the period of Nationalist agitation, awfully turned out to be a sort of motivated propaganda material. Even the short stories, novels and essays written during this period lacked in literal merits. As Narayan himself stated in his "The fiction writer in India", published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, as quoted from K. R. Srinivas lynegar, *Indian Writing in English*, the subject matter of fiction.

"Became inescapably political. . . the mood of comedy, the sensitivity to atmosphere, the probing of psychological factors, in crisis in the individual soul and its resolution, and above all the detached observations, which constitutes the stuff of fiction, were forced into the background" (360).

Needless to say, that Narayan's fictional attempts invariably contained all the above characteristics features, inspite of the fact that he too was living during that drek, stale and pale times, in so far as the literary atmosphere is considered, the publication of *Swami and Friends* (1933) is a great landmark, with its evocative new voice in the Indo-Anglian world of letters. The erstwhile philosophical sentimental and political leaning of literary output were given a good-bye.

As has been rightly observed by S Krishnan, “Narayan’s clarity of style, his straight forward story telling, his fully realised characters and his unforced humour provided a clear new direction to the Indian fiction” (xvii). *Swami and Friends* has various levels of appeal for various readers of different age groups. In its surface level, it is a story of a small boy. Since children are universally alike, Swami's habitation and ethics of life in
Malgudi are fictional devices of providing a local colour and scent to his character. But in his movement and performances, he behaves himself as a child anywhere and everywhere in the world. The particular effect that localised him in Malgudi is concerned with this sharp insight into the topographical and demographic profundities that are natural to the milieu of a small town middle class South Indian society. The fictional effects are evoked spontaneously and effortlessly through apt descriptions and well-created characters.

It is in this novel, following the footsteps of Charles Dickens of England and Mark Twain of America, that Narayan encompasses the child's world of immense playful activity, coupled with a self-protective and self-defending child's pristine purity and transparency, in a world otherwise dominated by the elders and their enforced rigid social and cultural concerns. In one word it can be said that Swami, at all cost, is very firm upon asserting his child like freedoms and choices, that too in a childlike manner. It is this innocent child like manner that makes less hazard; in the grown-up man's world and comes to conflict and strive with it in all innocent manners of rapport, that establishes a unique place for the novel, not only in the Indo-Anglian circle, but everywhere and anywhere in the world, where children would like to live their own lives in their own instinctive passion, not minding much the elder generations strict programme for it. Thus assertion, at any cost and at every cost for the much desired child like freedom and choice, is the essential theme of _Swami and Friends_.

This assertive manner of the child hero, Swami, somehow becomes a running connective thread all through R K Narayan's novels. Thus, R K Narayan fictionally created and visually realised a cloud cockoo imaginative land of a child performing himself in his own imaginative inner horizons of the world has to say and mean the world in
experience. The absolute child-like meanings and dedications that Swami makes his own eccentric meaning of the outer world of rapport confirms, that Narayan as a novelist, is himself a child of mind (to borrow the expressions of Charles Dickens), quite casually and unobtrusively and unassumingly speaks of children quite unreservedly, and openly to the children of the world.

The world of children as created by R.K. Narayan has its own special importance and meaning. Swami is the first profound child character created by R.K. Narayan. All other characters in the other novels, in one form or the other emulate the characteristics of Swami as a child. Narayan appears to have created certain well-structured characters of children and the children of mind. Therefore, reading Narayan’s fiction is a matter of unique aesthetic experience. It is more or less a sort of loosening and transporting oneself into a world of children, who commit themselves to all sorts of actions in a unified and well co-ordinated manner, without ever minding the ethical, moral and religious surroundings around them. Therefore, it is apt to call Narayan’s grown-up characters as children of mind. It is the child-like frowardness, which consequently lands them into crises in their situations of life that becomes the most enchanting feature of Narayan’s novel.

E. Child Literature and Narayan’s Heritage

After the seventeenth century, major point of interest in English literature, child and child literature found a respectable place. Earlier, according to Raymonds, children as such maintained “a very poor show in the pageant of English literature” (70). Even in Shakespeare, children occupy a secondary position. Their role in him was confined to evoke a little bit of tenderness and tears of pity. No serious attempts were made to enga
into the child's minds and its workings. A very mystery, fragility, innocence and naivety of children, attracted the attention of artists, only after Rousseau had written his *Emile*. "He was the first to view a child as a child", says Bloom (14).

Later, Vaughan, Blake and Wordsworth, who were prominently influenced by Rousseau, paid special attention to children and treatment of childhood in their poems. His influence on Wordsworth is of very great importance. Referring to this aspect, Legmi confirms that we find their “Rousseau's fundamental tenet: he has the same semi-mystical faith, in the goodness of nature as well as in the excellence of child” (93) The poetical works of all the above three constitute the fundamental backdrop for the proper understanding of the child in literature.

When Wordsworth said that, 'child is the father of man', he means to imply that childhood at all stages is the seeding point of humanity. Earlier to him, it was Blake, who had insisted upon that most requisite attention of tenderness towards children and need to care for children properly, as childhood is the formative base of life. It was Vaughan, that had attributed all the fairytale qualities to children in a state of 'angel infancy', duly protected by eternity. It was Blake, that has celebrated the vision of the laughing child, and the same inspired him to write his happy songs. The most important aspect of children that Blake gives are unchecked spontaneity and a child's capacity for enjoyment. For Wordsworth, childhood is a 'fair seed-time.' It is a period of 'aching joys and dizzy raptures.' All these are natures gift for humanity. In a way, the pre-Victorian child in literature contain in him, certain mysterious and divine qualities.

According to Susmita Bhattacharya, child in pre-Victorian literature, figures mainly as a symbol of innocence and divinity, rather than a creature of flesh and blood.
Childhood became a prominent theme in Victorian literature. Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Charlotte and Emily Bronte, gave a new turn to the portrayal of childhood. In their novels, we find a rare perceptive qualities of child's mind, by way of indicating into the child's character a kind of psychological dimensions. In short, they are depicted as living entities. The child in him is no more a picture of innocence and bliss. He is an unfortunate creature, who is utterly defenceless and who is aware of his pathetic existence. While, Wordsworth's child is a 'child of joy', and Blake's child is a 'bird born of joy', the Victorian child is a miserable one, surviving in a hostile and frightening atmosphere.

It is important to note, that most of the child characters in Victorian fictions are orphans or vagabonds, Jane Erie, Helen Burns, Heath Cliff, Oliver, Little Nell, Jo, David, Pip, Walter Gay, Esther, Richard, Eda, are all orphans, Agnes, Paul, Florence, are all motherless, and their fathers are hopelessly irresponsible, thereby they cater to their children an unwithstanding torture. Infact, they too are more or less orphans, leading a life of neglect. They are all deprived of parental care.

The Victorian child is acquainted with the bitter realities of life of this world. He has to survive under the crashing weight of a sense of alienation and isolation. Like Little Nell of The Old Curiosity Shop, they know nothing of childhood, but his weakness, fragility and wounded spirit. Therefore, Victorian childhood, by and large is a nightmare alienation. It is important to note here that the industrialization revolution of the eighteenth century Europe and the emergence of miserable child characters in fictions are simultaneous. Thereby, it was the industrialization revolution that had really implanted a colossal neglect for children and their survival.
However, the inconvertible fact remains that the most significant children in Victorian fiction are to be found in the novels of Charles Dickens. His treatment of childhood, which is incomparably subtler than his contemporaries, will remain the major focus of attention in this book. Baudelaire’s remark that genius is ‘childhood recaptured at will’, truly applies to Dickens and his children, which crowd the Victorian canvas and are a hallmark of his superlative genius. “Dickens is always great on the subject of childhood ‘that sunny time’, as it is conventionally called, but which, as Dickens represents it, and as we recollect it, is somewhat showery withal” (Unsigned Review from Fraser’s Magazine, as quoted by Collins, 246).

Dickens could sensibly portray the wide variations of the child’s mind. David Copperfield has held unrivalled place because its story has been “communicated by word of mouth in those tender years when fact and fiction merge, and thus belong to the memories and myths of life” (Woolf, 65). Dickens regards “the finest creature upon earth a child” (Bleak House, 96) and highly values its love and affection “I love these little people and it is not a slight thing, when they, who are so fresh from God, love us” (The Old Curiosity Shop, 46). That childhood was Dickens’ abiding concern is evident not only in his novels but also in his letters and speeches.

Dickens search for alternatives has enriched Victorian fiction with endless range and variety. He was acutely aware of alternate possibilities of the same predicament and his imagination “extended itself typically into odd angles and side-alleys of his subject” (Carey, 7). Dickens’ children though not happy and blissful are interesting studies. Pain and sorrow give their lives an added dimension. “The complaint, therefore, that Dickens did not give us a completely happy child is no challenge to his supremest art.”
(Carey, 7) Dickens’ children though not happy and blissful are interesting studies. Pain
and sorrow give their lives an added dimension. "The complaint, therefore, that Dickens
did not give us a completely happy child is no challenge to his supremest art."
"Joy had
an undertone of pain And even the happiest hours its sighs." (10) The usual critical trend
is to relate the misery and wretchedness of the Dickensian child to his own sense of
abandonment as a child. Critics like Cazamian, F. E. Baily, Peter Coveney etc. regard
Dickens’ children as a projection of his own sordid childhood.

Dickens was primarily an artist who did not allow personal considerations or
advice from his friends to over-ride artistic considerations. This is further revealed in the
letters which he wrote to his wife and friends. This is best illustrated by Dickens’ turning
down all appeals from the public requesting him not to kill Nell, for Dickens was aware of
the symbolism inherent in the tale. He was a conscious and serious artist who gave utmost
importance to his art, and Ada Nisbet has very appropriately prefaced her book with
Dickens’ heartfelt wish which he expressed in one of his letters that “my books will speak
for themselves and me, when I and my faults and virtues, my fortunes and misfortunes are
all forgotten” (Nisbet, 1952). It is possible that Dickens’ own childhood was the source of
his felt experience but there is certainly something more general that is involved in Dickens
as he valued himself as an artist. Though in David, one can trace some of Dickens’ early
experiences but David is not Dickens. He is essentially different from Dickens.

Incidentally, most of the best treatment of literature concerning a child’s
experience and visions of living are to be found in the books that were not particularly
mend for children. David Copperfield very often looks into the ‘blank of my infancy’, by
way of recalling the uncomfortable impressions of his home. Jane Eyre’s resistance shows
the elder oppressors. Young Stephen's Daedalus's first memories in the portrait of an artist as a young man, confirms the fact that the battle ground between his father and mother are well-drawn. Henry James's Maisie.

"as young as she was, was exposed to adult deceased and selfishness. And many more classic examples of the portrayal of childhood may not have been addressed to children but their art is characterised by a respect for a child's existence", says Bernard T. Harrison (365).

Children represent a special kind of reading public and the literature concerning them is also a special kind of literature. This genre maintains a rare passion to involve the morally educative qualities of good children. A good child fiction writer, even when he differs with the ideas of psychologist, sociologist and educationist, essentially believes that the enjoyment is the first requisite of the child literature and next comes instruction to the extent that child can withstand. On the authority of John Rowee Townsend, a great writer and critic of children's fiction, Bernard T. Harrison says,

"The enjoyment of the best kind is no easy pleasure, it ought to involve a stretching of imagination, a deepening of experience, and a heightening of awareness". At the same time, Joan Aiken says Harrison, in the liberating qualities of a good children book that linked the children's literature, "with a view of innocence as being in itself a mode of insight" (366). Joan Aiken substantially identifies in the child instinctive qualities to "discern the honest from the dishonest, plain from the pretentions, delightful from the depressing, kind from the callous, amusing from the dull, free from the captive" (367).

As the state of innocence of children is in the urgent need of education, the children's writings would never be sturdy, sincere or dull. It innocence and naive.
without ever becoming vulgar, turns into certain true modes of insights, by way of
impooverising a 'stretching of imagination, a deepening of experience and a heightening of
awareness', as confirmed by Joan Rowe Townsend. If play, fantasy and enjoyment are the
right credentials of children's literature, it is in the late nineteenth century that becomes a
proper landmark. We have here, children's adventures (Marryat, Kingsley, Stevenson) and
animal stories (Anna Sewell, Black Beauty, 1877, Kipling's Jungle Books, 1894, 95),
fairytale (Charlotte Yonge) and fantasies (Lewis Carroll, Francis Hodgson-Bernard).
Foremost amongst the children's adventure stories is Arthur Ramsyn. Ramsyn's tales have
a significant substance and certainty. The proper specification that are usually demanded
of children's writer in him, are summed up by Geoffrey Trease as follows:

"It must be genuine book at all levels. When he is choosing his theme and doing his
research his standards can be as adult, indeed as academic, as he likes. When he is writing
then he must let the child in himself dictate much of the form. He should be a children's
writer because he still remains inside himself, perhaps more vividly than the average adult,
the vestigial child he once was" (370)

If the above criteria is applied to R K Narayan and his novels, the manner in which
'the child in himself dictate(s)', the very form and texture of his novels and short stories
Infact, it is in the twentieth century, that the children's fiction acquires a unique maturity
of its own. The most important amongst the twentieth century writers are Catholine
Payton, William Mayne and John Mark. Writers like Richard Church, had given certain
successful variations of traditional children's adventure stories. Twentieth century is also
notable for the development of 'Teenage' novels and fantasy, including science fiction.
Many more names like Rosemary Sutcliff and Philippa Pearce are particularly important fo-
R K Narayan in conveying the perfect landscapes of Malgudi and dealing with the objects as living presences. R K Narayan particularly imitates them with the outlandish sense of place and of character, in his novels and short stories. In a unique manner, he converges this outlandish sense of place and of character into a familiar commonsense living by way of conforming them as particular with Malgudi and its surroundings.

All the above qualities are particularly inherited by R K Narayan, from the writers mentioned above. Even, the supernatural and the wizards in R K Narayan, has their echoes in Elen Garner (of The Owl Service). Swami’s struggle to achieve living mystic power to his own invented ritual in the backyard of his house, has its echoes from The Owl Service of Garner.

It has been attempted to give a brief summary of R K Narayan’s contributions, various influences upon him, and ultimately how he performs himself as an author, as he lets the child in him dictate much of the form. Almost all his characters and many of his short stories, even when he is writing, about children and of children. The literary standards that he had maintained are as adult and as academic, just like the traditional folklore and fairytales all over the world. His stretch of insight, his manner of offering, deepening experience and heightening of awareness, always compound in his writing, abundant curiosity and opportunity to acquire the needful thrills of self-discovery and self-awareness that his fictional writings compound, in his readers. As a matter of fact, the child’s eye-view of R K Narayan, in a sense, concerns with his own innocent and naive manner of observing men and matters around himself.

On the same flations, he transposes into his readers, the rare fictional magic of reading his books by way of adapting for themselves the needful child like habits of mind.
coupled with inquisitive curiosity to discover and to stand absolutely thrilled in discovering the strange meanings, the strange adventures, strange characters and strange incidence. It is with these qualities, that R. K. Narayan substantially fulfils, the standard of a good literary work, as established by Philips Sydney, when he said, 'It should send children to sleep and elders to the fire side.' Such is the magic of R. K. Narayan's novels and short stories.

F. Transport into The World of children.

To enter into the world of fiction of R. K. Narayan is to transport oneself into the world of children. There are literal child characters like Swami and his friends and there are, what Charles Dickens called the 'children of mind', like Chandran and even Raju, the sinner turned saint. It is for the purpose of creating this world of children that R. K. Narayan invented his fictional Malgudi, which stands as a pleasing parallel to the mundane world of ours. In order to make his world of children at once enigmatic, romantic and charming, but at the same time realistic in its practical measure, R. K. Narayan invented and invested his Malgudi with a rare authentic force born of his own unique personal prediction. His fiction is absolutely imagined in its tone and termor of his autobiographical day-dreaming, artistic imagination and delectic thinking, all compounded into an unique and enticing blend of the very mystery of life spirit, converging into monster strokes of fiction that intimate and informs the fundamental lessons of 'primary activity' of life itself, coupled with aspiration of pleasure and pass-time. It is in itself a
source book of the pursuit of knowledge and oncoming of life in a pleasurable atmosphere

The following observations of innumerable critics of R K Narayan's and his fiction make it abundantly clear that R K Narayan all through his fictional transactions maintain a unique personal temper or temperament that can be compared to that of a child inventing for himself his own personal world of fiction on the viewless wings of autistic thought and imagination. All children in the world are under a serious compulsion to escape, even run away, from the mundane world of reality and its rigours.

G. A Brief appraisal of The Novels of R.K. Narayan

R K Narayan, who started his fiction writing with exactly child characters in his Swami and Friends, constantly and continually enhances and reproduces these child characters as 'children of mind', committing themselves to such acts of mind which provoke them to confirm them into childish characters. They commit such wanton mistakes and fall into inordinate crises in their lives. The manner in which they perform themselves becomes out and out a matter of immense curiosity, as they commit themselves into lives of actions that knowingly bring them into innumerable difficulties and crises, which could have been just avoided with a little bit of prudences and restrains in them. For a child's mind, lack of this needful prudence and restrain are vibrantly available in the lives and life-styles of elders around them. It is often been said that Swami, the chief protagonist of Narayan's first novel was out and out autobiographical.

Swami as a fictional character is the miniature endowment of R K Narayan himself, as he fictionally conceives him and compounds him with all his parallel particulars of his own childhood that he spent in Mysore and Madras. Needless to say, that Narayan is an
observant writer that can convert and re-establish in himself any incident that he comes across in the childlike manner of rediscovering the essence of the incidences in his imaginative self. It is therefore, not altogether false to say that all other novels of R K Narayan are immense child's eye-view of life around them. Even when we go to the extent of stating that all the nine other novels of R K Narayan are envisioned versions of Swami in his creative moments of imagination, it is all a child eye-view or Swami's eye-view of life that makes all the novels of R K Narayan interesting.

Children not only observe but also actively involve themselves, quietly sympathetically of course, by way of assuming upon themselves a sort of imaginary 'actor's trunk in transposing themselves into various incidence and characters quiet imaginatively. This kind of child's imaginative exercise into transposing and transporting himself into innumerable autistic imaginative moments is usual in all children in the world. R K Narayan, as a writer substantiates this vibrant child like imaginative quality in him by way of creating all the situations and characters for his instinctive child like curiosity.

R K Narayan's The Bachelor of Arts is a very important experiment. It narrates the growing up of a young man into adulthood. Chandran, the hero of the novel is a son of rich parents. After completing his graduation, Chandran was not in the position to decide as to what to do next. His story is full of insights into the growing of a child into adulthood. Chandran is literally a 'child of mind' when he had many opportunities to pursue his higher studies. He suddenly finds that he has fallen in love. Hereafter the novel goes on the lines of describing the incidences in the life of Chandran in quite a quixotic manner.

While Chandran is really Swami grown-up, the story itself has plenty of the autobiographical touches of the author himself. R K Narayan, like his autobiographical
prototype in Chandran, fell in love with Rajam in his adolescent days. Inspite of the astrological advices against the combination of Narayan and Rajam, he preferred to marry Rajam. But Rajam died very early in his life after giving birth to a daughter. While the autobiographical details are verging towards a climatous end, the life-story of Chandran is somewhat different. Narayan puts a great psychological insight into the childish manners of a growing boy, who really falls in love with the idea of falling in love. What all Chandran needs at this adolescent stage of life, is a mere gesture of love from the opposite sex. In the absence of such gestures forthcoming to him, Chandran becomes totally lost in himself.

In yet another short story in ("The White Flower" in the Lawley Road), we have the miniature history of The Bachelor of Arts. The main protagonist of the story, is a student studying B.A. class. Incidentally the details of the story exactly gives the staple stuff of The English Teacher. There is a way of reading Narayan’s The English Teacher as a fictional continuation of the life-story of Chandran in The Bachelor of Arts. Very often he used to see a girl filling water at the street-tap. She also very often sees him at the same spot. They both exchange mute worldless looks at each other. They both do not dare to talk to each other, inspite of their hidden intentions to do so. Moreover, the Malgudi social conventions do not permit such liberties to the youngsters. Moreover, the marriage should always be within the caste and should be fixed by the parents. Somehow the love story of the Krishnan and the girl comes to an either-or-dilemma, when one astrologer said the horoscope were matching and the other said that they were not matching. Krishnan’s love for the girl is so strong that he wanted to decide, after performing a great devotional act of faith in the God. This kind of arduous desire for wish fulfillment is very common in
the child like minds, who are incapable of taking decisions for themselves. He placed two flowers, one white and the other red at the feet of Hanuman, the monkey God and a five year old girl was asked to pick one of them.

"Everybody held his breath and waited, he stooped to pick, and Krishna, unable to bear the strain, shut his eyes. When he opened them, he saw the white flower on the polished door-step of the innermost sanctuary. 'He knows what is best for us', said the elders pointing to the idol. Krishna felt stunned for a long time, and when he recovered he wished that he had it in his power to bleach all the flowers in the world" (21) 

The love-story of Chandran in the Bachelor of Arts is almost undergoing such dramatic hanging conditions in his minds. While his friends were becoming a nuisance, by way of unknowingly distracting him from the object of his love, he was not very sure whether his parents could agree for such a marriage proposal between a unknown girl and himself. Usually the parents in Malgudi do not give their consent for such marital arrangement by youngsters. With this kind of rigid attitudes of the parents and the hurdles of caste provisions and astrological analogous, there is no prospect for love-marriage at all. But, however, with all these oppositions, the youngsters like fire-brand decisive children very often fall in love, not once, but many times. As usual with any growing boy of Malgudi, Chandran was ultimately forced to marry a girl chosen by his parents. This is the finest Narayan's novel, which is written about the growing up of a young man into adulthood. This novel has enough autobiography.