Narayan was introduced to the classical Indian tales, myth, vedic poetry and Tamil classics, ethics and Ramayana of Kumar very early in life, by his grandmother "in a cozy corner of the house when the day's tasks are done and the lamps are lit."(1) Later when he became a proficient writer, the effect of this early nourishment given by his grandmother could be seen quite naturally in all his works. That is why his novels, like classic Tamil literature fall into two main groups namely, 'aham' (home - domestic life) and 'puram' (the outside - power, wealth, politics). There was no conscious effort on the part of Narayan to have these divisions in his works. They are the results of his culture and tradition.

In most of his works we find Narayan's total agreement with the view of Aristotle regarding the preference of plausible impossibilities over improbable possibilities. This is just a coincidence. Actually he owes his indebtedness and gratitude to the Indian sensibility and culture. The very mental make
up of every Indian is oriented traditionally. He expresses this fact: “our minds are trained to accept without surprise characters of godly or demonic proportions with actions and reactions set in limitless worlds and progressing through an incalculable timescale. With the impact of modern literature we began to look at our gods, demons, sages and kings, not as some remote connections but as types and symbols, possessing psychological validity even when seen against the contemporary background. And the hold of religion and the conception of gods ingrained in us must necessarily find a place in any accurate portrayal of life. Nor can we overlook the rural life and its problems, eighty five out of a hundred Indians being village folk.”

The general pattern of his novels is order-disorder-order. His life is leela, there are no permanent miseries or joys, one has to play out his destined role and he can not alter the role or goal. Astrology plays an important role in everybody’s life. Jasmine has the ‘jamanthra vasanai’ (fragrance of eternity). One can achieve the spiritual goal through leading a perfect domestic life. None is bad at the maximum those can be lovable villains to complete the balance sheet. “… Irony, is the surgical instrument to be used
product corruption, whereas all these people, even seedy, the stupid, the vain, and the inexcusably shabby like "travesty, "surveyed as appealing human naivete or what I have called 'a peculiar nuclear innocence' (3). Let us briefly discuss three of his major novels written in different decades but expectedly speaking the same truth.

At The English Teacher (1948):

The English Teacher celebrates the domestic harmony and the bliss of married life not only during the life time but after the death as well. It equips everyone with the typical fragrance of South Indian jasmine - the fragrance of eternity. It proclaims the consummation of sublime love. Here instant becomes eternity and 'one feels grateful to Life and Death' (p. 213). It is a simple tale set in the immortal little town of Malgudi. The narrator who is also the protagonist of the story is a lecturer named Krishnan. He teaches English in a College. His wife dies half-way through the book. He regains the paradise which he lost with the help of an old man who bridges the gap between the Life and Death by materializing a psychic contact through automatic writing. In the end he sees and talks to his wife in his bedroom where sticks a
piece of jasmine garland in a curve on the back of her head (p.213).

In the first half of the novel's half rank is clarity of thought and portrayal of transparent true to life events and situations, the second half clouds the vision with absurdity of automatic writing, psychic communion and mystic experience. Marinal hints of holy wisdom life is glorified in the first half and in the second half it is immortalized even after the death. Susila dies to be resurrected. Vishnu loses his position temporarily only to regain it permanently. The presence of jujube which fills the empty room in the middle of the novel to numerate Vishnu engulfs him with Susila binding jasmine garland on her hair to make him experience the drought trouble in the end.

The psychic communion through the medium of automatic writing may sound absurd to those who have no knowledge of the south and its tradition. Communication with the soul of the dead and next one is a living tradition in the south. The great poet and saint Thiruvilliyar believed in the concept of 'seven births' and the 'deathless soul'. Even now ritual such as 'kudai kettal', 'vilakku vaithal', etc. exist in the
south. In these rituals the soul of the dear and near ones
would be invited through a medium after 'pooja' to give
guidance, blessings, explanation, etc. to the living ones.

Narayan confesses to V.K. Reddy that everything he has set
down in The English Teacher actually happened to him—that
he made periodic visits to Madras where he met a lawyer who
communicated with the dead through the automatic writing.
"No was no more," Narayan said, "For one thing, he wrote three
or four thousand words in a half-hour, and no man can compose
so much as quickly. For another, Raja through the automatic
writing, gave proof of her existence."(4) And Justice V.R.
Krishna Iyer says, "Narayan is no liar, no mystic, no
charlatan, no psychic but a simple, honest, lovable novelist."
He continues, "Read R.K. Narayan's The English Teacher,
especially the later portion where the broken-hearted teacher
communes with his departed wife in seeming flesh and blood
and sari and flowers. It is marvellous and more strikingly
true! Actual dialogues, wonderful discoveries and sublime
experiences presented with the great artist's delicate,
delicate pen, dressed up like a novel but is authentic
and autobiographical... The novel which is his life story
is conclusive evidence, unless something hallucinating can
be attributed to the author, that life after death is reality.
I may add that the author had an interview with Ena Twigg, reportedly a remarkable medium, and his experience exceeded his expectation through a sudden communication from his late mother.(9)

Narayan's love at first sight with Rajam, the warnings given by the astrology, the way he defied it deliberately and the heavy price he paid for it are the things he can not forget and keeps referring to in his works repeatedly. Arranged marriage by the parents is still considered as the supreme form of the marriage, as it provides the couple immense scope for exploring and respecting each other. Also the success of such marriages proves that the marriage may be arranged by the parents consulting the horoscopes and astrology but actually it is already decided in the heaven and the husband and wife relation is not just for one generation alone. In The English Teacher R.K. Narayan relives not only his life but also sometimes his faith in horoscope, the bond of husband and wife, the fruit of married life, immortality of the soul, the local customs, habits, etc. quite artistically.

So married Tamilian can be seen without a piece of flower garland (jasmine is considered more auspicious) on her head.
A married lady to be auspicious has to take bath daily massaging turmeric paste all over her body, apply a vermilion dot on the forehead and don the hair with jasmine. Even now-a-days, in the ultra modern times, it is not a rare scene - husbands returning home with a packet of jasmine garlands for their wives. Even in Marathas like cosmopolitan cities one can see such common sights. This is a living tradition. On the other hand wives with smile on their face and flower on their head await their husbands. Through such small gestures the whole tradition pulsates.

Krishnan thinks—so calls Susila 'Jasmine', when he loves her most. After her death he feels the smell of jasmine filling her room and is suddenly transported to the past and suffers the loneliness. In the end Krishnan returns from the farewell party with a garland of jasmine in his hand. He falls asleep. In his sleep he cries 'my wife, my wife...'. He sees the dead Susila sitting on his bed with an overwhelming fragrance of jasmine surrounding her. It is a poetical soul stirring passage in the novel.

"Still jasmine - scented!" I commented.

"Oh wait," I said and got up. I picked up the garland from the nail and returned to bed. I held it to her "For you as ever. I somehow feared you would n't take it..."
She received it with a smile, cut off a piece of it and stuck it in a curve on the back of her head. She turned her head and asked: "Is this alright?"

"Wonderful," I said, smelling it. (p. 213)

The Tamil phrase for the fragrance of jasmine is 'Janmanthra Vasudam' (the channel smell). The fragrance surcharges the atmosphere with spiritual forces. The physical demarcation vanishes, the boundaries of personalities dissolve and the concept of past, present and future weld into one and Life and Death become unified.

A ceremony is inclined by the old servant woman to get married at once: "I was very uneasy within fifteen days of losing his wife. Otherwise, he will be ruined. I was the fourth wife of my husband and he always married within three weeks. All his four children are dead. What is wrong?" (p. 111).

Sudha's don't keep it kept on the floor: "Sudha lies under the window, laid out on the floor. For there is the law that, the body, even if it is an Emperor's must rest only on the floor, on Mother Earth." (p. 104). "... Everyone gathers a handful of rice and puts it between her lips - our last offering." (p. 105). Then the funeral procession to the cremation ground is vividly described. Scenes and situations,
rituals and customs like these are functional and not merely informative. Also it brings out the flair of local tradition.

No doubt the English Teacher is a typical love story - love before marriage and after marriage, love during the life time and after the death - but everywhere Harayan tries to maintain the convention of non-touch-sublime sort of love which is the poetic under-current of the culture. The fruit of Domestic harmony and the bliss of marital life is having children and the sweetest music, according to Tiruvalluvar, is the prattle of the life. Then Krishna desires to have more children Susila silences him by closing his mouth and telling that Susila alone will do and thereby gives a premonition of her departure from this world, as the fruits, children are no more sought.

Krishna, besides enough to understand the middle of life and the 'Leela' (play) of his creator, the God. Krishna values by accepting it as a 'law of life.' He learns to live alone leaving his daughter with his parents-in-law though she has been, since Susila's death, his only emotional stability. He says : 'Wife, child, brothers, parents, friends... We come together only to go apart again. It is one continuous movement. They move away
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The blind person's ill acceptance - the acceptance makes
his great death as the gaining of on the link of the other
world. This is clear, in all and on all the miracles are
meandious. One should try to enjoy the line and death
equality. ...Ye, you are capable, non-signer and
hopelessly in grief and think of me, I can hardly come to
you, because this grief makes the heart',; and this should
be allowed for both our souls."(p.314). If one follows this
message seriously, he can ever be cheerful and grateful to
both 'life' and death.'(p.317).

3) Harmandir Singh:

As in 'Chand' in fact in a major character in his novels,

one ruminated on death's final concept in guno
along with the changing time and society and at the same time preserves and holds the different strands of culture and tradition without being corrupted by the various influences, action and inaction or corrupted by not summing up but putting it into active existence. Narayan makes Malgudi speak for the culture, tradition and itself.

In 'The Guide' Narayan presents the transition period of Malgudi from an agricultural economy to industrial economy. The tradition and culture of south India comes alive through the Malgudians and through their ideals and aspirations, pettiness and superstitions, faith and beliefs, attitudes and aptitudes and above all through the little ironies of their lives. The authenticity of the soil could only be felt and it is difficult to transform this feeling from the book to any other form. That is why, the great film maker of international repute Satyajit Ray though desired to film The Guide could not dare to do it. Whereas Dev Anand tried and 'deviled' proving where angels fear to enter devils dare to tread. Narayan till today carries the bitterness towards Dev Anand for distorting the original story by 'abolishing Malgudi' and thereby discarding 'his own values in milieu and human characteristics'. (6) of course, very recently, Narayan is quite happy with ShankarNag who could authentically bring out the flair and flavour of Malgudi through the TV
Narayan is at his best when he portrays the childhood and boyhood scenes. Through Raju's childhood and boyhood Narayan brings not only the likes and dislikes, the fears and imaginations, the fancies and repulsions of the little world but recreates the whole panoramic view of culture and tradition with the rich colourful landscape background - the shade of an old, spreading tamarind tree across the road, dense with leaves amidst which monkeys and birds lived, bred and chattered incessantly feeding on its fruits; pigs and piglets coming from somewhere and nosing about the ground; bullock carts with its wooden wheels grating and grinding the dust off the road; and the bells jingling round the necks of the bullocks; the smell of straw, men, vehicles; the village community sitting on the brick platform constructed around the holy peepal tree and gossiping on and on; the stone figures anointed with oil worshipped by women, children chasing dogs around; little Raju and his old mother sitting on the floor side by side and eating their meal together with a rice pot within their reach, by the sooty tin lamp stuck on a nail in the smoke stained wall and, after the meal, the boy lying on a mat on the verandah while the mother sitting by his side telling heroic stories from the legends, puranas,
awaiting the return of her husband from his shop which is the centre of business and social discussion; the torture of the schooling, the pathetic and at the same time humorous drama of single teacher 'pyol' school; the touching traditional teacher - pupil relation while the student leaves the little school to join the board school... Such is the little world where everything from piglet to peepal tree is important, where domestic relation and love of mother, fear of father, social relation and respect of teacher, the habits, customs, etc. are pungent, and purposeful. Nothing seems to be odd or unnatural. (pp.12-25).

When Raju lives with Rosie in his house against the sentiments of his mother, his maternal uncle 'an energetic land-owner, six feet tall with a small knotted tuft on his skull, a shirt, an upper-cloth, a brown dhoti..."(p.147) who used to bring his sister fresh vegetables grown in his own garden matching with his appearance talks of castrating Raju as if he were a wild bull (p.148) and takes his sister to his village as he would never let her down at any cost. The rustic loyalty and love of a robust villager with its deep root in its traditional way of life is brought out in this scene. Raju's mother, an orthodox lady, shows full of sympathy for Rosie at the beginning (p.126) but when learns that she belongs to the
dancing-girl class (devadasi) she starts pestering her son to send Rosie back (p.135). This caste consciousness, social set-up and the things like these are entirely true to the south Indian society. So is the house itself, with its complete lack of privacy.

Narayan is staunch believer in tradition and religion. He is quite homely in portraying the hold of traditional values and attitudes on the psyche of middle class Hindus. His unshakable faith in destiny and the happiness in accepting the way of its functioning is time and again portrayed skillfully in his works. To him even Marco the dry intellectual, Rosie the debauchee and Raju the sinner are not bad characters. They act the way they act because of the preordained destiny which controls everyone from birth to death. Narayan tries to show that Marco and Rosie could have been an ideal couple as he was interested in sculptured figures on walls and stones in caves and his wife, Rosie wanted ancient models for her dance. Marco fails to see the sculptures coming to life in his wife who is embodiment of these images. Rosie does not get the models from her husband's rich collection. It is destiny which prevented them from recognising their complementary qualities. They are like parallel lines created for meeting, mating and parting and
merging is possible only when they can lose their individuality. So they play their symbolic roles.

Marco is the physical historian of the past seeking his fulfilment in unearthing the buried treasures of the culture, Rosie is the cultural ambassador of the present seeking satisfaction in the classical dance. And Raju is the spiritual messiah of the future attaining martyrdom by sacrificing his own life. The presence of positive and negative qualities in this characters makes them more realistic and authentic.

Raju's physical dominance over Rosie fades away as she emancipates into a creative Nalini. She never lost her heat to Raju. As he gave a new lease of life, she gratefully acknowledged by offering herself to him. But through and through she lives as an ideal wife to Marco. She is thrilled at the publication of his research work (p.177) and frames a newspaper picture of his and keeps it on her table. Earlier too whenever they quarrelled with each other it was she who repented and even she was ready to stop dancing if he could love her totally. Rosie followed him day after day like a dog, waiting on his master's grace (p.134) The refrain 'after all he is my husband' (p.179) remains in her all the time. Narayan not only elevates her to the status of an ideal wife,
inspite of the debauchery she commits, but also brings out the totality of the tradition from time immemorial of this ancient land when she feels to end her life at his door-step. As Savithri in The Serpent and the Rope becomes the symbol of ideal wife.

Though Marco is a sterile and dry intellectual who fails to love his wife and shower compassion and passion on her, he fails not to acknowledge in his book, the help rendered by the guide Raju (p.176) who almost abducts his wife Rosie. Such noble qualities balance the characters saving them from the brands of evil characters. The Indian philosophy of existence of good and bad side by side in everything is beautifully brought out.

The all India tradition says that sage Valmiki was a bandit. The local tradition of Tamilnadu speaks of a saint, Ramappa Nayjnar who was a hunter and used to worship Lord Shiva with the chewed and tasted roasted flesh of wild boar. In India the criterion of greatness is, in the traditional way, still the stature of the spirit and not the degradation of the body. So Raju becoming a saint even to a sceptical mind is a possibility. Raju is an average man whose life is controlled and manipulated by some unknown forces. Things seem to happen
to him. And he fits admirably in every role. His evolution from one role to another happens quite naturally and nowhere there is any artificiality or false note. The simple stall-keeper becomes a tourist guide because of the railway link and inflow of tourists. Circumstances bring Raju and Rosie together and the love in due course of time fades into oblivion and there emerges the dance-manager. Abundance of wealth and popularity bring in arrogance and he lands in jail. Released from jail he reaches the village Mangala, the auspicious village to become a Mahatma. These things, he seems to think, are destined. What is fated cannot be blotted and it has to be not only accepted but also endured.

Though Raju as an actor excels in every role which is thrushed upon him, he enlivens the role of the saint with utmost sincerity and becomes real martyr in the end. There is, in him, conscious acceptance of this role and sincere efforts to live upto the expectation of the role. First of all, he realises that he lacked ordinary character in his dealings with Rosie. This self-knowledge makes him tear off the masks one after another from his face to become the real saint.

He could adjust to every role with chameleon ease. But for the first time he confronts a situation of drought and famine of a greater magnitude and he is puzzled: "Something was
happening on a different level over which he had no control
or choice and where a philosophical attitude made no
difference."(p.82) This self-realisation makes him altogether
a different being. He, then, confesses to Velan disclosing
his shady past and explains to him that he is an ordinary
mortal and the holiness is just thrust upon him. This
nakedness of total surrender elevates him to the status of
a saint.

The continuity of the unflinching faith of Velant and the
villagers even after his disclosure of his shabby past
transforms metamorphosing the picaro into pilgrim, 'saint
into swami', forger into fakir, tourist guide into spiritual
guru, sinner into saint and romantic into martyr; "If by
avoiding food I should help the trees bloom, and the grass
grow, why not do it thoroughly?' For the first time in his
time life he was making an earnest effort, for the first time
he was learning the thrill of full application, outside money and
love; for the first time he was doing a thing in which he
was not personally interested. He felt suddenly so
enthusiastic that it gave him a new strength to go through
with the ordeal." (p.213)

Prof. C.D. Karasimhaiah points out that the new strength which
Paju felt to go through the ordeal must have come - "... From
the hither to untapped reserves of the stories of goodmen
that sacrificed themselves for others he had daily heard from
his mother; it came from the simple faith of the villagers,
a faith which by its purity and depth could move even the
hard-hearted; it came, if one may say so, from the locale
itself - such is the spirit of place that Narayan carefully
creates to put his characters in tune with it - an ancient
temple, surrounded by hills, the river Sarayu flowing in front
of it, whose very name, if not the river carried its obvious
implications for a reader of the Ramayana even at the name
of the village - Mangala - has its rich overtones and
evocative power."(8)

Raju undertakes the fast quite seriously and religiously.
He even refuses the glucose and saline offered to him by
the Doctors. Auvaiyar's famous saying (Meothurai) : 'If there
is one good man anywhere the rains would descend for his sake
and benefit the whole world' quite often quoted by his mother
echoes in him. And this faith is still a living tradition in
Tamilnadu. During the severe drought in 1987, people of
different religious congregated at Marina Beach and offered
prayer to rain God. Raju walks down the steps of the river
like a tottering baby and standing in the water utters :
"Vela, it's raining in the hills. I can feel it giving up
under my feet, up my legs -"(p.221) and dies as a rain yr...
Lakshmi Holmstrom observes about this:

"The miracle that happens is not that the rains come, but that Raju becomes 'Swami' dying for his people. The very qualities that he always recognised as his nature - to be involved with people, to anticipate their needs and to provide for them."(9)

Like T.S. Eliot Narayan writes not merely with an intense social awareness of his own age but with the past of India in his bones.

The Man-Eater of Malgudi, 1961:

Narayan in an effortless and triumphant way blends the all India myth of Basmasura with the local tradition of non-violence, non-aggressiveness, concern for the common man, compassion to all the living creatures and the conviction that humanity has in it a built in mechanism which will enable it to weather all the seasons and to survive all the situations. This dual operation level added with generous sprinkling of Narayan brand of humour raises the story of The Man-Eater of Malgudi to a greater height, wider width and deeper depth than any of his novels. This novel also shows the gradual shift from the 'Agam' (Domestic Life) to 'Bhoomi'
(outside marital life) division on the pattern of ancient Tamil classics which indicates indirectly the maturity of the author.

Majority of the Malgadians like most of the south Indians are strict vegetarians. They are peace loving lot and violent attitudes and aggressiveness are quite alien to their nature. They have bounteous love and compassion to all the living creatures. One of Natraj's grand uncles gave him money every morning when he was a boy to buy sugar for the ants and insisted him to serve that sugar in the different corners of the house. He watched with ecstasy squirrels, mice and birds busily helping themselves from the granary in the house, and would not allow anyone to disturb the crows and sparrows that came to share their food. (p.52) People feeding the crows and birds before breaking their day long fast on the New Moon Day (Amavasya) in the memory of their dead parents is still continuing in the south. Young girls and married ladies used to decorate the cow-dung smeared floor daily with rice powder floral pattern called 'Arimak kolam' daily in the early morning. Now-a-days only during the special occasions like 'Pongal' rice powder is used on the other days a substitute of white stone powder is used. The basic principle of drawing
this rice-powder floral pattern and simple and intricate designs is to serve the ants and other small creatures. Thus the story of The Man-Eater of Malgudi projects the living tradition of south in a subtle but beautiful way.

Vasu, the outsider, creates havoc and disturbs the tranquility of Malgudi. The tranquility of everyone in Malgudi from Babaraj to Shastry, elephant to mosquito get disturbed because of his alien nature. Everyone is agitated at heart but none could use any violence against that evil force. Vasu all alone on one side carries on his relentless fight against nature. (p.51)

On the other hand the whole community suffers from fear and agony and not able to do anything. It may seem to be quite unnatural but if one takes the mental make up and the tradition of south Indians this impossible thing will become a plausible one. Vegetarianism makes the south Indians peace loving and non-violent. Even the enemies are loved and the demons are worshipped for their integrity and merits. That is why there is no 'Ramalila' in the south. They may feel pity for Ravana or Duryodana because they know the circumstance which makes them enact their part in the way they do.
They have the strong faith in the triumph of the good.
Narayan brings out this philosophy effectively in the following words: "The sufferings of the meek and the saintly are temporary, even as the triumph of the demon is; everyone knows this. Everything is bound to come out right in the end; if not immediately, at least in a thousand years; if not in this world, at least in other worlds. Over an enormous expanse of time and space, events fall into proper perspective. There is suffering because of the need to work off certain consequences, arising from one's actions, in a series of births determined by the law of Karma.

The strong man of evil continues to be reckless until he is destroyed by the tempo of his own misdeeds. Evil has in it, buried subtly, the infallible seeds of its own destruction. And however frightening a demon might seem, his doom is implied in his own evil propensities..."(10) That is why Natraj prays to Vishnu like the elephant in the story 'Gajendra Moksha' of 'Bhagavata Purana': "Oh, Vishnu save our elephant, and save all the innocent men and women who are going to pull the chariot. You must come to our rescue now."(p.132)

Vishnu has heard and the elephant and the innocent men and women pulling the chariot are saved. Natraj does not pray
for the destruction of Vasu. He wants only the safety of the elephant and the people. When the news of unnatural death of Vasu spreads Natraj worries thinking he might be unknowingly the cause for his death. Sastri leaves for pilgrimage and returns only after the normalcy is restored in Malgudi. Such is the firm hold of non-violence in the minds and hearts of Malgudians which is the direct projection of the tradition and culture of south India. Things may rapidly change but the root is still there embedded deep into the earth to shoot out its shoots whenever the time demands.

Though Vasu possesses certain aspects of demon, yet he glows with so much of manliness and talents. He is more dynamic than others in the novel. Natraj suppresses his thoughts and acts as a hypocrite. He smiles at the milkmans but curses at heart. (p.9) He is attracted by the sexy appeal of Rangi but pretends to be a noble man without any such weaknesses. (p.150) Whereas Vasu speaks out what he thinks and acts out what he speaks. He, in fact, not only has Rangi his mistress but brings other such women to his shelter. When he realizes that his master is exploiting him without knowing over it he finishes off him. (pp.17-19)

He is, in fact, a pragmatic idealist. He is an expert asceticist (p.16) and highly qualified having an I.I.E. in
Edwin Gerew in his extended study of the novel says that Vasu does not really represent evil. Vasu's dynamic personality makes the evil more attractive. Patraj's fascination for Vasu and his attempts to re-establish friendly relations with the taxidermist indicates evil is not merely stranger but also more stronger than goodness. Vasu prefers to be king in the hell than a slave in the heaven and not only lives like a hero but also dies like one. Patraj describes him as 'the prince of darkness.'

Narayan grafts the ancient Indian tradition and Hindu myth with that of so far discussed south Indian living tradition and reveals thereby the solutions to all the doubts and answers to all the questions as they are firmly rooted in the cultural ethos of this ancient land. The structure of the novel follows the classical pattern of Sanskrit literature.

The novel recreates the old Hindu myth of Dhasmasura. Vasu is created in the form of Dhasmasura and Patraj as a pray still of Shiva. The Dhasmasura parallel is indicated throughout the novel. Sachtri tells Patraj about Vasu: "He surely will
In definitions of a rakshana... a demonic creature who possessed enormous strength, strange powers and magic, but recognized no sort of restraints of man or God... Every rakshana got swollen with his ego. He thinks he is invisible, beyond every law. But sooner or later something or other will destroy him."(p.72) Then he narrates the Bhaumasura story how he acquired the special boon, how he wanted to test it on the benefactor, Shiva and how Vishnu in the form of Narasimha destroyed Bhaumasura and saved Shiva and the whole humanity. Sastrir again in the end of the novel talks about the Bhaumasura myth to solve the riddle of Vasu's death. "Every demon carries within him, unknown to himself, a tiny seed of self-destruction, and goes up in thin air at the most unexpected moment. Otherwise what is to happen to humanity?"(pp.173-4)

This mythical structure of the novel and the creation of Vasu in the mould of Bhaumasura rakshana is a conscious effort of the novelist to give a concrete form to his vision that confirms the stability of goodness and the evaporation of illusory evils. In a radio interview he said : "The rakshasa is a man, not a tiger, an ego-centred man for whom the objective world is non-existent - a tamer rakshasa who wants to kill the elephant that belongs to the lord narayana."(16)
Vasu fits himself perfectly in the description of the rakshasa in all respects. He is 'a large man about six feet tall' with 'large powerful eyes under thick eyebrows, a large forehead, and a shock of unkempt hair like a black hat.' (p.15) His clothes are gaudy and he drives his jeep at break neck speed. He is a taxidermist, an unthinkable profession according to Hindu belief. He has immense brutal strength - breaks down his gum, snaps chains, twists iron bars, breaks the iron cot (p.144) and kills himself when he hits himself on the temple to crush the mosquito. (p.173)

He bullies and challenges everyone (p.17). In fact, he seems to get artistic pleasure in abandoning Natraj in the Forest (p.35) and killing all sorts of animals. Science and technology are his extra hands and arms to destroy the nature. Love is just lust for him. Though he is nick named 'Monsoon' by Natraj, he is actually a 'monsoon-wet' as he brings various women like Begum to his den to be tortured and discarded after sexual pleasures. He says: "Only feels sorry, and they deserve all the trouble they get. I really do not know why people marry at all. If you like a woman, have her by all means. You don't have to own a coffee estate because you like a cup of coffee now and then." (p.32) As an M.A., in
history, economics and literature and also proves his skill as a taxidermist. He is a dare-devil who is 'afraid of nothing on earth or in heaven or in hell.' (p.148) Thus Vasu is a complete rathsara in the tradition of Ravana, Bhimasura and others. It is said that Bhimasura was suddenly born out of the sweat of Shiva as the god was dancing and Vasu's appearance in Haigudi is equally sudden.

The Man-Ratha of Haigudi at the same time is an allegory whose each character and every incident stands for something supernatural. As a whole the whole story in the reconstruction of the myth of Bhimasura, in the puzawai tradition, it can be even called Vasapurana. The trouble with, Matraj (Shiva) is that he was not able to say 'no' to anyone that got him into complications with everyone (p.149) as Lord Shiva knew only to give boons and land in trouble. Matraj gives his bent in the upstairs of his printing press to Vasu as Shiva blessed Bhimasura with the boon of burning anybody by touching on the head (upstairs). Matraj prays to Vishnu to save the elephant and the men and women from Vasu. Shiva sought the help of Vishnu to save him and the humanity from Bhimasura. Vishnu became Rakini to destroy Bhimasura. Doug (Fanganath - Vishnu) unknowingly kills Vasu by not harming Vasu while he asleep and thereby allowing the monkeys, the
death to sit on his forehead, Mahisasura burns himself by keeping his hand on his head and Vasu kills himself by banging his palm on his forehead. Shiva falls in love with Mohini and Natraj develops a temporary weakness towards the sex appeal of Bangi... and the parallel can continue like this.

The message this tradition brings eclipse is a temporary phenomenon and it will vanish and sun will shine.
NOTES AND REFERENCES

2. Ibid., pp.122-123.
   Also see : Brijana Kacker's 'Face-to-Face' interview with R.K. Narayan in Prose India, September 1962.
12. All interview on September 6, 1961, published in Writers Workshop Miscellany No.5, 1961, p.50.