Chapter VI

Summation

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayan (1906-2001), one of the towers of Indian Writing in English was born and brought up in a conservative South Indian family. He is a true Indian both in vital spark and cogitation. Much has been said about him as a celebrated and incontrovertible story-teller. Massive works have been published on his eye-catching descriptive style and his art of categorization. He is often adorned as an emulsion of vivid Malgudi, a microcosm of Indian social milieu.

R. K. Narayan deeply rooted in Indian culture, tradition and philosophy, imitates the Indian spirit and thought in his works. The embodiment of Indian philosophy is imbibed in his fiction generally and Indian values in particular. However, he does not burden his fiction with scholastic philosophical discourses. In spite of all philosophical under-currents in his novels, he presents the society as it is. Simple are his fictional works, yet life is projected realistically. Narayan is accredited for establishing Indian literature in English to the rest of the humanity and is considered as one of the greatest Indian novelists in English for his classic.

An amateur, unperceptive reader of Narayan may often be enticed by the blatant ease of his thematic concerns manifested by his distinctive comic narrative mode. The humdrum commonalities of the Malgudian life illustrated by Narayan and the plainness of thematic anxiety give a non-serious tone to his fiction. However, there is a profound undercurrent of values discourse in his fiction, inter-related with social, cultural, religious and ethical disciplines.
Values are the rules which determine decisions about right and wrong according to dharma. Albert Einstein remarked, “Try not to become a man of success, but rather a man of value” (Bob 446). Einstein adored that a man of values is greater than a successful man who achieved it in an unruly way. Values are the guiding principles of life which give direction and firmness, bring joy, satisfaction and peace to life. They are like rails that keep a train on the track and help it move smoothly, quickly and with direction towards destination. They bring quality to life and perfection in life. For instance, values help many to avoid divorces and suicides in Indian families that are culturally bound by ethics.

Hence, Narayan’s fictional texts have a foregrounding in Indian values that could be partly ascribed to his traditional background. But his values and vision are purely indigenous that bears the impression of his knowledge of ancient Indian tradition, culture and philosophy.

Narayan’s works absolutely stand for values that are meritorious and needed for both men and society. Social, cultural and ethical values are mainly dealt with in his works. Only these values share other values like educational values, political values, economical values, spiritual values and the rituals to be followed in life for a successful tune in modern age. Narayan’s ideals are an admirable mixture of what he is innate from his own Hindu culture and what has been incorporated from his experience to the western life and literature. He has always been claimed as a novelist par excellence in matters of social criticism of India. But few have been in print on how Narayan integrates the profoundest Indian belief, philosophies and spiritualism in common and theory of values in particular, in his novels. Stephen admits, “To be a good writer anywhere, you must have roots - both in religion and family. I have these things” (234-235), born in a South Indian family of “the
purest Brahmin stock” (shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in) Narayan’s ancestry in religious conviction and family are reinforced by his motherly grandmother who was influential in pioneering him throughout his childhood to classical Indian and Tamil cultures, languages and literature, crucial to the traditional Brahmin values and ways of life. Every evening she would teach the Tamil alphabet followed by Avvaiyar’s saying as well as a few Sanskrit Slokas praising Sarasvati, the Goddess of Learning. Spiritual values had grown in him as he grew up. His conventional family and social background instigated the familiarity of Hindu outlook, religious conviction and traditions in his young age. Because of his learning of the spiritual values and Indian culture from his childhood, he introduced many mythological symbols aptly in his works. Narayan does not utilize the genre of the novel, as a medium for propaganda for any social or political cause, nor does he dispense too much philosophy and theory in his writings like his peers. Jayant K. Biswal opines:

R. K. Narayan views life’s lapses not with any missionary benevolence or zeal but with the understanding and wisdom of an artist who acknowledges various compulsions, complexities of life behind his chimeric narrative modes. Thus, his comic mode shields his philosophy. Behind the narrative façade of his novels, Narayan attempts at a vision of life … a life of opposing dualities, of appearance and reality, beliefs and betrayals. (45)

Narayan pictures the realities of life in his works. His fiction includes people and their acquaintances in an unlikely town in South India. The important feature of all Narayan’s novels is the setting and the locale. The favoured backdrop of Narayan’s Malgudi, an imaginary town came into sight when he sat down to write Swami and Friends. Malgudi
provides the strong sense of place which suffuses these books. All his novels are located in the fantasy town of Malgudi, known for its past history, a pictogram of antiquity. In this place, Lord Rama made the river Sarayu flow by pulling an arrow from his convulse and scratching a line on the sand. It is the terra firma where Gautam Buddha preached the homily of empathy, Sankara tinted the Vedantic philosophy, Christian disciples advocated their religion, and Mahatma Gandhi preached his doctrines of truth and non-violence. These Malgudians provoke analogous with “Chaucer’s Canterbury characters, Shakespeare’s fools and Hardy’s rustics” (shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in). According to P. S. Ramana, “Narayan has studied a character first on the test of social order i.e. in the context of his community, set up and social environment; secondly, he studies a character in relation to himself” (44). His characters first are suited to the environment; then he presents them to his taste of culture.

The Malgudians achieve the equilibrium between their profession and values and synthesize the concepts of Purushartha and Ashrama Dharma (Radha 23) in their life. A scrutiny of their life reiterates the claims of their foregrounding in Indian moral and social value system. So, Malgudi is not a modern fashionable town, but a town having moorings in the mythic, historic past of the country and is a place that provides an ideal setting or locale for the intellectual, philosophical, religious, ethical and moral activities of his characters. These aspects in the ancient past of India through the imaginary town of Malgudi supervene to Narayan’s novels a credibility or authenticity.

Malgudi grows itself from novel after novel and it reaches an excellent town in his last novel. This is India distilled--an urban India, but one in which a hinterland of jungle, of little villages, of wide plains is still present. While analyzing his novels, the
researcher feels the subsistence of Malgudi and gets an influential intuition of being in it. This powerful impression is created not by detailed descriptions of the countryside or buildings, but by the characters themselves and the redolent nature of their thought and their speech. It is the right to be heard which is idiosyncratic here. It is a voice which is rooted in a world-view quite different from a modern novel located in North America or Western Europe. This voice is sensitive to a distinctive tradition in which the accumulated beliefs and social practices of centuries inform the smallest act. It is a wholly different way of looking at the world.

R. K. Narayan’s narration is very much impressive as well as interesting. He has a sure, keen and penetrating eye for important details. So, the objects described by him linger in the hearts of the readers. His descriptions are full of interests because they bound in realism and fantasy. He does not fail to give a picture of human life with its flaws and high jinks. Therefore, an element of bizarre is also present in his novels. He portrays quite vividly the complex texture of social and religious mores and ethnicity, governing a South-Indian Hindu family. His novels talk of the obscure caste-divisions and sub-divisions, class snobberies, absurd marriage customs, blind superstitions and tyranny of astrological calculations. Besides, a student’s typical busy and carefree life at colleges, his irresoluteness and waywardness, the whims and conceits of professors have been painted artistically and realistically.

The Indian values Narayan projected through his works make one wonder in rapt. He is a penetrating analyst of human passions and human motives--the springs of human action--and this makes him a great critic of human conduct. Human relationships, relationships within the family circle and relationship centering on sex and money are his ever-recurring
themes, and they teach one how to establish right relationships. Whatever disturbs the norm is an aberration, a disorder; sanctity lies in return to, and acceptance of the normal. Life must be accepted and lived, despite its many short-comings, follies and foibles. Readers have to garner the ideas according to their vision. Based on such emblems, the researcher has sort out values needed for life both in society and in personal life.

The social relationship, family relationship, human relationship and social values needed to the society to develop one’s community in a pleasant atmosphere in Indian soil are well exhibited by the characters in most of his novels. The family is the instantaneous perspective and the relationships among the characters are the father-son, mother-children, husband-wife, and brother–brothers, which are exuberantly enhanced by his characters. Values like concern for environment, courtesy, dutifulness, forgiveness, friendship, gratitude, hospitality, justice, love, patience, repentance, responsibility, service, sympathy, tolerance, sharing etc are also surplus ingredients that wave the sociological structures. Society depends on natural order. An individual is a child of society as a matter of necessity. Thus, social values are synthetic that bind individuals together.

Moreover, Narayan powerfully trusts the life which is lived in association with traditional culture. One of the enduring values is respecting and accepting the words of parents as they direct their brood from their own experience and digression from it brings suffering and dissatisfaction. “The human relationships presented by Narayan such as the relationship between the father and the son — for example, Chandran and his father in The Bachelor of Arts, Swami and his father in Swami and Friends, Margayya and Balu in The Financial Expert do not have concord and tranquility, because, the son in these relationships do not show any sense of respect and reverence to his parents”
and sojourn by the tradition. At last sons regret their fault and look back. Man should follow ethical rules in life constructed by our elders, and recorded in our scriptures. If he rejects them, he will regret for it as seen in the life of Chandran suffering a lot for discarding his parents’ wish.

In the similar way, the severing of relationship and poignant astound is found in husband and wife relationship in Narayan’s novels. The relationship between Marco and Rosie in *The Guide* is not based on traditional values as devised by Manu in *Manu Smriti* -- fidelity, submission, and mutual esteem and appropriate lenient. This couple does not share this kind of bond and therefore their relationship does not become everlasting. On the contrary, the relationship between Krishna and Susila in *The English Teacher* touches the height of sublimity because they share a strong bondage of family values. The relationship between Nataraj and Vasu in *The Man Eater of Malgudi* does not run in a smooth manner and there is turmoil in their lives. It depicts that true love forms the base of any relationship and lasts long. Thus, the role of traditional values in regard to human relationship has been emphasized by Narayan in his novels.

Narayan analyzes the flaws and follies in his society which he hates and experiences in life. Personal values like freedom of decision is completely submerged by elders as exposed in his novels. Cultural values are the codes and conduct superseding in the lives of people by the age old elders and believed to be true. Cultural attributes like religion, caste, dowry system etc., smash the true love of a person.

Narayan’s second novel *The Bachelor of Arts* contains autobiographical elements but is much more satisfying in its structure than *Swami and Friends*. The search in this
case is for freedom, and it takes place in the face of all the constraints which the Hindu family and wider Indian society can place in the way of a young man eager to find him. In this novel, one of Narayan’s main preoccupations comes to the fore, which is marriage and its complexities.

Contemporary Westerners are sometimes astounded by the sheer fuss involved in an Indian marriage. In particular, the elaborate negotiations and the very large sum of money spent on celebrations impress outsiders, especially those who are accustomed to relatively informal weddings. The traditional Hindu marriage, however, is an altogether different thing from the typical arrangements of a Western couple: it involves the families on both sides, who are strongly interested in creating a bond. This means that the young man or young woman, who nurtures hopes of a love-match, detached from considerations of social position or caste, may be heading for a major confrontation with family members who have very different ideas. The Bachelor of Arts tells of a young man, whose views of life, including marriage are more ‘modern’ than those of his family.

Chandran’s relatives are immersed in the traditional beliefs of their religion. Marriage is not a matter of personal choice, but something that is divinely ordained by the matching of stars in the couple’s horoscope and by co-incidence of rigid caste system. Because of non-matching of the horoscope, Chandran’s love cum arranged marriage stops. Later, he was married to the girl his parents wished. This process of self exploration, challenge and finally reconciliation is a familiar theme in Narayan’s fiction. In a sense, it mirrors Narayan’s own life as a man whose vision and understanding transported him beyond the rigid beliefs and practices of his society but never took him away from that society. And that central message anchored in society is really a very attractive feature of his novels.
Marriage plays a central role in *The English Teacher* too. As in the earlier novels, the idea of acceptance looms large. Ultimately the hero, Krishna, has to accept the fact of the loss of his wife and the loneliness that follows. He has fought against this brute fact by attempting to communicate with her through paranormal means, but this leads nowhere, in the same way as all the smoke and mirrors of the various mystic figures who parade through Malgudi seem ultimately to lead nowhere. The struggle of the characters against social restrictions and their social destiny appears to be forcing them to follow such struggles to a greater or lesser extent. Many people waste part of their lives trying to be something they are not. Eventually, of course, they may come to realize what they really are, and if that happens to be a citizen of a small town, rather like Narayan’s Malgudi, bound up with neighbours and their concerns, sewn into a family and a nation, are much worse than that.

Many Indian novels center on the dissimilarity created only by living under a dissimilar caste. Narayan’s *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* exemplifies this by Sastri’s feelings headed for others and in his severe cultural beliefs. Likewise, in his *The Painter of Signs*, caste becomes a subject for a couple Raman and Daisy. Raman, a rationalist wishes to marry a population control propagandizer Daisy, who belongs to an unknown caste and met with a failure in his marriage. It is similar to the theme of wishing to marry the other caste becomes a barrier in Arundhati Roy's *God of Small Things*.

“Nataraj and Vasu, the Eastern and the Western Traditions, the main characters are in constant conflict with one another and illustrate the differences between two cultures and the invasion of one culture upon another. Nataraj is the owner of a small printing press. He rents a room in his home to Vasu only to have it overtaken by Vasu's lifestyle,
values, and taxidermist profession” (shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in). In *The Man Eater of Malgudi* the demonic or *Tamasik Gunas* or qualities are symbolized through Vasu. Here Narayan revives the *Puranic* myth of *Bhasmasura* and *Mohini*. Mythological Gods and their mode of life shown through some of the characters divulge his exuberance in spiritualism and spiritual values are noted heavily in many novels. Truth triumphs and evil gets punished is the trustful logic of Hindus which is touched upon wherever necessary.

Narayan’s comic vision illuminates numerous weighty themes—the place of woman in a traditional society, the ethical precincts of a materialistic way of life and the consequences of flouting accepted codes. His fiction also incorporates the psychological and ethical implications of some Hindu concepts as austere purification, yoga, renunciation, non-attachment, Maya and the cyclic progressions of life and death. Nevertheless, Narayan projects a great Indian theory of *Karma* and minutely represents various paths of achieving Moksha or self-realization in his novels. Narayan is inventively interwoven with various thoughts of *The Bhagwad Gita* in his novels. He has the theory of renunciation, and liberation or Moksha in his two novels: In *The Guide*, Raju, the tourist guide, is initially entrapped in the illusory world and commits the offence of forging the signature of Rosie and is consequently punished and sent to the prison. His foul deeds pay him. He receives his ill fate as per his evil Karma. But landed into the prison life, he finds time for his moral and social transgression. The prison accrues an ideal opportunity to journey into the innermost regions of his soul and shakes off his material and social illusions. Thereafter, an evolution occurs in the character of Raju, to be a spiritual guide and he lives and dies for the sake of people and attains salvation for his sins which is a ceaseless and ongoing process. Chandran
another character in *The Bachelor of Arts* gets frustrated due to love failure, becomes an ascetic, renouncing himself after a long wander, realizes the true love of his family and begins a new life.

His fiction combines different facts of life and experience. K. R. S. Srinivasa Iyengar rightly remarks, “Narayan’s novels are the art of resolved and conscientious exploration … he would, if he could, explore the inner countries of the mind, heart and soul, catch the uniqueness in the ordinary, the tragic in the prosaic” (360). Narayan believes in all rituals, ethos and abstract philosophies. No wonder his fiction reflects his inherent knowledge of Indian philosophy, classical literature, religion and ethics.

The author’s commonplace creations seek a righteous path in the travails of their existence which is pinpointed in the totality of Indian living—an amalgam of past and present, tradition and modernity (Verma 42). V. S. Naipaul also holds similar view and remarks: “Narayan’s novels are less purely social comedies I had once taken them to be the religious books, at times religious fables, and intensively Hindu” (22). Naipaul remarks that he could find many religious rituals and myth expressed through comic mode in a natural way.

Narayan’s staging of characters and their associations with one another accomplish a philosophic and valuable overtone. He presents the characters in the light of the most considerable universal theory of Karma as devised by *The Bhagavad Gita*, the holy book of Hinduism. Approximately all Narayan’s characters exhibit the growing pains arising from the frustration with their mundane lives. This existing fact discontent helps in their progression of achieving self-realization. Narayan’s characters attain a synthesis of flesh
and spirit through the philosophic interpretation of their own mundane activities. Kantak rightly observes, “These Malgudi men and women within their circumscribed lives yet manage to express the irrepressible Joie-de-vivre which distinguishes them” (113).

Almost all the characters of his novels experience loneliness and alienation that is due to their displeasure with life. The lengthy drained nights which Swami spends in the forest enables him to appreciate and understand the love and affection of his parents. In the same way, Krishna and Susila in *The English Teacher* and Marco and Rosie in *The Guide* suffer from partition and isolation which teach them to face the bitter truths of life. Raju, the guide denounces the material life and turns spiritual and introspective during his forlorn life in the jail. Thus, Narayan has ventured the subject of severance in his novels in order to integrate the philosophic visualization of India. This hallucination has been discoursed by most of the Indian scriptures through the theory of self-realization.

Narayan has also offered the great theory of order and disorder in his novels. Arjuna in the Indian epic, *The Mahabharatha*, encounters a heavy conflict on the battle field and it was brought to normalcy by Lord Krishna’s lively preaching of the theory of *Karma*. One finds the ‘order-disorder’ pattern on a large scale in Narayan’s novels. In his appearance of human relationship between two human beings, there is order in the beginning, but this order is not lasting. It gets disordered when his characters do not accord with other characters under some unexpected situations and conditions. About this pattern, R. A. Singh rightly remarks: “The order-disorder pattern in R. K. Narayan’s fiction could be understood better in terms of the Hegelian dialectic where order attained at the end is qualitatively different from the initial order which generates discontent in the protagonist” (17).
Narayan applies this prototype in almost all his novels. The ‘order-disorder’ pattern is found in the relationship between Swami and his father, and Chandran and his father. They have regulation and tranquility in the aperture, but this sort does not stay for an extensive time. Their relationships do not accomplish any suitable dimension because their motives clash with each other and their outlooks and attitudes differ from each other. Likewise, there is order in the beginning in the relationship between Raju and his mother and Vasu and Nataraj. But their relations are disordered when they comprehend the transitoriness of human relationship based on selfishness and opposed motives. But at the end, they attain spiritual and rational peace as they learn a lesson that human and the social values preached by the Indian philosophy are compulsory for any human being to achieve salvation and self-realization. It is these values that help one to sustain his balance in times of disorder, clash of motives and conflict.

R. K. Narayan’s characters with a foregrounding in the cultural life of their society (shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in) have intensely absorbed and unspecified philosophical ways of life. Even though they cherish the ancient values and maintain the traditional ways of life, yet they do not waver in bringing about a change, adopting and adapting to the modern ways of life. Narayan deals with Indian philosophy, but he does not sermonize in an aphoristic way, on the divergent, the dull, dry and grave material of Indian thought is made comprehensive and contemporary. Narayan’s characters can be classified into three separate groups on the basis of their Indian values and social activities. Firstly, there are the chief protagonists with a specific philosophical vision in life. Nataraj in The Man Eater of Malgudi is a customary man in his own right who expounds, protects and promotes the value system of Indian culture. Secondly, people like Vasu in The Man
Eater of Malgudi, offer a confrontation to the unity and harmony of the Malgudian world which is a microcosm of the Indian society. Lastly, Narayan introduces a class of people who offer an analysis of Indian culture and thought in their own way. They are ordinary people engaged in the mundane activities and their attitude to life; circumstances and fate bring about the divergent interpretations and analysis of Indian philosophy.

Narayan's fiction repeats the dogma of Fate (destiny) in the Indian value systems. The intrinsic faith in life and the capacity of its renewal in the face of a threat of its existence is the central principle of his fiction. The Indian philosophy regards this life which functions in a recurring order subjected to a variety of ups and downs as means of true self-realization. It is averred that the occult and obscure experiences in The English Teacher described by Narayan explores the cycle of life and death in addition to the loneliness of human existence. The Guide is also a sojourn into the theme of man's quest for identity and self-renewal. Narayan’s characters strengthen and reassert their faith in Indian culture, history, religion, ethics and philosophy withstanding the shock of a foreign culture. Narayan asserts the fact that an individual can transcend the boundaries of Karma, fate and the cycle of this life and death if he observes the dictates and dictum of Indian Shashtras.

Narayan has interwoven Gandhian beliefs in the subject and plot of his novels. His heroes transmit Gandhian views and promote Gandhian philosophy as way of life, which is projected very effectively. Narayan delineates the Gandhian stream of consciousness that awakens the inner sensibility of both the characters and readers. Krishna in The English Teacher finally develops as true Gandhian. In The Man-Eater of Malgudi, the theme of non-violence is arbitrarily contrasted with the character of Vasu.
Narayan's stories instigate with realistic settings and everyday happenings in the lives of a cross-section of Indian society, with characters of all classes. Gradually fate or chance, oversight or blunder transforms ordinary events to preposterous happenings. Unexpected disasters befall the hero as easily as unforeseen good fortune. The characters admit their fate with an equanimity that suggests the faith that things will somehow turn out happily, whatever their own motivations or actions. Growth, in the form of western-imported goods and attitudes, combined with bureaucratic institutions, meets in Malgudi with long-held conventions, beliefs and ways of doing things. The modern world can by no means win a straightforward success because Malgudi admits only what it needs, according to its own confidential sense.

In *The Guide*, Raju, the shop keeper becomes the railway guide by chance. He never intends to train himself for this post from the beginning but it happens naturally by his love in satisfying others needs. As such, he turns to be a spiritual guide after his imprisonment for forging Rosie, the sign of Marco’s wife, whom he seduces by making her a dancer. She aptly comments Raju’s Karma to undergo such a punishment for his mischief. Murty quotes, the plots of Narayan are “built of materials and incidents” that are neither extraordinary nor heroic” (111), he selects the ordinary day today events, but it is the magic influence of his imagination that ‘captures our interest’ and ‘attention’. Narayan’s novels are ‘straight-forward, realistic pictures, undisturbed by fantasy’ (Murty 112). His novels keep a uniform quiet tone. Every event is described with precision and care, and the details are correct and the event is psychologically convincing. Modern theme of having extramarital relationship is not approved in Indian culture and Narayan never allows his characters to achieve happiness and success through such relationship which is against the Indian culture.
In *The Painter of Signs*, Daisy an unmarried population control health propagandizer, develops courtship with Raman, who belongs to an orthodox Brahmin family. Narayan depicts such characters as unsuccessful in their marriage bond and the fact was objected by the readers.

However, modernity plays a great role in sanctifying the old conventions of caste, culture and intercaste marriages. He never gives opportunities for such beliefs in his stories, for he strictly adheres to the old traditions and cultures.

Narayan’s art and genius can be quoted in the words of Paul Vergheese,

> Narayan as a novelist is also a commentator on the broad tendencies of his society and age. He follows the tradition of story-telling as it existed in ancient India, but adopts his form and style from the west. The instruments of his critical strategy are comedy, irony and satire. Narayan keeps very close to surface reality, for his aim is to reveal the tragic-comedy implicated in ordinary life. His problems are to give the reader a picture that strikes him as typical of everyday reality. For this he depends on selection. He therefore excludes from his picture such realities, as are not susceptible to comic treatment. His picture of life is always true to facts, but to those facts only at which a reasonable being can be expected to smile. He is also careful to survey his subject matter from an angle from which its comic aspects are not most prominently visible. (120)

R. K. Narayan, a waggish maestro of elevated decree, camouflages the ideals that are treasured to him, allowing them to exude to the reader in and through the encounter of
his characters in his novels. A reader often misses them as they are so skillfully handled upon. This has stood in the way of his receiving the recognition that is his due. As Warren French rightly observes, “He demands too much of readers and critics who cannot transcend their own apprehension of Doomsday” (yabaluri.org).

The essential values that Narayan highlights in his novels are:

a) The indispensable Indian pious outlook is the hunt for identity. People expend their life in search of uniqueness and waste their lives.

b) The outcome of the pursuit is the receptiveness of the moment. Warren French chose to praise Narayan with particular reference to this excellence, namely “his awareness of the moment”. His speech marks one of the most memorable lines from Wilder’s play *Our Town*, “Do any human being ever realize life while it is lived? --every, every minute?” (yabaluri.org).

R. K. Narayan is one of the saints and bards who have realized what life is and how it should be lived and has observed how it is lived by his crazy neighbours and has distilled those values in his fiction. People have lost the sense of understanding the existing minute. They are always brooding about the past or dreaming about unobtainable fruits of the future and have lost the delight of sentience of the moment in which they actually survive. So, man must live the present.

c) Exercise and Yoga are the most conventional and affluent ways to discipline the body and mind. Yogic way of teaching is “to steady one’s mind, to look down one’s nose and at nothing beyond. The eye is the starting point of all evils and mischief” (yabaluri.org). Isolated objects can be arbitrarily picked out by the eye. The eye is then followed by
the mind, and the other parts of the body are controlled by the mind. Trouble and complication, or waste of time is the outcome of such chain of activity and so one should not get distracted by anything except the goal.

d) Narayan’s eclecticism of additional revelation is about the definition of God. God as explained by him is Rama, Krishna, Allah, Christ nor of any other spiritual denomination. It is often believed that man pictures the divine in his own icon. Man has the liberty to think his own God. God is more than human envision and thought. In *Bhagauada Gita*, God reveals himself, in a potent frightening form, which permeates the entire cosmos in every form of life and deed. He is within everyone who derives strength from Him.

e) Narayan explained the way of true happiness: One should not yearn beyond one’s reach. Recognize that everything happens through God’s grace. God’s intentions cannot be tacit. Time is the master of all events. If one broods on one’s improvements rather than one’s shortcomings, he will be happier.

f) Philosophy of non-violence: Man has to avoid fighting. Hatred is a slow poison. “No cause is worth a clash. If one is ready to abhorrence and want to destroy each other, he may find a hundred reasons—a diversion of canal water in your field, two urchins of opposite camps slapping each other, rumours of molestation of some woman, even the right to worship in a temple, anything may spark off a fight, if man is inclined to nurture hatred—only the foolish waste their lives in fighting” (yabaluri.org).

g) Regarding husband-wife relationship: Human ties cannot be defined in just black-white terms (yabaluri.org). There can be no such thing as absolute hostility or
absolute worship. Couples need some arguments to understand each other, like failure is the stepping stone to success. People should not consider husbands as scapegoats, if they do not care about their wife’s wishes. So, everyone is acting a part all the time, knowingly or unknowingly. But, God who witnesses everything must be cognizant of their opinion and the secret bliss of companionship. His choice is always right and has a purpose. Relationship formed against our culture is also not encouraged. Though it is acceptable due to modernity, it is not true love of man-woman relationship and never lasts for long.

h) Of scholarly competence: There is a limit to inherit the knowledge, but like food it must be restricted. Man must gain awareness to his capacity and needs and not to overload himself with unwanted facts and ideas that lead to obscurity.

Some people who are naturally gifted with knowledge or talents will protrude on the platform of earth and present their best to make others happy. It is believed that wasting one’s gifted talents unused is a sin according to Vedic culture.

xi) Integration of the past: Man has possession of his whole life. He should not rebuff the past life. One must not forget the ways and the bitter truths he comes across in life. It is praiseworthy to hold the evergreen memories.

x) Of adult age: Old age is the blond period in life to relish the past, like Wordsworth who cherishes the reminiscence of the beautiful nature in his gloomy and old age. It gives him happiness. Adorable is the old age, when one recalls his youthful beauties. Man learns a lesson from his past is a true adaptation.
(xi) On separation or loneliness: No relationship, human or other, or association of any kind could last forever. Separation is the law of life right from the mother’s womb (yabaluri.org). Loneliness is the barest truth of life which Narayan has shown in his novels. Death is the unchangeable verity in man’s life; people are like guests on earth living only for a short period. So, people should live their best in a happy and healthy atmosphere. Love is the indispensable mode which one has to share with others and only this concept makes others to remember forever.

Now-a-days the world is lumbering with value crises. It does not develop overnight; it emerges slowly and gets developed in the society over a period of time. Education is a course of instigating the beginner to high-quality life. But today’s education gives importance to transference of information and nurturing of professional skills. Till recently, education intended at character-building in the learners. But in the present day, education seems to be a “Moral Vacuum”. As Gandhi pointed out, education lacking character, leads to criminality; educated persons have wider opportunities to pamper in crimes and that too committing them most efficiently (Nagaraj 661).

The values of idealism, altruism, selflessness and service to fellow human-beings are disappearing from our life. People started believing that “might is right” and through physical power alone tribulations could be solved (Nagaraj 662).

Most important factors triggering value-crisis in the society are as follows:-

As an effect of population explosion, nations are enforced to increase their manufacture in all fields and at all levels. They slowly changed over from agrarian to industrial economy. Due to strict competitions encountered in the market economy system, each nation is
longing to retain the market by fair or foul means. People are ready to resort to any means to suit their goals, leading to widespread corruption and all kinds of white collar crimes. Industrialization endorses consumerism which results in tempting people to obtain luxury things even by borrowing. Credit card system is an example for this growing trend of customer allurement. When a person is unable to borrow anymore, he does not waver even to plunder others. Search of material wealth and self-seeking ends at any price has become the be-all and end-all of life.

An important consequence of industrialization is urbanization. As a result of agricultural wealth losing its vital importance, villages present a scenario of parched dry lands and dilapidated houses. Villagers migrate to the nearby towns and add more slums to the already overcrowded urban centers. Value degeneration is unavoidable among the people in the slums as they could not get even the basic human needs fulfilled. They become mentally prepared to do anything to endure and perpetuate life.

Religions lose their influence on the urban people due to the prevailing sense of agreement among them. Weakening faith in religious influence make people live as they wish.

The impact of increase in literacy level among the masses could be noticed in their enhanced scientific temper, seeking cause-effect relationship in all observed phenomena. Due to rational thinking, people started questioning many of the religious beliefs and religions started losing their grip on people. The decline of religious influences paved the way for value degeneration among the people. Eventually everyone started explaining their misdeeds and crimes.
Due to the impact of Western Culture, the hall marks of the traditional Indian culture like joint family system, simple life, lofty ideals, hospitality, tolerance, religious faith, compassion, helping others, saving for the future etc. have started disappearing, yielding their place to credit card system, neglecting parents and elders, becoming irreligious and highly selfish, exhibiting desire for pomp and show etc. ‘Creche,’ ‘Home for the Aged,’ ‘Credit Cards’ etc. are the byproducts of this new found culture. People have become restless and tense, losing their peace of mind. Divorce is on the increase and the family life is subjected to severe strain. Value crisis has been felt in all walks of life.

The technological revolution today has succeeded in multiplying the facilities and material comforts but failed in promoting peace of mind and better family life. Though it helped to decrease manual labour, it definitely added to mental tension and lowered capacity of tolerances and patience. Even cultured people indulge in committing crimes like printing and circulating fake currency notes, manufacture of illegal arms and ammunitions etc. with the help of science and technology. Scientific revolution has also added to value degeneration among the people.

Due to renovation, adoption of new devices and strategies in production, distribution, transport, communication, recreation, food and costumes, traditional beliefs and faiths have drastically changed, ultimately paving the way to value degeneration. Today, one sees everywhere gross and general coldness to finer feelings with the only object of making oneself as at ease as one can. “Sensitivity to sufferings of fellow human-beings is missing and it is very uncommon to see people with social concern. Our material environment--rivers, mountains, forests, flora and fauna--is getting progressively more polluted and depleted of its resources” (www.indianmba.com).
Narrow casteist, “socialist, linguistic and rationalistic outlooks are isolating the people and approaching in the way of raising a unifying national and international outlook” (www.indianmba.com). People, knowingly commit crimes; they do not also consider it shameful.

The entire problems of this crisis cannot be efficiently undertaken through constricted piece meal efforts. Need of the current condition is a dreadful change in the perspective of life, which could be obtained only by value education, communicated methodically right from the primary level to college level.

It was perhaps true in the day’s bygone, when parents at home and leaders in the community in various walks of life were all value-based people. Younger children and growing adolescents could catch values of elderly people either by imitations or by special efforts. In the present age, when both the parents go out for jobs leaving their kids in the care of servants, how is it possible for the younger ones to imbibe the values from their role-models? Further, there is a grave deterioration both among the parents and community leaders in terms of their being value models for the younger generation. One cannot therefore expect values to be caught from undesirable situations and persons in society in today’s world. Hence, values have to be taught in addition to being caught from selected situations and personalities.

At the popular level the most talked about point of current cultural crisis is the fast change in life styles, particularly amongst the urban middle-class. Food habits, dress, forms of greetings, common courtesies, modes of entertainment, interpersonal relationships-particularly between members of opposite sex-have all changed. Some of these changes are due to
changing socio-economic conditions but many are the result of copying western modes. The media are constantly prodding us to accept these modern life styles. The youth belonging to the economically well of class are particularly enamoured of the glamour, the fun and freedom promised by the modern culture. They reject traditional restraints on the pursuits of sensuous pleasures as old fashioned and unnecessarily restrictive of their individual freedom.

At a deeper level cultural values are expressed through aesthetic sensibilities and their external expressions. They are reflected in the life styles also but more directly in music, art and literature. The appreciation and enjoyment of beauty have always been considered a necessary hallmark of cultured person. The themes of traditional aesthetic expressions were based on deeper level experiential truths of life. This respectful evaluation of one’s cultural roots should not, and does not, mean denigration of other cultures. Cultural chauvinism has always been inimical to the growth of human civilization, and frequently the cause of tyranny and violence. The evaluation of Indian culture should be done in terms of its capacity to contribute towards evolution of a global human culture, at these different strands of the common human culture, and hence become the common heritage of all. It is only through such an open and inclusive attitude of multi-culturalism that we can overcome the problem of inter-cultural conflicts. The conflict between modernity and tradition is a recurring theme in the cultural value crisis. In the Indian social context it is popularly seen as flouting of traditions and customs, decrying the spiritual and glorifying the materialistic view of life, and adopting western life styles. Even at the intellectual level of life, sometimes consciously but often unconsciously,
modernization is taken to mean westernization. This colonization of mind, a tragic bequest of the past, still conditions our intellectual temper and our cultural attitudes.

The deepening value crisis in contemporary Indian society is casting its evil shadow in all walks of life. As a result of this neglect, one is engulfed by a severe value crisis in personal, social, professional and national level. From the glorious heights of being one of the most civilized countries, Indians have plunged into an abysmal chasm of corruption, strife, inequity, and moral, social and human degradations. The only way to rectify this value-crisis is through education. Developing value consciousness has been the central theme in the traditional Indian concept of education.

Dr. Baskaran says,

India is a treasure house of spirituality, religion, morality and ethics. We have more than two hundred universities, five hundred affiliated colleges and more than fifty thousand secondary schools. In spite of this, we could produce only some scientific manpower—the third largest in the world. We were not able to produce doctors with doctrines, engineers with ethics, judges with justice, community with culture and human beings with humanism. It is high time we landed in value education. (59)

Modern youths have become victims of pessimism, diffidence and frustration—consciously or unconsciously. Our search for the cause will take us to the educator and education. If we want to bring out a reformation, it should come from the teacher. Teachers must make serious and sincere attempt to inculcate eternal values in the minds
of the youth. Education should aim at all round development of a learner with a focus on the emotional side of all. All teachers should do this with a missionary zeal.

Indian Education Commission’s Report (1964) mentions that education is a powerful instrument of social, economic and political changes and therefore is to be related to the long term national aspirations and the short term problems it is called upon to face (Nagaraj 73). Through education, the potentials of everyone are to be developed and it instills the feeling of one’s social obligations.

Education is not only to teach knowledge or exercising of skills. It has to give the cultured a proper sense of values. One of the main reasons for this sorry state of affairs is the lack of any important component of value education in the modern system of education. The universities and other centers of specialized higher education have become merely manpower training centers, or mints, for hallmarking a certain standard of knowledge and not nurseries of good citizen. They are producing only careerists and job seekers and not change agents for social and human progress. The education imparted to the students does not refine the social, moral, and human sensitivities, nor does it inculcate in them a sense of responsibility to work for the common good, and to serve the society through their knowledge and skills. As a result, young person’s coming out of education does not enjoy the happiness and satisfaction of leading a good life, nor do they contribute to the social and human well-being. One could enlarge it to include the whole spectrum of life values-social, aesthetic, ethical, spiritual and human values. Then only one can create value climate which will encourage emergence of good human-beings and a good society.
Therefore, the aim of value education is to engage students in an open ended exploration of the entire spectrum of value that goes into making a good human person, that enriches life, and that helps in the development of a good society. Borrowing a phrase from Bertrand Russell, this exploration could be called a ‘romance with goodness’ (Tripathy 3). It is an enquiry into what is worthwhile and valuable in human life, and what makes us truly and fully human. Value education ought to aim at the progress of ‘the whole person, to live a full life, in the wide world’ (Tripathy 3). Academic enquiry into such wide ranging values covering the varied dimensions of human life can be rightly placed under the general heading of “Human Values”.

The objective of any scheme of value education should not be to foster, inculcate or propagate any predetermined set or system of values. Instead, it should develop a deep awareness, and a deeper sensitivity, for all the value dimensions of human existence. It should seek to generate capacity for making intelligent and independent value judgments in real life situations, based on principles and convictions. Furthermore, it should help individuals examine their unconsciously acquired value system, and then to reformulate their own philosophy of life. Persons with this level of value maturity alone can act with courage and conviction. They alone can provide responsible, value-based leadership in the diverse areas of social and professional life, and simultaneously have the satisfaction of living a happy and worthwhile life. Human values have three dimensions of goodness; the ‘good’ person, the ‘good’ life and the ‘good’ society which can only be obtained through value education. Days may go but parents are the same to whichever place or the age man may attain. Likewise, even many millenniums can exist but our culture should not be washed out in the name of modernity or rationalism. Indians must be proud to
sustain India as a ‘well-cultured’ country instead to nominate it as a ‘well-developed’ country. Hence, the fiction of R. K. Narayan reflects Indian values as such in three dimensions of social, cultural and ethical perspectives, and consequently insists upon the importance of value education to the world in general to make everyone a value—based global citizen.