Chapter I

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Every novel of Narayan is structured around a hero, who partly because of his obsession with self and partly because of an emotionally inflammable romantic situation gets increasingly alienated from his traditional community. Thus starts a process that brings him anxiety, isolation and sometimes even degradation. The process comes to a comic consoling end with the hero’s tame, willing submission to the will of the community. (Dev, “R. K. Narayan: Artist of the Ludicrous”)

Like the people of the real world, R. K. Narayan’s fictional personas too undergo the dialectic of being and becoming and it has various implications for them. As every conflict or dichotomy brings some change in both matter, in physical form, and mind, in psychological form, so it brings great psychological and spiritual changes in the life of his characters, and “embarks them upon the process of individuation”.¹ Individuation, in the words of C.G. Jung, can be defined as “a psychological growing up, the process of discovering those aspects of one’s self that make one an individual different from other members of the species. It is essentially a process of recognition…” (qtd. in Guerin 180). During this process, they either follow and consolidate the traditions and behaviour pattern of the society in which they live or they move on with their own set of principles and by doing so act against the social norms. D.W. Harding has observed in his insightful psychological treatise Social Psychology and Individual Values:

¹ Footnote: Individuation is a concept in analytical psychology that describes an individual’s self-discovery and self-acceptance.
Every action and thought which we reveal has social significance: in some degree, however slight, it sanctions or challenges the behaviour and judgements of others in our group. It imperceptibly confirms existing usages by conforming, or it questions them by deviating from what is established. (113)

In the course of present study, it is observed that dialectic of being and becoming has three types of implications for the characters of R. K. Narayan. During the process of individuation many of Narayan’s protagonists become, what in sociological terms is called as, deviants. The International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences defines the word deviant in the following way, "Deviant is a behaviour that violates the normative rules, understanding, or expectations of social systems". These deviants feel so much engrossed with their becoming that they lose all contact with the being. In the mad pursuit of their inner individual desires, they act against the traditional norms of Malgudi society. These deviant characters include Sampath and Ravi (Mr. Sampath), Vasu (The Man-Eater of Malgudi), Mali (The Vendor of Sweets), Daisy (The Painter of Signs), Rann (Talkative Man) and Tim (The World of Nagaraj). They work out their various schemes; pursue their grandiose ambitions in the orthodox, tradition-bound Malgudi society. Their chief aim and purpose in life is to gratify their senses by enjoying carnal pleasures. Religion and morality is as good as non-existent for them. These people forget all that is spiritual and celestial; for them life is in nothing else, but in the fulfillment of their individual urges and vaulting ambitions. In their attempt to fulfill the carnal desires of their life they neglect all the moral and social norms and the result is utter chaos and restlessness in their lives and the society they live in. They fail to get any insight and have no vision of life.
These deviants, when they move ahead on the path of becoming a social participant, feel so much fascinated by the materialistic and sensual things of this world that they lose their inborn simplicity and naiveté and move on with their own desires and obsessions. They are held captive by the illusions of this materialistic world and the screen of their mind gets clouded. They feel deluded by, what in spiritual terms is called as, Maya. It is also mentioned in the Upanishads:

They live and move in the Ignorance and go round and round,
battered and stumbling, like blind men led by one who is blind.

(qtd. in Life Divine 596)

They start accumulating various layers of worldliness on their being which takes them away from their true self. The pure being, as a result of these layers or illusions, is clothed in a series of “envelopes”, koshas in the Vedantic language, and gets distanced from the true self. The five envelopes or koshas of individual given in the Vedanta are:

1. Annamaya kosha- Physical body sustaining on food.
2. Pranmaya kosha- The vital body sustaining on pran, vital breath.
3. Manomaya kosha- Intellectual or mental Consciousness.
4. Vigyanmaya kosha- Transcendental wisdom or knowledge envelope.
5. Anandmaya kosha- Divine bliss accruing from knowledge of God or Brahman.

All these envelopes or koshas occupy the human mind at different times and blur his vision, and rarely allow him to think of higher things. They, as a result of these envelopes or illusions, start living in their own world where their animal desires and instincts rule the day with no sign of moral or social restraint.

The second category of characters in R. K. Narayan’s fictional world is made of persons like the old man in Mr. Sampath, Jagan in The Vendor of Sweets, Raman in
The Painter of Signs, Madhu in Talkative Man and Nagaraj in The World of Nagaraj who, though fulfill their social and moral roles, become odd and eccentric in their views and thoughts. These characters are having their own incongruities and absurdities of character which arise from a certain schism in their personality resulting from the difference of their becoming from their being. This happens when these characters move ahead on the path of becoming a social member and face an internal conflict between their social roles and their individual aspirations. Their efforts to follow and fulfill their personal desires and inner urges are thwarted by the social norms. So these inner urges and desires form a sleeping volcano which, though not allowed to flow, keeps on smoldering inside their heart and mind. When these inner urges remain incomplete and unfulfilled, they work inside their psyche and bring about great mental turmoil which makes them act in a peculiar manner which is largely odd and eccentric. As a result of these peculiarities and oddities, these characters, though follow the social norms in the form of customs and traditions, but behave in a weird and abnormal manner. The oddities and incongruities of their character become a source of great humour and laughter in the novels and stories of R. K. Narayan.

The third category consists of characters who, during the journey of their life, gain spiritual insight and are transformed into a new being showing that their former self has died away and a new personality has been born. In psychology it is termed as “the Rebirth Archetype” which symbolizes the birth of a transformed being. These characters get this transformation right in the middle of this world and while playing their social, individual and spiritual roles as in the case of Raju (The Guide), Jagan (The Vendor of Sweets) and Raja (A Tiger for Malgudi). This transformation results when they move ahead on the path of becoming and follow their own individual
aspirations and desires. The mad pursuit of their own ambitions and desires in the form of becoming and the inner voice of their being pushes them in a state of social and psychological dialectic. Their mind feels puzzled and ultimately recourses to the spiritual side of their self which eventually brings certain transformation in them.

It is worth-pointing here that the transformation cannot take place in utter isolation and without transcending the physical world. A fully transformed man is one who has lived life to its fullest. “In order to be a man, one must first refuse to be God” (qtd. in Doubrovsky 76), observed Camus in The Rebel. So an ascetic who has had no experience of the social world cannot be said to be fully transformed. A perfect blend of both social and spiritual life is what is required for any real illumination. Shashiprabha Kumar has observed in this regard:

… any individual progress cannot take place in isolation, rather it is to be achieved while living its interaction with other beings, human as well as non-human. It is also a psychologically proven fact that no human being can develop to the fullest potential unless there is co-existence, coherence and co-ordination in his individual efforts and social set-up. Any approach toward life which is not integral or unitive and which divides or separates life of the individual and society into compartments, is likely to be ineffective. (7)

Sri Aurobindo’s idea of transformation also inculcates and endorses this belief. Aurobindo believes that evolution goes on with ascending and descending order of movement. At first the spirit descends into matter; then the matter evolves into life. There can be no ascent of world to the spirit until and unless the spirit descends into the world. The descent of spirit into matter, as Sri Aurobindo feels, causes the emergence of matter into life and by the descent of spirit into life, life evolves into
mind. This process continues till the reach of supermind and ultimately the “Sachchidananda”. S.K. Maitra observes this about Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy of descending and ascending order:

In fact, without the descent of the spirit into the world, there cannot be any ascent of the world into the Spirit. To the extent to which the spirit has descended into the world, to that very extent is it possible for the world to ascend in the spirit. There is a descent of the spirit into life, and that is why matter seeks to evolve into some higher than Matter-Life. There is descent of the spirit into life, and that is why Life seeks to rise to something higher than its self-Mind. Similarly, there is a descent of the spirit into Mind, and Mind must therefore move towards its source by ascending to something higher than itself- supermind.

The ascending process does not stop with the Supermind but continues till the Absolute spirit or Sachchidananda is reached. (3)

The descending and ascending processes are respectively known as involution and evolution in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo. In the process of creation, everywhere evolution is conditioned by involution. The evolution of matter takes place because the spirit involves into matter and matter possessed of spirit emerges into the higher grade of life. The order of ascent goes in series and passes through different stages. The descending order takes its direction in the following manner: Existence, Consciousness, Force, Bliss, Supermind, Mind, Psyche, Life, Matter. In the case of evolution the ascending order goes in reverse manner. Thus, in Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy, as Sheojee Pandey observes, “Matter is the first (nethermost) stage and spirit is the last or the summit of evolutionary process” (84). The components or the stages of involution and evolution are categorized as lower and higher hemispheres.
The higher hemisphere includes Existence, Consciousness, Force, Bliss, and Supermind, whereas the lower hemisphere includes Mind, Psyche, Life, Matter. Aurobindo calls evolution as inevitable and observes:

This inevitable evolution, first develops, as it is bound to develop, Matter and a material universe; in Matter, Life appears, and living physical beings; in life, Mind manifests and embodied thinking and loving beings; in mind, ever increasing its powers and activities in forms of Matter, the Supermind or Truth consciousness must appear, inevitably, by the very force, what is contained in the inconscience and the necessity in Nature to bring it into manifestation.

*(Life Divine 591-592)*

In more simplified words, it can be said that evolution is possible only when the individual descends into the matter of materialistic world. Then the spirit or being of the individual meddles with the Matter-Life of this world and from Matter-Life the being of the individual ascends or rises to the Spirit and then to Life or Supermind and then at the last stage of evolution it reaches the ‘Sachchidananda’. Thus, “Matter”, for Sri Aurobindo, “is the form of substance of being which the existence of Sachchidananda assumes when it subjects itself to this phenomenal action of its own consciousness and Force” *(Life Divine 242)*. So at the initial stage of one’s life, an individual lives at the lower hemisphere of his vital, but during the process of his evolution, or process of enlightenment, the individual rises to the higher vital. The philosophy of Sri Aurobindo can also be shot through the idea of dialectic. As in Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy of evolution the individual spirit descends to matter, so also the being merges with the matter in the form of sensual and materialistic pursuits of this universe and then ascends to the higher vital only when he realizes of the
uselessness of the materialistic life. At this stage he rises above sensual pleasures of life and starts thinking of the higher things. So dialectic is at the basis of Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy of evolution also as it results from mutual pulls and pushes of matter and spirit; mind and supermind; body and soul.

Thus, transformation takes place during an individual’s journey of life only when he partakes of both body and soul. It happens when he goes through certain pulls and pushes, both inner and outer, during his earthly journey and as a result of these pressures certain change comes in his personality. He is either transformed completely like Raju, Jagan and Raja, or changed into an ego-centric or anti-social being with a strong element of deviation like Sampath, Mali, Vasu and Rann whose vision is selfish, materialistic and mundane. The following statement of D. W. Harding subtly depicts the colours of R. K. Narayan’s characterization and tells that his novels deal with

the development of the social individual, the being who could realize virtually none of his possibilities without the elicitations offered by a social group, but whose growth remains individual, sometimes going beyond it, sometimes taking directions that no member of the group has previously explored. (160)

Narayan’s characters represent the extremes of human behaviour, its glory and predicament. Some of his protagonists achieve the pinnacle of social and moral idealism as in the case of Raju and Raja and sometimes they fall into the bottomless pit of meanness and carnality as in the case of Sampath, Mali, Vasu and Rann. Thus, R. K. Narayan’s fictional world is a gallery where we see variety of characters thronging the corridors of his novels and stories.
R. K. Narayan’s characters can be seen in the light of Vedanta philosophy also, according to which the beings in their different states of manifestation participate in the three gunas in different degrees and so to speak, in indefinitely varying proportions. These gunas are not states but conditions of universal existence to which all manifested beings are subjected. In Vedanta philosophy:

The three gunas are: Sattva, conformity to the pure essence of Being (Sat), which is identified with intelligible light or knowledge and is represented as an upward tendency; Rajas, the expansive impulse, in accordance of which the being develops in a given state ... and lastly, Tamas, obscurity, assimilated with ignorance, and represented as a downward tendency. (qtd. in Guenon 52)

The character and personality of human being is formed by the assimilation of these three qualities: sattva, rajas and tamas (purity, virility and dullness). From the individual point of view, each human being is a mixture of these gunas and has to evolve from tamas, through rajas to sattva and beyond, because the goal of spiritual evolution is nothing else, but the transcendence of these three gunas. Sattva is conformity to the pure essence of being (Sat), which is identified with intelligible light or knowledge and is represented as an upward tendency. Rajas is an expansive impulse, in accordance with which the being develops itself in a given state. Tamas represents man’s involvement in materialistic pursuits assimilated with ignorance and represented as a downward tendency. A person while being caught in the web of materialistic (tamsic) things does not see things in the light of spirituality: the screen of his mind is misted and he weighs everything with money or materialism as seen in the case of R. K. Narayan’s deviants. William Wordsworth has lamented at this aspect of life in his poetry.
The world is too much with us, late and soon;
Getting and spending, we lay waste out powers,
Little we see in nature that is ours.

("World Is Too Much With Us" 122)

A person of *tamsic* nature always keeps himself busy in the sensual pleasures of life and cares little about the pleasure of soul. Such persons are Epicurean in their senseless pursuit of sensual pleasures. They, in the words of W.B. Yeats, are “caught in the sensual music” (“Sailing to Byzantium” 104) of fish and flesh and do not pay any heed to their spiritual being.

The people of *sattvic* tendency like R. K. Narayan’s transformed characters are more concerned about spirituality and the sensual pleasures of life do not waver their heart. They lead a life of asceticism and become what Swami Vivekananda terms as true *Rishis*. A person who attains such a state rises above his individuality and merges himself with the universal or the divine being. Such a person achieves what Sri Aurobindo called, “The Transcendental reality, knowing which all else seems unreal. The immobile and eternal silence, the ineffable peace, the absolute Existence beyond all possibility of relation of feature, of differentiation. The one that really is” (*Aim of Life* 171). This realization or knowledge of this supreme truth of the world brings down all other barriers and differences of faith and creed, religion and breed and just one thing reigns and that is the oneness of each and everything.

Name and form also come to an end (as limiting conditions of the being); and, being “undivided”, without the parts or members therefore which composed the earthly form, he is set free from the conditions of individual existence (as well as from all conditions applying to a special and determined state of existence of any sort, even a supra-
individual state, since the being is henceforth in the absolutely unconditioned principal state). (Guenon 139)

Such an individual recognizes the value of, what Jiddu Krishnamurthy terms as, “what is”. He rises to a state of bliss and loses his own individual self and identifies himself with the universal being:

Once it (Sattvic stage) has been achieved there is in fact no longer any “living soul” distinct from the Self, since the being is from that moment quit of the individual condition; that distinction, which never existed save in illusory mode (the illusion being inherent in the condition itself), ceases for the being from the moment it attains absolute reality; the individuality disappears together with all limiting and contingent determinations, and the Personality alone remains in its fullness, containing all its possibilities in their permanent, unmanifested state principally within itself. (Guenon 151)

Narayan’s protagonists too touch such spiritual heights as in the case of Raju and Raja which will be amplified in the chapter under the title “Characters Seeking Transformation”.

Sigmund Freud’s concept of Id, Ego and Superego delineated in “The Anatomy of the Mental Personality” can aptly be used and applied for the characters of R. K. Narayan. His characters either come under the dominance of Id as in the case of social and moral deviants, or the dominance of Ego, i.e. the normative members, or they come under the category of Superego, i.e. the odd and eccentric characters who are self destructive, like persons under the dominance of Superego. So whatever is said of Freud’s psychic personas is true of Narayan’s protagonists as well. Of Id Freud has said,
The id blindly obeys the pleasure principle. It knows no values, no right or wrong, no moral standards, no considerations for other people. It is a ‘cauldron of seething excitement’ [with] no organization and no unified will, only an impulsion to obtain satisfaction for the instinctual needs, in accordance with the pleasure principle.

(qtd. in Wolman 244)

This is true of R. K. Narayan’s deviants also who are ruled by the pleasure principle. Like his deviants “id knows no values, no good or evil, no morality” (Freud 104-105). Thus Id, in short, is the source of all our aggressions and desires. As Freud observes,

It is lawless, asocial, and amoral. Its function is to gratify our instincts for pleasure without regard for social conventions, legal ethics, or moral restraint. Unchecked, it would lead us to any lengths - to destruction and even self-destruction - to satisfy its impulses for pleasure. Safety for the self and others does not lie within the province of the id; its concern is purely for instinctual gratification, heedless of consequence. (qtd. in Guerin 130)

Narayan’s deviants like Sampath, Mali, Vasu and Rann work on these lines and remain in the complete hold of their Id and do not think of anything else.

The normative characters of R. K. Narayan remain under the influence of Freudian ego as they follow the rationalization principle and their carnal desires are not untamed like the deviants’. They live a life of peacefulness and perfect adjustability in the social world of Malgudi. As Freud points out. “In popular language, we may say that the ego stands for reason and circumspection, while the id is governed solely by the pleasure principle, the ego is governed by the reality principle” (qtd. in Guerin 130). Some of his characters lead a life of balance where
there is a perfect equilibrium of inhibitions and fulfillment. They fulfill their personal ambitions and desires, but within certain limitations which are prescribed by society. They lead a balanced life which is a blend of both desires and restrictions. It is also observed by Aldous Huxley, “Harmonious living is a matter of tact and sensitiveness, of judgement and balance and incessant adjustment, of being well bred and aristocratically moral by habit and instinct” (qtd. in Atkins 31).

Freud believed that Superego is the representative of all moral restrictions, the advocate of the impulse toward perfection or the ‘higher’ things of life. The superego serves to repress or inhibit the drives of the Id, to block off and thrust back into the unconscious those impulses toward pleasure that the society regards unacceptable, such as overt aggression, sexual passions etc. Whereas the Id is dominated by the pleasure principle and Ego by the reality principle, the Superego is dominated by the morality principle. We may say that if Id would make us devils, the Superego would make us behave like angels. This is true of the transformed characters of R. K. Narayan who lead a life of austerity and strict spiritual discipline. But this Superego may also lead to oddities and eccentricities of character. And this happens when “the thwarted aggressiveness (of a super-egoist) becomes internalized and stored in the superego, where it may turn against one’s own person in acts of self-destructiveness” (Wolman 271). In such a situation, it leads to a split or schism in the personality of the individual and eventually his odd and awkward behaviour as also in the case of odd and eccentric characters of R. K. Narayan.

Many of the protagonists and characters of R. K. Narayan, who are ordinary men and women, move out of their ordinariness and become deviants in their quest to make life more pleasurable or adventurous. They passionately cling to a life that time and again betrays and batters them. R K. Narayan’s novels represent tiny worlds
where the Lilliputian men and women are shown with their dreams and sufferings; where one finds untiring limping across the boundaries of life with the beauty and bruises of existence. His Malgudi represents the typical Indian society where traditions and customs rule the day, but it is jolted out of its cozy womb of peace and is flung into turmoil with the entrance of one or the other deviant who mostly belongs to the third generation of characters and does “an encroachment upon the foundations of faith” (M. R. Anand) by his ways and manners. Prabhjot Singh, in “Hero as Deviant in the Novels of R. K. Narayan”, also finds that Narayan’s novels generally web around social deviants. These deviants fail to carry the burden of old customs and traditions and struggle to “extricate himself from the habitual, dreamy automation of his past” (Walsh, “Sweet Mangoes and Malt Vinegar” 126). They exist in the state of “ritual bondage” (Frye 168) and rebel against all social and moral constrictions which seek to thwart their freedom. By their violent actions and selfish behaviour, they disturb the quiet waters of Malgudi life. They are insulated by their social set-up and, as seen in the case of many characters, are brought back to the orbit of social equilibrium.

These deviants come under the influence of western culture and try to leap-frog into a new age of materialism and modernism without considering that no one can become modern overnight, and only by adopting the foreign traditions and culture without their assimilation with their real-self. They become only pastiche beings who, in their hurry to adopt the foreign culture, are uprooted from their own traditional culture and are unable to adjust and assimilate in the adopted foreign culture. As a result they appear shallow and frivolous having no depth or realization of any culture. Their so-called modernization is skin deep and results in their moral and social
degeneration. Gordon A. Fellman has rightly observed about the process of modernization of both an individual and society,

A nation wishing to find and make a modern self must root its newer sense of self in yesterday together with today, to signify the searching, hope-filled now as continuous with the dignity of the real and legendary then. A society does not modernize at will. Like a person deliberately seeking to change, a nation must get newness from the materials of its history, not just from elements introduced from outside.

(246-247)

Most of the characters of third generation in Narayan’s fictional world are of materialistic vision. They are worldly through and through and their only concern in life is to fulfill their animal instincts and carnal desires. While moving ahead on the path of becoming, they feel captivated by the showiness of the materialistic world. They become subject to ‘Maya’, illusion of this world, and do not pay any heed to the moral and social norms. Our Upanishads have also called this world to be a Maya, an illusion created by the Supreme. As is mentioned in Swetaswatara Upanishad:

The Master of Maya creates this world by his Maya and within it is confined another; one should know his Maya as Nature and the Master of Maya as the great Lord of all. (IV. 9, 10)

R. K. Narayan’s deviants feel inclined towards the sensual and materialistic pleasures of life during the process of their becoming. It is a fact that the human heart pursues the pleasure principle and finds this pleasure in the fulfillment of sensual desires and individual ambitions and in this process neglects the real delight which lies in spiritualism.
It is the desire-soul that by its wrong reception of life becomes the cause of a triple misinterpretation of the rasa, the delight in things, so that, instead of figuring the pure essential joy of being, it comes rendered unequally into the three terms of pleasure, pain and indifference. (Sri Aurobindo, *Life Divine* 222)

R. K. Narayan’s deviants come under the influence of this ‘Maya’ and are driven by their instincts and desires and do whatever comes in their heart. In the fulfillment of their vaulting ambitions and animal desires they do all inhuman deeds. And in this way, they act against society and social norms and do not feel for the sentiments of others. They brush aside the whole value system of society and form their own system which is ruled by the pleasure principle. But any such system which does not muster up the sanction of the larger group is not approved by the society and is considered a form of or an act of deviation. D. W. Harding has given a psychological insight into a social value system in the following words:

A fully satisfactory social context for their activities includes for the most people the opportunity of face-to-face contact with others whom they know and like, a recognized function in their group, and a sense of having the sanction of companions for a wide range of their individual values. (57)

By ‘values’, it is hereby meant the desires and preferences of the individual which sometimes come in conflict with the desires and preferences of others in the social set-up. The individual follows his own value system in the form of his desires and instincts, but the society sanctions only those values which are in the larger interest of people.
So these deviants follow their own whims and fancies and do not pay any heed to the feelings of others. They feel no qualms of conscience while pursuing their mad desires and wild instincts. They wallow in the quagmire of worldly pursuits and desire and cut loose from their mooring and wander aimlessly on the murky waters of life without any spiritual insight or vision of life. They do not listen to what the other members of family and society say and follow their own path of becoming, and the other members of family or society suffer because of them. But these deviants are not accepted by the Malgudi society as they, by their deeds and actions, openly challenge its value system. They may be “tolerated for a while by the society or by the gods but must inevitably erode” (Hemenway 25), as in the case of Sampath and Ravi in Mr. Sampath, Mali in The Vendor of Sweets, Vasu in The Man-Eater of Malgudi and Rann in Talkative Man. The society tries to ostracize them or considers them abnormal so that it may save itself from their evil effects. D. W. Harding observes in this regard,

Bad conduct or foolishness of opinion, if it were tolerated, would tend to lower our standards. And to protect them we bring to bear on the offender various social pressures such as pleading, dissuasion, ridicule, withdrawal of respect and liking, or perhaps material punishment.

(113)

But in some cases no social restriction is applied on them as it is felt that nothing can bring any change in them, so the best considered way is social insulation considering them abnormal and crank (as done in the case of Vasu in The Man-Eater of Malgudi). As Harding remarks,

…we do as we would lock up a dangerous bull or confine the waters of a flooding river; our aim is only self-protection by material means. We have no hope that social pressure or punishment can in this case bring
the offender to seek a more satisfactory social relationship with us by modifying his behaviour. What we essentially do by the judgement of abnormality is to insulate the social group from the effects of the offender’s example. (113)

In such cases the society feels helpless and does not make any effort to mend the ways and manners of the deviant; but tries to save itself and the people around from his evil impacts. So, instead of being aggressive, it becomes defensive.

The present chapter deals with such deviants of R. K. Narayan’s select novels. The title assigned to this chapter is “‘Do What You Will’ Characters”. This term or concept has been taken from Aldous Huxley. What he means by this observation is that when one reaches a certain level of adaptation and at a certain place in society and culture, he has to shift his orientation to realising himself and behaving in the way he deems fit keeping in view the social restrictions and taboos. If a person does what he likes without taking any account of his responsibilities or roles in society, becomes a source of trouble for others and remains adamant even after all pressures and restrictions, the society insulates him and starts telling him to “do what you will”.

R. K. Narayan’s deviants also do not pay any heed to the social and moral norms and they ‘do what they will’. They represent “those terrible innocents who shock society by not accepting the rules of its game” (qtd. in Sartre, “An Explication of The Stranger” 111). These characters from the select novels of R. K. Narayan are taken up for discussion and analysis one by one in the next part of the present chapter, but without following the chronological order of novels.

Taking up such representative characters from the select novels of R. K. Narayan, comes the character of Sampath from Mr. Sampath (American title The Printer of Malgudi). Mr. Sampath is one of the most delightful earlier novels of R. K.
It moves around three main characters—Sampath, Srinivas and Ravi. But among these three characters the central pivot is Sampath, the printer, and the novel is named after him, though we come to know of his name on the sixty-seventh page of the novel. All the characters of this novel are a study in the dialectical tension which gives these characters a peculiar nature and temperament and individuality. Mr. Sampath is a delightful story of the rise and fall of a confident “upstart” (“Upstartism” 200), a term used by R. K. Narayan himself for the deviants in his novels.

Sampath is a genial printer who is an ‘optimist in life’ and believes in ‘keeping people happy’. He has a wife and five children. He is a pragmatist, more an opportunist and a trickster who tries to make the best use of every opportunity. He is a self-seeker who uses others and can dupe anyone in pursuit of his aim and desire. C. P. Sharma observes of Sampath:

He is a knave, a liar who never loses his self-confidence. He is, as it were, born with an ability to defy the accepted norms and customs. Unlike Srinivas he is neither puzzled by moral considerations nor by pricks of conscience. (67)

Sampath determines his relations with others and even with his own wife according to the convenience and expediency of his own. The couple lives mechanically without any human understanding and mutual attachment. He performs the social roles of a husband, a father and a social participant but without any real conviction. He has a keen desire to win name and fame in society and for this he helps whoever comes to him. He says to Srinivas on his first meeting with him, “There are no strangers for Sampath” (67). Further he says, “Customers are God’s messengers, in my humble opinion. If I serve them aright I make money in this world and also acquire merit for the next” (68). Because of this nature of him, he gets ready to print
the weekly of Srinivas, the journalist. Sampath is a strange fellow and is weird in his character and behaviour. For example, he does not want that somebody should enter into his press and he does not give any hint of the number of workers he is having in his press, but always calls them as many. Whenever Srinivas offers to help him in his work by entering into his press, he brushes aside his offer at once and considers it an act of intrusion which he does not like at all.

Sampath is largely under the influence of, what Freud terms as, Id. All his actions are motivated by his over-developed ‘libido’, a term used by Freud for the sexual energy in man. Libido, according to Freud, “is a prime psychic force” (qtd. in Guerin 128). So, an over-developed libido makes Sampath sensual and worldly in his outlook and behaviour. It makes him act against the social norms through his ways and manners. When his press is locked, Sampath makes foolish plans of making a film and engages many people in his nonsensical idea. He selects Shanti, the glamorous widow from Madras, as the heroine of the film and falls in love with her. He does not care for the moral and ethical norms of society to which the people like Srinivas are attached. He is already married and has five children, but he is not ready to bother for them either. He does not care for anyone and runs after Shanti and plans to marry her. He is already married, but still decides to marry Shanti. He says, “Religion permits us to marry many wives” (180). He is ruled and driven by the ‘pleasure principle’ and does not give way to reason and commonsense. Lust has made him blind and he fails to see reason in things. He throws all social norms to the winds and does what he likes. This is how he rationalizes his scant respect for the sanctity of marriage and other social institutions:

Some people say that every sane man needs two wives- a perfect one for the house and a perfect one outside for social life… I have the one.
Why not the other? I have confidence that I will keep both of them happy. (179)

He becomes so shameless in the pursuit of his animal instincts and carnal desires that he is ready to keep both his wife and his beloved in separate houses. He does not feel the pricks of conscience while doing such a heinous deed, nor does he feel the albatross of guilt hanging around his neck. He seems to have lost all sense of shame and guilt. He wonders, “Is a man’s heart so narrow that it can not accommodate more than one? I have married according to Vedic rites: let me have one according to the civil marriage law…” (179). He throws all social customs and traditions to the winds and follows only his instincts. He craves for Shanti whom he has introduced to everyone as his cousin-sister. When Srinivas tries to make some sense out of him, he declares in the same state of shamelessness:

Here goes my solemn declaration that my wife and children shall lack nothing in life, either in affection or comfort. Will this satisfy you? If I buy Shanti a car my wife shall have another; if I give her a house I will give the other also a house; it will really be a little expensive duplicating everything this way, but I won’t mind it. (180)

He lives in, what Sri Aurobindo terms as, the ‘lower vital’ of his self which is made of individual urges and carnal desires. In the pursuit of his evil desires and in his lust for wealth and woman he has become oblivious of all his obligations towards his wife and children. His bemused and bewitched eyes fail to notice anything, but his own-self and his beloved Shanti for whom he seems mad.

When Sampath comes to know that Ravi is also after Shanti, he loses his control and asks Srinivas to tell him to remain away from her life as he does not want anyone to come between him and Shanti. He seems to have gone crazy for her. Later
in the novel, he takes Shanti to the Mempi hills to persuade her for marriage, but on their way back she runs away from him and goes back to Madras from where she had come, leaving her child behind. She warns Sampath not to follow her as she has become fed up with the life she has spent with him in the film studio. She declares in her note written to Sampath:

I am sick of this kind of life and marriage frightens me. I want to go and look after my son, who is growing up with strangers. Please leave me alone, and don’t look for me. I want to change my ways of living. You will not find me. If I find you pursuing me, I will shave off my head and fling away my jewellery and wear a white saree. You and people like you will run away at the sight of me. I am, after all, a widow and can shave my head and disfigure myself, if I like.... I had different ideas of a film life. (218)

At last, Sampath returns back to Malgudi disheartened and Srinivas, the narrator leaves him to his own fate.

Thus, Sampath is a study in the dialectical conflict of being and becoming. He loses his inner being in this process of becoming when he madly pursues his own carnal ambitions and animalistic urges and in this pursuit turns out to be a social and moral deviant. Thus, he is “the typical product of the amoral civilization of the modern age” (Krishna Rao 80). He deviates from all codes of social and ethical conduct and pays no heed to his responsibilities towards his family and society he lives in. The feelings and sentiments of others seem to have lost all sense for him and he feels crazy for Shanti. He excels in the art of opportunism and uses everyone for his own evil ends. This is what the novelist himself observes of him:
He is one who generally feels, “all the world owes me a living.” The world outside has no meaning for him except as a store house of opportunities... (Narayan, “Upstartism” 151)

Thus, the dialectic of being and becoming does not help him in rising from the lower vital to the higher vital; it rather is instrumental in his social and moral degeneration. He remains under the complete hold of ‘Id’ and his ‘Ego’, which is “the rational governing agent of psyche” (Guerin 131) and ‘Superego’, which is “the moral censoring agency, the repository of conscience and pride” (131), fail to keep a check on his behaviour and actions.

Another character in this novel who becomes a social deviant in the pursuit of his animal instincts and carnal desires is Ravi. He is the only son of his parents and is the sole bread-winner who has to take care of his old parents and three younger sisters. But he does not fulfill his family responsibilities and runs after an unnamed and unidentified girl. He discloses to Srinivas that he is madly in love with a girl whom he had seen in the temple for once or twice. He requests Srinivas to help him search that girl for him as he seems to have gone crazy for her like Sampath did for Shanti. He tells that he can not live without her. He becomes so mad after that unknown girl that he is unable to divert his attention from her.

Ravi has many family responsibilities on his shoulders, but he does not feel concerned for them. He appears to be in a state of frenzy and is dominated by the idea of that girl. He works in an insurance company as the assistant of a European boss who scolds and rebukes him at every small mistake and is ultimately fired from the job. His mind centers round the idea of that unknown girl. But his love is not pure, it is dross. When he fails to find that girl, he gets frustrated and is unable to get normalcy in life. His life seems to have been thrown topsy-turvy by the thought of
that girl and he is unable to find peace either with his own-self or with the world he lives in. Srinivas is deeply aggrieved to see him in such a state of pain and suffering. But none can help Ravi in this state as he does not want to be helped. In this situation of utter hopelessness Srinivas asks Ravi:

Like Shiva, open your third eye and burn up love, so that all its grossness and contrary elements are cleared away and only its essence remains: that is the way to attain peace, my boy. I don’t know how long you are going to suffer in this manner; you have to pull yourself together. (103)

But Ravi is not able to rid himself of the idea of that girl. Because of his attitude of this, he cannot perform his social and moral duties and proves to be a great threat to his society.

Ravi has a whole family to take care and feed, but he does not find anyone for whom he has to work. Life is so dull and meaningless to him that he wonders: “Why should I work and I earn for whom? For whose benefit? Why can I be not allowed to perish as I am” (119)? For him the world has shrunk to his own-self and to that unknown girl whom he crazily loves. He has no love towards his younger sisters nor has he any regard for his aged parents. He is completely self-centered and finds that the world has ended for him. Srinivas employs him at the film project with the help of Sampath when he loses his job, but there also he is unable to perform his duties. All the time he hankers after Shanti, the heroine of the film who resembles his unknown beloved very closely. He cannot keep himself away from the thought of Shanti and is frequently seen by the people at the studio following her. He becomes quite conspicuous to all those present at the film studio. Even Sampath comes to know of this fact and makes a request to Srinivas to advise and dissuade him from roaming
unnecessarily here and there. But even Srinivas feels afraid of cautioning Ravi as he seems to be in the complete hold of his animal desires in the form of his overdeveloped libido. As Srinivas tells himself, “A man who followed his instincts so much could not be given a detailed agenda of behaviour” (160).

Ravi can not shake himself free of the idea of that unknown girl whom he now finds in the heroine of the film, Shanti. He seems to be mad after her and this madness eclipses his sense of judgement and makes him unable to judge right and wrong. He does not find any interest in his work of accounts and wishes to be employed at the studio so that he may get glimpses of his beloved every now and then. The following statement of his reveals his craziness for Shanti:

I will not do these accounts any more. I can’t. I hate those ledgers. I want to work in the studio now- in the art department. … Otherwise, I don’t want this job at all. I will throw up everything and sit at the studio gate (to watch Shanti). That will be enough for me. (152)

The world seems to have lost its existence for him and that girl appears all in all. But she refuses to have any association with him and feels afraid of his animalistic behaviour. At last, he feels so much engrossed in his passion for that girl that he can not control himself and tries to molest her. As under the influence of some spirit, he rushes towards Shanti and carries her to glut his repressed passion. He behaves like a wild beast at the sets of the film and is unable to be tamed by anyone including Srinivas. He creates a great havoc at the studio and destroys everything. He is sent to jail for his animalistic act, throwing his family into a state of hunger and starvation. He gets swayed by his evil instincts and desires, and does all inhuman deeds in the name of becoming.
Thus, Ravi too is a social deviant, an abnormal fellow who is torn between his individual aspirations and his social obligations. But he neglects his social and moral responsibilities totally and gives prime importance to his own carnal desires and wishes and remains under the complete hold of them. The feelings and sensibilities of his poor parents and the hopes and aspirations of his little sisters fail to move or drive any sense in him. He fails to perform his social and moral roles, and becomes a social deviant. His infatuation and craziness for Shanti blurs his vision and makes him unable to see through the real nature of things. He remains an abnormal character as he is far from the normal code of conduct. He creates great trouble in the social milieu of Malgudi and is left all alone at the end of the novel.

So both Sampath and Ravi turn out to be social and moral deviants in the course of the novel. They are the people of, what the Hindu philosophy terms as, \textit{tamsic} nature and live in the lower vital of self. Their character can be assessed and analysed in psychological terms also. They remain under the complete hold of ‘Id’ and their ‘Ego’ and ‘Superego’ fail to restrict or rationalize their behaviour and actions. Their craziness for Shanti, in Jungian terms, can be viewed as the call of Anima, the Devi, the female principle of one’s psyche. Anima is a factor or component, area or territory of one’s conscious and unconscious self which is counter to male ego. The syzygy of the anima and animus results in the individuation and transformation of one’s self. But anima can work in the opposite way also. It sometimes acts as the ‘seduction principle’ and becomes a pathological obsession obstructing one’s spiritual growth as seen in the case of both Sampath and Ravi. Jung has warned against this aspect of the unconscious self.

Every personification of the unconscious- the shadow, the anima, the animus, and the Self- has both a light and a dark aspect.... the anima
and animus have dual aspects: they can bring life-giving development and creativeness to the personality, or they can cause petrification and physical death. *(Man and His Symbols 234)*

So, anima as a seductive principle blurs the vision of both Ravi and Sampath and makes them unable to see the light of reason and commonsense.

Sampath is a trickster who uses others for his own benefit or profit. He becomes a spiritual disciple of the old landlord when he comes to know that he has a large property and can help him in producing his film. He goes to him for spiritual lessons and flatters him only to get money for his foolish plan. He does not have any genuine inclination for learning spiritual things or attending to some religious discourse. Ravi, on the other hand, is a straight-forward person who fights with his European boss for the rights of his colleagues and loses his job as a result of this. He is not a trickster like Sampath, though he follows his individual desires and evil instincts and becomes a social deviant like him in the process.

The character and behaviour of Vasu, the protagonist of R. K. Narayan’s *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*, is also the outcome of the dialectic of being and becoming. As the title of the novel suggests, it is the story of an unruly person named Vasu who is utterly devilish in his thinking and behaviour and knows no restraints. “He”, as William Walsh finds, “has a nihilistic and menacing air which becomes in the Indian context a force not negotiable on human terms” *(R. K. Narayan 137)*. He is devil who throws all moral and social norms to the winds and does all inhuman deeds. He is person who is driven by his own ambitions and carnal desires and in the pursuit of them he flouts all ethical and social norms. He is a live example of Freudian ‘Id’ in action or dominance which knows or sanctions no social, moral or ethical laws or
restrictions. He is a person of asuric tendency, a violent paranoiac who enjoys teasing and torturing, hurting and killing others for his own fun and laughter.

Vasu is a taxidermist by profession who kills and stuffs animals both for the sake of money and to fulfill his reckless devilish desires for hunting and killing animals. He is utterly heartless and cruel and does not hesitate in killing someone. For him killing someone, which to all God-fearing people appears very horrific, is quite an easy task. This is how he simplifies the act of killing someone. “There is nothing terrible in shooting. You pull your trigger and out goes the bullet, and at the other end there is an object waiting to receive it” (176). He is a ruthless fellow and loves to insult and bully others. He pays no heed to the sense and sensibilities of the fellow beings. He is a strong person and feels afraid of no one. As a result, he does whatever he likes and deviates from all spiritual moorings which provide sustenance and succour to a social set-up in times of difficulty. He throws the peaceful life of Malgudi out of gear at his very entrance. This is how the critics have observed of his nature and temperament, “Anarchy and unfriendliness are the two guiding principles of his life. With his overweening pride, wrath, harshness of speech, insatiable desire and cruelty, Vasu appears to be the harbinger of modern cult of terrorism in Malgudi” (C. P. Sharma 119). But at last he pays a price for such an attitude of him and kills himself leaving the Malgudi world to peace and poise.

The character of Vasu is a fine study in social and moral deviation. The dialectic of being and becoming is at the root of his character and it gives him a peculiar nature and temperament, and he turns out to be a dehumanized man. Such dehumanization occurs when an individual loses all his moorings and does inhuman deeds to fulfill his animal instincts and evil desires. Such a person does not have the least spiritual insight and floats aimlessly on the murky waters of life without any
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spiritual vision. Vasu, in the present novel, is an example of such a person. He feels so much engrossed with the process of his becoming that he loses all contact with his being, the natural and innocent self and, as a result, he becomes a deviant in all terms of the word. He is quite selfish and self-centered in his behaviour and dealing. For him the feelings and emotions of others have no value and are all worthless, not to be even mentioned of. The moment he storms into the peaceful world of Nataraj (the narrator and the printer in the novel) and Malgudi social milieu, it is thrown topsy-turvy. His presence disturbs the equipoise of the narrator’s life when he first comes to him for printing his visiting cards. He makes fun of his friends, the monosyllabic poet and the journalist. This is how the narrator tells of his bullying nature and reckless temperament,

Sometimes he (Vasu) just came and lounged in my parlour. My other visitors always tried to run away at the sight of him, for they found it difficult to cope with his bullying talk. The poet left if he saw him coming. Sen, the journalist, who was always loudly analyzing Nehru’s policies, could not stand him even for a minute. (28)

Vasu teases his friends with bitter comments and retorts and they, being passive and docile, humbly bow to his bullying ways. This is how Vasu teases the journalist and reacts to his comments on Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India, “‘If you feel superior to Nehru, why don’t you go to Delhi and take charge of the cabinet?’ and laughed contemptuously” (28).

Vasu is taxidermist and seems to be a devil who has come to Malgudi to play his evil game of hunting in the Mempi hills. The moment he storms into Malgudi, the simple and peaceful world of Malgudi is disturbed out of its cozy womb of traditionalism and spirituality. This is how he boasts of his purpose of coming to
Malgudi in front of Nataraj, “You think I have come here out of admiration for this miserable city? Know this, I’m here because of Mempi Forest and the jungles in those hills. I’m a taxidermist. I have to be where wild animals live” (18). He comes to Nataraj and offers to stay in his attic, and without waiting for his consent he starts living there. He is neither a guest nor a tenant of Nataraj as he does not pay any rent for his attic. He seems to be afraid of no one and does whatever he likes. He kills all kinds of animals and brings them to his attic to stuff them. His whole house seems to be crowded with the dead animals and their hide. As a result the building gives a foul smell because of which Nataraj is frequently enquired by his neighbours and is even objected to by them.

Vasu does not feel afraid even of the forest authorities and bullies their men. The whole town seems to be disturbed by him and his activities. He does not feel pricks of conscience while killing innocent animals and stuffing them. In fact, by doing so he tries to prove the superiority of human beings over the animals and nature. Vasu is having his own philosophy of life where there is no place for feelings and emotions, neither is there any scope for natural innocence and naivety. This is how he justifies his killing of the innocent animals, “After all, we are civilized human beings, educated and cultured and it is up to us to prove our superiority to nature. Science conquers nature in a new way each day; why not in creation also? That’s my philosophy...” (15). So by his evil actions he tries to show man’s superiority over nature and God. The ideas and deeds of Vasu force Nataraj to think, “This man had set himself as a rival to Nature and was carrying on a relentless fight” (64).

Vasu is a hedonist whose only concern in life is to find pleasure. He is thoroughly materialistic, selfish and scientific in his approach towards life. His purpose is only to make more and more money by killing more and more animals. He
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does not cherish any religious or ethical ideas or ideals and makes fun of the religious sentiments of others. He kills and stuffs an eagle, which in the eyes of Nataraj and other people of Malgudi, is a sacred bird. This is how he makes fun of the religiosity of the people,

I think there is a good business proposition here. I can supply them (religious people) stuffed eagles at about fifty rupees each. Everyone can keep a sacred garuda in the puja and I’ll guarantee that it won’t fly off. Thus they can save their eyes from glare. I want to be of service to our religious folk in my own way. (65)

Through Vasu R. K. Narayan seems to be telling about the disastrous effects of one’s materialistic and scientific outlook. “Through the portrayal of Vasu, Narayan intelligently hits at the horrible hazards of unconventional power of science and technology which can be a boon, if rightly assimilated, and a curse, if wrongly projected” (C. P. Sharma 121).

In his selfishness, Vasu becomes ruthless and does not cherish any feeling of pity for others. He starts his hunt even inside the Malgudi town and it results in the disappearance of many pet animals of the people known to Nataraj which, as Nataraj comes to know, are actually killed and stuffed by Vasu. Nataraj wonders, “Nothing seemed to touch him. No creature was safe, if it had the misfortune to catch his eye. I had made a mistake in entertaining him. I ought to send him away at the earliest possible moment” (65). This reckless hunting of poor animals by Vasu moves Nataraj very much because he had been brought up in a house where they were taught never to kill. The presence of Vasu and the smell of dead animals in his attic pushed Nataraj into an abnormal state of mind.
Nataraj has given his attic to Vasu out of sympathy when he first came to him. But Vasu becomes authoritarian and uses his attic for all sorts of nonsense and for keeping dead and stinking animals there. He behaves as if it is his own house and Nataraj has nothing to do with it. Nataraj is not bold enough to tell him to stop doing all that nonsense in his building. He believes, “Aggressive words only generate more aggressive words. Mahatma Gandhi had enjoined on us absolute non-violence in thought and speech, if for no better reason than to short-circuit violent speech and prevent it from propagating itself” (71). Because of this attitude of him, Nataraj finds himself in great trouble. He himself admits later in the novel, “The trouble with me was that I was not able to say ‘no’ to anyone and that got me into complications with everyone, from a temple prostitute to a taxidermist” (209).

Vasu is not only inhuman, he is also immoral. He brings all kinds of women to his attic in the night and Nataraj, the poor printer, becomes the laughing stock of his friends and family men. But he can not do any thing as he is afraid of Vasu and can not dare scold such a person. Vasu lives there without paying any rent, and settles as if it is his own house. When Nataraj asks him if he has made his arrangement for living, Vasu sends him summonses from the court in which Nataraj is held responsible for harassing his tenants. Nataraj feels shocked of this as he has not given his house on rent; he has not taken even a single penny for the attic given temporarily to Vasu. So, Nataraj, who has never seen a court, has to take the help of the ‘adjournment lawyer’ to get out of the trouble. Vasu has no feeling of gratefulness towards Nataraj; he, on the other contrary, cherishes a feeling of enmity towards him. But, Nataraj being a normative character of society feels uncomfortable of this enmity. As he himself narrates, “I could never be a successful enemy to anyone. Any enmity worried
But Vasu, on the other hand, is a reckless person and has no such social concerns.

Vasu is against all norms and values of society. He does not have any faith in social customs and institutions. For him marriage and other social institutions are completely meaningless and irrelevant. For him a wife and a prostitute are not different in any way; but are same, both of them being the objects of sexual pleasure. While the wife fulfills the sexual needs of one, the prostitute fulfills those of many people. So he does not feel any need of getting married and keeping a wife. This is how he advocates his philosophy of life:

Only fools marry, and they deserve all the trouble they get. I really do not know why people marry at all. If you like woman, have her by all means. You don’t have to own a coffee estate because you like to have a cup of coffee now and then. (41)

He does not believe in social obligations and roles which are played by an individual in social institutions. He is not only asocial and immoral; he is also an inhuman devil, a rakshasa. His nature and temperament suits the definition of a rakshasa which recognizes no heavenly or worldly laws. This is how Sastri, an employee of Nataraj defines rakshasa as a person like Vasu,

who possessed enormous strength, strange powers, and genius, but recognized no sort of restraints of man or God. . . . Every rakshasa gets swollen with his ego. He thinks he is invincible, beyond every law. But sooner or later something or other will destroy him. (96)

In his fiendish nature he forgets everything and plans to kill the temple elephant, Kumar, which has to lead a religious procession of a temple in the town. The Malgudians consider this elephant as a God’s messenger, but it does not make any
difference to him. He does not have any faith in God or spirituality. Poor Nataraj feels greatly embarrassed because he is placed in the witness box by the Malgudians including his friends for giving shelter to such a dehumanized person who, as Nataraj feels, has turned ‘man-eater’. He bursts into tears on thinking of all this. He feels, “This was the greatest act of destruction that the Man-eater had performed; he had destroyed my name, my friendships, and my world. The thought was too much for me. Hugging the tiger cub, I burst into tears” (240). So, the poor printer holds himself responsible for all this trouble. But he is helpless and is unable to do anything. In utter helplessness he prays to God,

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. (183)

Though Vasu does not receive any restraint and behaves like a demon, but a devil like Vasu, as inscribed in our scriptures, carries with him the seeds of his self-destruction. When a group of people, including the poet, the journalist and the Police Inspector, approach Vasu and try to dissuade him from killing the temple elephant, he bullies them all. He tells them, “A hundred of you will have to worry before you can catch me worried” (172). It appears as if he is afraid of “nothing on earth or in heaven or hell” (207). He justifies his plan of killing the temple elephant in the following words, “Has it occurred to you how much more an elephant is worth dead? You don’t have to feed it in the first place. I can make ten thousand out of the parts of this elephant” (174). He does not have any religious feeling for the temple elephant; nor does he listen to the urges of the people. On their persistence to save the temple animal he gets angry and frightens them of dire consequences. He breaks one leg of his bed in a fit of rage to demonstrate his power and even hurts the police inspector in
the process. Consequently, he has to sleep and spend his night in the chair because of his broken bed. In his sleep he is so much irritated and attacked by the mosquitoes that he, in a maddening fury, hits himself on his temple (forehead) and kills his ownself by trying to hit the insect he dreads most. Thus, Vasu, the demon deviant, is killed at his own hands because, as Sastri observes:

Every demon appears in the world with a special boon of indestructibility. Yet the universe has survived all the rakshasas (demons) that were ever born. Every demon carries with him, unknown to himself, a tiny seed of self-destruction, and goes up in the air at the most unexpected moment. Otherwise what is to happen to humanity?

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His strength and power to kill someone with just one blow of hand, which he has used in his life to terrify everyone in the town, proves fatal for his own-self, and he is found dead in his room, the next morning of the day of religious procession, leaving the Malgudi world in peace and equipoise once again.

Thus, Vasu, a born human, is dehumanized by his animalistic actions and deeds. He has his peculiar nature and temperament resulting from the dialectical tension when he loses all contact with his being, the moral self, and becomes an inhuman, fulfilling his own animal instincts little caring for the social, moral and spiritual values of life. He poses a great threat to civilization, to all that is social and moral and “recognized no sort of restraints of man or God” (96). He crosses all limits and knows no one until he has to suffer for his deviation and inhuman behaviour in his death and that too at his own hands. Sastri rightfully observes about this aspect of human ego.
Every man can think that he is great and will live for ever, but no one can guess from which quarter his doom will come . . . . Every *rakshasa* gets swollen with his ego. He thinks he is invincible, beyond every law. But sooner or later something or other will destroy him. (96-97)

The dialectic of being and becoming results in complete dehumanization in the case of Vasu. He is so swayed by his animal ambitions and carnal desires that the feelings and emotions of others appear totally meaningless to him. He is power drunk and does not give way to reason or commonsense. He, as Nataraj tells his wife, “is afraid of nothing on earth or in heaven or hell” (207). His being, the moral and spiritual part of his self, seems to have been choked and the only thing which rules over him is his becoming, becoming a ruthless and fiendish fellow. He does not care at all for others; their feelings and sentiments are as good as nonexistent for Vasu. This is what he thinks of the sensible people like Nataraj, “You are sentimental. I feel sickened when I see a man talking sentimentally like an old widow” (176). Thus, the dialectic of being and becoming which can lead to the self-consolidation of human beings results in complete dehumanization in the case of Vasu. This is how James Dale sums up Vasu’s character and observes.

... he (Vasu) became interested in taxidermy, probably because it gave him an excuse for killing animals and thereby provided an outlet for his violent nature. He is scoffer and a mocker, brushing aside custom and tradition, kindness and courtesy. His whole life is an exercise in ferocious self-expression; he lashes out the world around him to compensate for his own lack of purpose and his failure to find a place in society. (95)
To see the animalistic behaviour of Vasu, one feels inclined to ask himself like Socrates, “I see myself and ask myself: am I a monster more twisted and fuming with pride than Typhon?” (qtd. in Quilliot 157).

R. K. Narayan’s Vasu “is not only a character, but an oppressive and destructive force” (Walsh, “Narayan’s Maturity” 151). He is a parody on Bhasmasur, a devil or an asura of Indian mythology who, as it believed, received no restraint of God or human. Bhasmasur was blessed with superhuman powers by Lord Shiva. He could burn anyone to ashes by just placing his hand on the victim’s head. With this power of him, he created great uproar in the whole universe and proved a great threat even to the gods. Then Lord Vishnu took the appearance of Mohini, a beautiful apsara. She enamoured Bhasmasur with her beauty and dance. He was so much bewitched by the beauty of Mohini that in his act of dance, he unknowingly held his hand on his own head and burnt himself to ashes by doing so. Thus, he was undone by Lord Vishnu who took the form of a female, which in Jungian terms acted as the seductive principle of Anima. So, Bhasmasur’s power to burn others proved self-destructive like Vasu in the novel who too kills himself with his superhuman power to kill others with just one blow of hand.

The character of Rann in the Talkative Man is also a study in “do what you will” aspect of human life. The novel deals with the characters named Madhu and Rann. While the character of Madhu is an example of oddity and eccentricity of nature and behaviour, the character of Rann in the novel is the delineation of social and moral deviation and can be placed in the category of other deviants like Sampath, Ravi and Vasu. The novel, as Narayan himself tells.
is the story of a wife’s (Sarasa) attempt to reclaim her erratic, elusive husband who is a wanderer, a philanderer on a global scale, abandoning women right and left. (R. K. Narayan, “Postscript” 120)

Rann in the novel turns out to be a trickster like Sampath who tells all sorts of lies to impress upon others. He poses himself to be coming down from a foreign country named Timbuctoo, the name of which appears as strange as his physical appearance. He claims to be deployed on a special mission by the UNO. This is how he boasts of his purpose of coming to Malgudi, “I have to send a report to my headquarters out of the voluminous data I have collected. I am also writing a book on a vital theme” (10). He always remains clad in some strange attire, in suit and boot to look dignified and a “pompous fellow” (77).

Rann seeks the help of Madhu and starts staying in his house. He appears very outlandish because of his strange dress and eerie ways and manners and tries to impress upon others by all this. He, as Madhu comes to know, is Rangan actually who has trimmed and tailored his name to sound it foreign. As Rann enters into the peaceful world of Malgudi he becomes quite conspicuous and throws the peaceful life of society out of the gear. He is a womanizer who has captivated many poor women in his charms and seduced them before deserting and leaving them to their own fate. When he comes to Malgudi, he sets his eyes on Girija, the innocent grand-daughter of the old librarian of the Town Hall Library. When Madhu comes to know of his plan to seduce Girija, he tries to rescue her and feels himself involved in the whole affair without being asked for it. He feels,

The old librarian must be protected from shock or a stroke, Girija from a public scandal and eventual desertion in some far off place and all
the frustration and tragedy that befell every woman captivated by Rann's charms. (97)

He takes upon his own the self-assigned task of saving Girija from the evil intentions of Rann, who turns out to be a lecherous fellow.

Rann is a philanderer, a heartless person whose only concern in life is to play with the feelings of innocent girls, fill their eyes with false dreams and then leave them after seducing them. He is an unredeemed devil and has no pricks of conscience. During his dialectical existence, he loses all contact with his being, the natural and innocent self, and follows his own vaulting ambitions and animal desires and becomes utterly devilish. Life for him does not lie in the goodness of self, but in the fulfillment of his carnal desires. Rann lacks any spiritual insight or vision of life. He does not pay any heed to the moral and spiritual values of life and does whatever he likes. He deviates from all codes and patterns of social behaviour.

Rann goes to different places assuming different names and does the same kind of heinous crime everywhere. He comes to Malgudi and introduces himself as a UNO delegate. The entire Malgudi feels attracted towards him because of his personality and fake stories of his visits and adventures of various countries. He also captivates Girija in his charms and shows her beautiful dreams of life abroad. He promises her to take her away with him and plans to seduce her. Madhu too feels impressed by the adventures of Rann. This is what he observes of Rann when he encounters him. "His (Rann's) outlandish style of living and dressing was fascinating" (76). But then he meets Sarasa, the first of the endless list of the wives of Rann, who tells him about the evil nature of Rann and his habit of seducing innocent girls. She also tells him about how he has performed many fake marriages under different names. This is how Sarasa exposes the animalistic nature of Rann.
A regular lady-killer, sir; the only one who could survive was myself. I’ve been to the capitals of the world, hunting for him with the help of the Interpol and met only the poor wrecks he left behind when he vanished. (55)

Madhu, the Talkative Man who does not at first believe in her words, on ransacking the belongings of Rann, comes to know of the extent of the recklessness and cannibalistic tendency of him, who otherwise looks so polished and civilized in the European dress up. He finds many letters written by women whom Rann had married under different names and had deserted after his animalistic urges had got satisfied. The Talkative Man feels,

Like our gods, he seemed to have a thousand names- Ashok, Naren, D’Cruz, John, Adam, Shankar, Sridhar, Singh and Iqbal and what not. The letters were all from women: imploring, appealing, and accusing and attacking in a forthright manner; some of them were intensely passionate from Mary, Rita, Nancy, Manju, Kamala, and so on. (85)

Though the letters were written by various women who belonged to different places, but one thing was common in all and that was “the cry of desertion” which pervades in all the letters. He feels so shocked that he does not believe his own eyes. He curses his own-self for trusting and helping such a hollow man. The presence of Sarasa in Malgudi, his earliest wife, disturbs Rann’s peace of mind who otherwise remains very calm and poised. The narrator tells of him, “I had never found him in such a mood or using intemperate language. The thought of this woman (Sarasa) seemed to unloosen the bolts of his (Rann’s) mental framework” (48).

After coming to know of the evil intentions of Rann, Madhu does everything to save Girija. He wonders, “You (Rann) are heartless, a monster, don’t you have a
feeling for the child you pampered” (86). Rann fills the eyes of Girija with false dreams and shows her many ivory towers. The innocent girl fails to see through his hypocrisy and eventually falls a prey to his evil designs. He befools the old librarian with his scholarly talks in order to impress upon him so that he may allow his granddaughter to come near him. This is what Madhu observes about Rann’s expertise,

He (Rann) was versatile:- one moment to impress the girl and patronize her and take her under his wing- so solicitous, kindly in tone- the world of the fairy-tales, the next moment the international scholar academician adopting his manner to impress the old man- on whose goodwill he would have to depend in order to get closer to the girl. (80)

As a result of his boastfulness, Girija becomes a victim of his evil trap. She does not listen to anything against him as, “she had a totally different picture of Rann. She worshipped him as a god who can do no wrong” (110). Rann plans to elope with Girija, seduce her and then leave her as he had done with many other innocent girls. He hires the taxi of Gaffur for his purpose of elopement. But the Talkative Man comes to her rescue in time and calls upon Sarasa, his earliest wife and sends him back to Delhi with her. By doing so he saves Girija “from being burdened with a fatherless child” (97) and from all that which other girls had suffered at the hands of Rann. Thus, at last he becomes able to deport Rann out of the Malgudi society.

So, Rann is a deviant of all the moral and spiritual values of life. For him life lies in the fulfillment of one’s animal instincts and in this process he defies all social and moral norms. He receives no restraint upon himself and decides to seduce a young innocent girl so that Madhu, the protagonist feels like saying, “She is young enough to be your daughter. You are a lecherous demon and wouldn’t mind even if it were a granddaughter” (15). But like any other deviant of Narayan, Rann has to pay a
price for his deviation and is made to be carried away back to his wife in Delhi. Thus, peace and order is once again restored in the Malgudi world which does not tolerate anything that is odd and eerie because, as Madhu observes, “Malgudi climate has something in it which irons out outlandish things” (27).

The novelist himself comments on the restoration of peace and order in Malgudi world in this novel, “I had to manoeuvre to get him (Rann) out of Malgudi hurriedly, when I found that he was planning to seduce and abduct a young innocent school girl” (“Post Script” 120). But even after Rann’s departure from Malgudi, Girija is not ready to believe that he was an evil person having evil intentions. This is what she says, “You are all against him (Rann). He was so good, oh, he was kind and generous and nobody understands him” (110). Even Madhu does not dare say anything against Rann in front of her as he knows that it will be useless because Girija believes in him blindly. He feels, “No use talking to her about Rann- it would make no impression on her, would not pass through the barrier she had built against the outside world” (110).

Rann is a degenerated human, a callous and indiscriminate lecher. He pursues his own animal instincts and carnal desires and while doing so he loses all moral and spiritual mores. He deviates from his being and defies all social and moral patterns of human behaviour. In this way, the dialectical tension of being and becoming results in his deviation and degeneration, and it fails to bring any transformation in him. Rann can not stay with a girl for long and for this he has performed many fake marriages assuming different names. Even at last he does not stay with Sarasa after being deported from Malgudi and runs away from her with another girl. The Talkative Man and the readers come to know of this fact through the letter of Sarasa. This is how she tells of his evil plans, “He was an expert in the art of deception. Now I realize that all
Thus, Rann turns out to be a social and moral deviant in the novel. While moving ahead in his life he does not care for the feeling and sentiments of others nor does he pay any heed to the social and moral norms of society. He, like Vasu, is dominated by Id, the darker side of his personality and the light of Ego and Superego fails to touch him or bring any rationality in him. He is a thorough villain who does whatever he wills, and which is entirely inhuman and immoral. He too suffers with an overdeveloped libido like Sampath which makes him sensual and lecherous. All his actions are dominated by this weakness of his character and complex of personality. He seems to be living at the ‘lower vital’ of his self and fails to touch the middle vital or the higher vital during the course of his life. He remains tamsic in his nature and attitude and his actions are motivated by his subhuman tendencies.

R. K. Narayan’s Rann seems to be a parody on Donjuan, a legendary Spanish nobleman who was a libertine and a rake. His only concern in life was to play with the sentiments of women and leave them to their fate after seducing them and getting bored with them. So, Narayan’s Donjuan too impresses upon the innocent girls with his ways and talks, captivates them in his charms and then seduces them by making false promises. He uses them for some days and then he feels bored of them and leaves them to their plight and again sets out on his expedition of finding some other girl.

Like many other novels, the dialectic of being and becoming is at the root of characters in The Vendor of Sweets. The specific nature and temperament of Jagan and Mali in it results of the dialectical tension of being and becoming. It gives Jagan his peculiar odd and eccentric nature and behaviour, and eventually gets him
transformed at the end of the novel, and makes Mali a social deviant. While Jagan’s oddities and eccentricities of character arise from his alienation of being from his becoming, and transformation comes when he realizes the real nature of things, Mali’s deviation occurs during the process of an unrestrained and unbridled fulfillment of his individual desires and personal wishes.

The character of Mali is a fine study in social and moral deviation. While going through the process of becoming, Mali loses all contact with his being which is the moral and spiritual self and follows his own instincts and desires and deviates from the established pattern of social behaviour. He feels fascinated by the affluence of American materialism and rationalization and defies all spiritual and moral norms to which his conventional society is deeply attached. In his attempt to fulfill his reckless individual desires, he recoils back from the social milieu of Malgudi and consciously rejects all the mores so dear to the people of older generation like his father Jagan. He tries to leapfrog into a new age of materialism and defies all customs and traditions of Malgudi which appear burdensome to him. He does not realize the importance of these customs and traditions and rejects them straightway.

Every society or social group is based upon certain common principles or patterns of behaviour which are adopted, obeyed and respected by all people of that society and these common principles form the culture of that social group and with the passage of time become its life-line. S. Radhakrishnan has depicted the importance of tradition and culture in the following words,

Tradition is not a rigid, hidebound framework which cripples the life of spirit and requires us to revert to a period that is now past and beyond recall. It is not a memory of the past but a constant abiding of the living Spirit. It is a living stream of spiritual life.
But some people fail to realize the importance of such traditions and act against them like Mali in the novel, who too does not pay any heed to these traditions and acts against them and becomes a deviant.

Mali is the spoilt motherless son of a loving father Jagan who is a sweet-seller. Both Mali and Jagan are totally different in their nature and ideology. Jagan, being deeply rooted in tradition, pins high hopes on Mali; whereas the latter, being a product of modern age, has his own notions and ways of doing things. Jagan wants him to be a graduate, but Mali has different plans regarding his future. He does not pay any heed to the feelings and expectations of his father and drops out of the college without his knowledge. He makes foolish plans of becoming a writer and in order to learn the art of writing he decides to go to America. Jagan is astonished to know about his plan of learning to write story telling from America. He expresses his surprise to the cousin in the following words: “Going there to learn story telling; He should rather go to a village granny… Did Valmiki go to America or Germany in order to learn to write his Ramayana?” (41)

Mali does not care for the concerns of his father and does not listen to his advice. He feels fascinated by the showiness and gaudiness of American materialistic culture and does not think of anything else. He becomes a pastiche being and everything of his own culture and country appears worthless and base to him. The Malgudi town and culture also look abhorrent to him, and he feels obsessed with the idea of going to America. In his ways and manners, Mali, as C.P. Sharma observes, represents “those Indian youths who, being oblivious of their own cultural heritage, ape the alien cultures blindly and think that they are progressive” (129). He steals away Jagan’s money and goes to America to fulfill his foolish dreams. He goes to
America and adopts its ways and manners without getting to its roots. His sojourn in America consolidates his disliking or disenchantment with the traditional life of his country. He starts cherishing the American ideals and departs from his own traditional culture. He starts eating beef there and suggests the same to his father. He tells his father in a letter written to him:

I’ve taken to eating beef; and I don’t think I’m the worse for it. Steak is something quite tasty and juicy. Now I want to suggest why not you people start eating beef? It will solve the problem of useless cattle in our country and we won’t have to beg food from America. I sometimes feel ashamed when India asks for American aid. Instead of that, why not slaughter useless cows which wander in the streets and block the traffic? (42)

Mali talks of killing stray cows to solve the problem of hunger and starvation in the country, little caring that “the Shastras defined the five deadly sins and the killing of a cow headed the list” (42). Mali adopts the western materialism as a pastiche being without getting to its roots and tries to use the same in the traditional society of India without realising that the Indian society is based on a different plane, and is spiritualistic and not materialistic. He gets utterly disrespectful to the pristine purity of his sacred traditions and openly flouts and decries them. His alienation from “the fixed classical background of India with its complex rules, institutions and customs” (Williams 62) is completely unacceptable and irreparably disgusting for a traditionally and culturally brought up person like Jagan.

Later, Mali returns to India with a half-American, half-Korean girl and introduces her as his wife to his father. Jagan feels utterly helpless and ashamed, but he can not help it. His relatives break all relations with his family as he is held...
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responsible for spoiling and pampering his son. This is how he is rebuked by his sister,

We are ashamed to refer to you as a brother. Even when you joined Gandhi and lost all sense of caste, dining and rubbing shoulders with untouchables, going to jail, and getting up to all kinds of shameful things, we didn’t mind anything. But now is it a fact that you have a beef-eating Christian for a daughter-in-law? I can hardly call you a brother in the presence of my in-laws. No one can blame Mali, with a father like you… (115)

After coming back from America Mali poses himself to be an American, but actually becomes a half-American both in his dress and manners and in his thinking. His vision has become completely materialistic and selfish and all the traditionalism and spiritualism of his own country appears useless to him. He finds fault with everything that is Indian and hates the Indian ways and mannerism. He seems to be at war with everything that is traditional and spiritualistic. Even his father gets fed up of his irritating ways and manners and has to say this to him, “Why do you blame the country for everything? It has been good enough for four hundred millions. . . . You were not born in those days” (70).

Jagan realizes the gravity of the situation when Mali expresses his hatred even towards his business of sweet-making. He feels ashamed of his father for being a sweet-seller and says, “I have better plans than to be vendor of sweetmeats” (71). Mali wants his father to stop selling sweets and join his business of establishing a factory of story-writing machines. But Jagan has not lost all his sense of discretion to accept such a foolish proposal of his spoilt son; however he does not have the guts to tell Mali to leave all that nonsense. Mali still believes that his father, being cowardly.
will bow to him and will accept his proposal. He finds fault with everything to which his father is attached, but the poor father feels tongue-tied to see this shamelessness of his son. Both Mali and Jagan come in a state of conflict with each other. This is how Mali behaves and argues with his father,

Jagan said, ‘Gandhi always advocated poverty and not riches.’

‘And yet you earn thousand rupees a day,’ said Mali with a vicious smile. (70-71)

Jagan, being a cowardly father, adopts the Gandhian policy of non-violence and non-cooperation towards his son and daughter-in-law and avoids their company. But at last he is pushed into a tight corner when he comes to know that Mali and Grace, who are living as a married couple to all appearances in the Malgudi world, are not married actually. This is how Grace tells him of their relationship, “But we are not married. He (Mali) promised he’d marry me in the Indian way, because I liked it, and brought me here” (108). Jagan’s soul is shaken to its roots at this realization. He has never thought that Mali would bring him to such a state of degeneration. He is unable to believe in such an immorality of his own son. “What breed of creatures are these?” he wondered. They had tainted his ancient home which had remained unsullied for generation” (109). Jagan feels so much shocked to know of this that he loses interest in everything. The cousin, being a constant well wisher of Jagan, tries to console him by saying, “Our young men live in a different world from ours. and we must not let ourselves be upset too much by certain things they do” (110). But nothing can convince Jagan against such immoral behaviour. He finds it difficult to cope with the situation. He feels it impossible to live with such a tainted couple and decides not to go there. He does everything to save himself from the evil vibrations of that unmarried couple living together. This is how he insulates himself from them.
JAGAN BARRICADED HIMSELF in completely. He derived a peculiar excitement in performing all the actions of a purificatory nature. He shut the communicating door between his part of the dwelling and Mali’s and locked it on his side. He did everything to insulate himself from the evil radiations of an unmarried couple living together. (112)

When Jagan breaks all relations with his son and his so called wife, Mali plans to send her back to America and live a free and unrestrained life in the evil company of his friends. Later in the novel, Mali is found guilty of carrying illegal liquor in his car and is subsequently sent to prison. In this way, Mali, who has created havoc and disorder in the placid atmosphere of Malgudi, is duly rewarded in his imprisonment leaving the Malgudi world in peace and order once again.

Thus, Mali is a deviant character. This deviation is the result of his too much preoccupation with the process of his becoming which leads to his deviation. While moving ahead on the path of becoming, he cannot hold converse with his being and gets swayed away by his own animal instincts and individual urges. He does not conform to the cultural and social norms represented by his society and deviates from all that for which the Malgudi society stands. D. W. Harding observes in this regard of the individual development which often comes in conflict with cultural and social set-up, “The social development of a human being involves the definition of individuality as well as conformity to the broad features of personality sanctioned by his particular culture” (166). Mali’s individual aspirations come in conflict with his cultural heritage and he gives prime importance to his desires and discards the cultural ways and manners of his society. His behaviour and actions are largely dominated by his ‘id’, the pleasure principle and are not restrained or checked either by his ‘ego’ or his
‘superego’. He does not care for the feelings and concerns of anyone else including his loving father, Jagan and his so-called wife Grace and does whatever he wills.

Mali turns out to be a psychopath in the course of the novel. According to the International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences the word ‘Psychopath’ refers to

...chronically anti social individuals who are always in trouble, profiting neither from experience nor punishment, and maintaining no real loyalties to any person, group or code. They are frequently callous and hedonistic, showing marked emotional immaturity, with lack of sense of responsibility, lack of judgement, and ability to rationalize their behaviour so that it appears warranted, reasonable and justified.

A psychopath cannot relate to any reality and always lives a life of delusion. He is unable to adjust himself in any set-up. Mali too finds it difficult to assimilate with the traditional culture of Malgudi and acts against it. He does not find any interest in his studies and makes frivolous plans of learning to write story-writing in America. He runs away from his home and flies over to America after stealing his father’s money. Even in America he cannot assimilate with the Western culture and comes back to India with a foreign girl whom he introduces as his wife. He feels ashamed of his father’s business of sweet-making and makes foolish plans of earning money by establishing a factory of story-writing machines, but fails in them. He uses even his girlfriend Grace for his own selfish plans and decides to send her back to America when he does not find her of much use or value in his life. His life remains ever in trouble and even at the end of the novel, he is sent to prison and is left alone by his father feeling that his stint in jail will give him some idea of reality, but which does not seem happening actually.
The character of Mali and Jagan stand in complete opposition to each other. Whereas Jagan lived his life and pursued and fulfilled his individual aspirations and desires “within the patterns provided by Hindu scriptures and traditions” (C. P. Sharma 133), Mali, on the other hand, always did whatever he liked. Thus, their character is a study in psychic dialecticism where their response to the conflict of their inner self and their social and moral roles in this world, determines their attitude in society and fixes their character. It is this very response of them towards the dialectic which gives both of them their peculiar character and identification and makes them so memorable as they really are.

R. K. Narayan’s *The World of Nagaraj* too deals with a “do what you will” character named Tim who resembles Mali. The novel weaves round the social world of Nagaraj which is jeopardized and thrown out of the gear with the entrance of Tim, his nephew. The novel is a dialectical study of the protagonist Nagaraj, who is a normative member of society though he has certain oddities and eccentricities of character, and Tim, who turns out to be a social deviant in the course of the novel. Tim represents the young men of post-independence era who were the by-product of the western culture and became “victims of the many ills of modern culture overtaking the calm and sequestered life of Malgudi” (C. P. Sharma 173).

As the title suggests, the novel deals with the peaceful world of Nagaraj which is thrown topsy-turvy with the entrance of Tim. Tim is the son of his elder brother Gopu who lives in a village. But he is full of hatred towards fields and cattle and runs away from there when his father scolds him on some issue and comes to Malgudi without telling anyone at home. His poor mother and father feel concerned, but he does not care at all for their feelings and sentiments. He comes to live with his uncle Nagaraj and aunt Sita, the childless couple, who live all alone in a big house in Kabir
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Street. They look up to Tim as their own son, but he turns out to be a great source of trouble for them as the story unfolds.

Tim feels attracted towards the showiness and gaudiness of the materialistic culture and becomes a pastiche being in his thinking and beliefs like Mali. He is a third generation character and like many other third generation characters of R. K. Narayan, he deviates from the social customs and traditions and hankers after western culture. He prefers black coffee because, “Americans drink pure decoction without milk or sugar, they call it black coffee” (56). He like Mali is a psychopath and lives a life of delusion like him. Nothing rational gives way into his psyche and he leads a life of his own will and desire.

Tim comes to live with Nagaraj and disturbs the peace of his home with his ways and manners. He does not pay any heed to the concerns of his uncle and aunt and often comes home late. The poor couple keeps on waiting for him till late in night, but is unable to raise any objection. He is admitted in the Albert Mission College, but drops out of it at his own will without telling anyone like Mali. He keeps on wandering here and there and does not do anything. “From the minute he got up from bed the young man moved up and down the house and then constantly went out on his bicycle or the neighbour’s scooter, and returned home late” (58). The love of Nagaraj and his wife gets him spoilt and pampered. Even Gopu comes to know of this fact and scolds Nagaraj for spoiling his son, “You have spoilt him beyond repair: you are Narada, mischief-maker” (44). Gopu is not happy with Nagaraj’s upbringing of Tim and says, “If he is growing in your shadow, he will be another Nagaraj. We do not want another Nagaraj in the family” (42).

To add to the trouble of Nagaraj, Tim starts visiting Kismet Bar, a club of the fashionable young spoilt people where, as the Talkative Man tells, “one can get
everything from ice cream to whisky” (59). Without anyone’s knowledge he starts taking wine and tells lies time and again. He befools the poor couple by giving lame excuses. Nagaraj feels disturbed by his ways and manners. “He realized that his mind had lost its poise. His thoughts constantly revolved the subject of Tim, with many questions unanswered and he found it exhausting” (61). Thus, the peaceful world of Nagaraj is disturbed by Tim’s dubious ways and manners, but Nagaraj, being a cowardly uncle, is unable to keep a tab on his escapades. He thinks of Tim as a dog which does not change its nature of living in dust even if you make him stay in an aristocratic atmosphere. Tim sticks to his ways of deceiving others and living like an “unleashed donkey loafing about” to and fro. Nagaraj does not tell Gopu about the state of affairs and is held responsible. Gopu writes to Tim,

Boy, what is happening? You never write, and we do not know whether you are studying or wasting your time. If your uncle thinks he can leave you to live the existence of an unleashed donkey, he is mistaken. I’ll make him answer for your deeds… (65)

Later in the novel, Tim gets married and brings home a wife who loves playing music and singing songs. She disturbs the peacefulness of whole house by her noisy ways and practices. She regularly practices at harmonium without bothering about the comfort of others and does an intrusion into the peaceful and quiet existence of Nagaraj. The din of her blaring harmonium impinges upon his mental equipoise and pushes him into a tight corner. Nagaraj has to spend his maximum time outside his home. He is cornered in his own home, but feels afraid to tell all this to them. He forgets his work on Narada and feels utterly helpless in his own house. He decides to do his work on Sage Narada in the nearby temple, instead of doing it in his own home, but is rebuked for such an idea by his wife, “When you are not able to find
silence in your own home, how can you find it in the temple?” (134) In a state of utter helplessness he prays to God, “Please give that girl better sense than to sing, and inspire her not to deafen us with her harmonium and film hits” (94). In this state of dejection, he requests his wife Sita for help, “You must come to my rescue. I simply cannot write a single sentence unless Saroja mends her ways” (143). But even his wife can not help him. So, he decides to save himself from this incessant torture by stuffing cotton wool into his ears. “I shall also acquire a lot of cotton wool and try and pack it all in my ears so that even a thunderclap may sound like a whisper” (185), he thinks.

Thus, Nagaraj is subjected to great mental trouble and torture which he is unable to stand with. To add to his trouble, Tim decides to employ his wife at the Kismet Bar to entertain the customers with her music and songs. He does not give least concern to the family reputation and to the aristocracy of the Kabir Street and puts his family reputation at stake. Nagaraj is utterly distressed like Jagan when he comes to know of this fact. “Nagaraj felt stunned. He never thought it would come to this. A daughter-in-law of the family to sing to a set of drunkards at Kismet” (113). But Nagaraj, being a cowardly guardian like Jagan of *The Vendor of Sweets*, is unable to stop Tim from his deviation and suffers deep inside. He feels, “Life is getting more and more complex. All that I seek is freedom, peace of mind and scope to write my book” (117). The Talkative Man sees through Nagaraj’s state of mind and comes to his rescue in the same manner as the Cousin has come to the rescue of Jagan, and advises him, “Don’t worry. Let them do what they like. Young people of these days are different” (113).

Later in the novel, Tim takes away his wife Saroja with him without telling anybody in the house and starts living in the outhouse of Kismet bar and employs her
there. But Nagaraj does not dare ask him anything, and for this he is rebuked by his brother Gopu, “Two solid persons, a husband and wife living in your care, leave the house and you don’t bother about it. Two solid persons just disappear, vanish into thin air, and you ask no question and have no answer” (148). Gopu comes to Malgudi to take away Tim and Saroja with him to the village, but Tim refuses even to recognize him at the Kismet bar. The disheartened father takes it to his heart and leaves Malgudi without intimating even Nagaraj, holding him responsible for all that trouble which Tim has caused. He breaks all his relations with Tim and disowns him. In utter despair he declares,

I have no son. I disown him. You (Nagaraj) have misappropriated and ruined him completely. You may adopt him and assign your property to him as your successor so that you may have someone who will have the right to ignite the funeral pyre when you die… (171)

So, Tim is a heartless fellow who does not have any pricks of conscience in refusing to recognize his father, and leaving his uncle and aunt embarrassed. He is a shameless fellow and returns to Nagaraj after a fight with the secretary of the club at the Kismet bar. He comes back to him unasked in the same manner as he had left him earlier in the novel to keep his life out of the gear, and Nagaraj, being a cowardly uncle, can not do anything, but accept and tolerate them.

Thus, the dialectic of being and becoming results in social and moral deviation in the case of Tim who does not care for the feelings and sentiments of his father and mother, uncle and aunt and does whatever comes into his heart like Mali. There are many parallels which can be traced between The Vendor of Sweets and The World of Nagaraj. Both the novels trace the sequence of events which make the life of their protagonists, Jagan and Nagaraj, miserable and tormenting and this happens when
their spoilt sons (Tim is also a son of Nagaraj in a way in Indian terms) follow their own individual desires and instincts and do not listen to their elders and act against the customs and traditions so dear to them. Both Tim and Mali behave in an irrational manner and lack any vision of life. Tim like Mali is also a psychopath and lives a life of delusion and remains away from reality. Tim’s deviation can be compared with that of Mali’s who too does not listen to the pleas of his loving father and does whatever he likes. Nagaraj too like Jagan fails to keep a check on the ways and manners of his nephew and remains a mute spectator to his immoral and anti-social acts. Both Mali and Jagan remain in the hold of their Id and do not listen to the call of their Ego and Superego. Their action and behaviour is largely dominated by the pleasure principle and not by rationality or morality. Both Tim and Mali live at the lower vital of self and fail to reach to the middle vital or the higher vital. They are of tamsic tendency and their acts represent their typical tamsic nature and temperament, and approach toward life.

Thus, many of the male characters of R. K. Narayan do what they will and turn out to be social and moral deviants in this process. These characters mostly belong to the third generation of Malgudi society and act against those customs and traditions which are so dear to the people of first and second generation. Some of the deviants turn even inhuman or asuric during the dialectical journey of their life as seen in the case of Vasu who turns ‘man-eater’ in the course of the metamorphosis of his character. Though he is a born human, but becomes inhuman in his ways and manners. He likes to tease and hurt others, both humans and animals. He is a devil for whom killing someone is as simple a task as playing. He starts his reckless game of hunt inside the Malgudi town and does not spare even those animals and birds to which people’s religious sentiments are attached. Vasu feels proud of the killings he
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has done and the hunting expeditions he has undertaken. He takes pride in telling that he had hurt his own master who had taught him the tactics of wounding and killing someone with just one stroke of hand. Thus, through Vasu Narayan has given expression to the hidden violence in man, the Id, and ‘Shadow’ in Jungian terms, which if uncontained results in great trouble and turmoil in society. It is this Id of him which turns Vasu asuric as it remains unchecked and unsuppressed by ego and superego.

In some cases the dialectic leads to the immoral and unethical behaviour of R. K. Narayan’s characters as seen in the case of Sampath and Rann who turn lecherous and become tricksters in their lives. Sampath though is married and has five children, feels bewitched by the beauty of Shanti and runs after her. He decides to marry her and keep both his wife and beloved “in separate houses”. He does not cherish any moral and ethical ideas and openly flouts the norms of society when they come in the way of his evil desires. Rann too is immoral and lecherous as he finds enjoyment in seducing and deserting the innocent girls. He has a list of countless girls to his credit whose lives he has spoilt and has left them to misery and suffering after seducing them. He is so immoral that he captivates even Girija in his charms and plans to seduce her who is of his daughter’s age and who looks up to him as her mentor and saviour.

Some of R. K. Narayan’s deviants become psychopaths as seen in the case of Mali and Tim. They live a life of illusions and fail to get to the reality of life. They do not assimilate in any culture and remain ever restless. Mali feels fed up of his life in Malgudi, leaves his studies and goes to America and returns back as half-Indian and half-American. Similarly, Tim feels dissatisfied of his existence in the village with his parents. The life of cattle and cow-dung irritates him and makes him run away to
Malgudi town. Even in Malgudi he fails to assimilate and behaves weirdly and disturbs the equipoise of his uncle’s home by his immoral and anti-social behaviour. Both Mali and Tim are left to their own fate by their fathers at the end of the novel when it is found that nothing can mend their ways and manners.

R. K. Narayan not only deals with male deviants in his novels, he also shows those female characters who rage a war against the social and moral norms of society through their dubious ways and manners. These women characters forget the traditional role of a lady in family and society and set to attain an individual identity, in the process of which they move out of the ring of traditions and customs. This quality of R. K. Narayan’s characterization can be amplified by citing the example of Daisy from The Painter of Signs.

Daisy is one of central figures in the novel The Painter of Signs. Though the novel is shorter in length, but it has all the qualities which make it a remarkable piece of literary art. William Walsh has observed of this novel, “It is not much longer than a nouvelle and yet by the end of it a character has been evolved, a predicament analysed, a world constructed, a point of view defined” (R. K. Narayan 153). The novel deals with two main characters named Raman and Daisy. Both of them are the peculiar products of the dialectical tension of being and becoming. While going through the process of being and becoming, they are moved away by their own ambitions and instincts and are unable to act according to the accepted code of social conduct. They get degenerated as a result and behave in an immoral manner. The novel as C.P. Sharma observes, “highlights the degeneration of modern man as an inevitable result of decline of faith in the cherished ideals, established institutions and sacred values” (143). Because of their degeneration and immoral behaviour they, as S.P. Bhardwaj finds, “are a little way off from the normal class of beings” (173).
Daisy is a family planning zealot of Malgudi and acts abnormally. She has a great desire to establish her own identity and in its pursuit she runs away from her home in her very childhood and is later found somewhere near a sea in a hut by her parents. She acts in an anti-social manner right from her childhood. She feels her identity lost in the din and clamour of her household which consisted of fifteen children and numerous elders living the most unarranged life in that ‘madhouse’. She could not establish her identity in that house as “all individuality was lost in this mass existence” (130).

Daisy represents the women of post-independence era who were zealous to establish their individual identity and in this attempt of them they went against the traditional norms and established institutions of society. She herself admits in the course of the novel, “Long ago I broke away from the routine of a woman’s life. There are millions of women who go through it happily. I am not one of them” (159). Daisy does not like to be inspected by a prospective bridegroom who has come to her house with a marriage proposal, and behaves in a very rude way. By such an attitude she is held responsible for spoiling the image of her family and ruining the future prospects of her other sisters. But, she feels fed up of such a life, “I never dreamt there could be any other kind of life, any other interest in life, any other way of living. I had no idea that it could be changed…” (130). To get rid of such a life, she runs away from her home and becomes a missionary who is devoted to the social cause. Later in life, she becomes a campaigner of family planning and has no personal life. But such an attitude of her gradually turns her out into a social deviant having no regard for the cultural and moral values of society.

Daisy’s involvement in the programmes of family planning makes her envious of children. She is against children and considers them burden on society. Raman
feels afraid of such an attitude of her and observes, “Thank God, she is only concerned with births and not death. Otherwise she’ll be pestering Yama (The God of Death) to take away more people each day…” (69). Though Daisy works with a mission to save ‘mother earth’ from the extra burden of excessive population, but her mission makes her an extremist who feels envious even of children and marriage. Such an attitude of Daisy is quite abnormal and lacks any real conviction. This is what Raman feels of her attitude towards children,

... she was not really a lover of children and viewed them perhaps as symbols of defeat for her cause. She never patted a child or tried any baby talk. She looked at them as if to say, you had no business to arrive – you lengthen the queues, that’s all. (60)

Raman is shocked to see her bullying the people for having large families and a great number of children. He wondered:

What a lot of policing she was doing! Raman thought. She must really be mad! She will fight and shun people who bring up large families.

Some madness must have got into her head quite early in life and stayed on there. (67)

Daisy does not have faith in the established social institutions like marriage and family. She is against marriage as the monotony and drudgery of married life does not suit her. Marriage and other social bonds are all meaningless for her. For her sex, whether within marriage or outside marriage, is just a biological phenomenon having no spiritual or social significance. For her there is “nothing extraordinary for a man and a woman beginning to live under the same roof even without being married” (168). She adopts a mechanical approach towards life and starts copulating with Raman without getting married. For her sex is a mechanical process, having no
emotional and social value, and this attitude of her reminds us of the mechanical approach of the Typist Girl towards love and sex in T. S. Eliot’s modern epic, *The Waste Land* which too portrays people’s faithlessness in the established social values and institutions.

Daisy is not interested in marriage with Raman as she does not believe in it. She feels that marriage and other such social bonds will curtail her freedom and will make her lose her individuality. The two conditions she has laid down before Raman for marriage are—First they will not have any child and second if by chance one is born she will give the child away and keep herself free to pursue her social work. She refuses to marry Raman as per Vedic rites and decides to come to his house to live on any of the convenient days. “We will begin to live under the same roof on any day we decide” (158), she tells Raman and he wonders, “What sort of a married life is this going to turn out to be?” (172) This is how she justifies her decision to start living together without getting married, “When two souls met in harmony the marriage was consummated perfectly, and no further rite or ceremony was called for” (158).

Somehow, the married life or the life of a husband and wife terrifies her. Though she wants to enjoy all the pleasures of a married life, she wishes to escape from its responsibilities. That is why she refuses to come with Raman to his house. She does all those things which are not sanctioned by the social setup and which are unethical. Her entire attitude is that of deviation from the patterns of social behaviour and model code of conduct. For her marriage means the end of one’s individual freedom and she refuses to receive such a willing slavery. As she tells Raman, “Married life is not for me. I have thought it over. It frightens me. I am not cut out for the life you imagine. I can’t live except alone. It won’t work” (179).
Daisy is also a social deviant of her own type. This is how she justifies her decision and refutes her earlier promises made to Raman, “At some moments, and moods, we say and do things- like talking in sleep, but when you awake, you realize your folly... Oh, forgive me for misleading you...” (180). She does not pay any heed to the pleas and concerns of Raman and goes away from him by saying merely this, “I have a different life chalked out” (181). At the end of the novel, she leaves Raman behind and walks on her own way.

Thus, Daisy moves away from the social, moral and spiritual patterns of behaviour and becomes a “do what you will” character in the course of her life. She has no faith in the spiritual and moral values of social institutions and roles. She has a great desire to establish her own identity which eventually blurs her vision and erodes her sense of judgement. She follows her own individual aspirations and personal desires and goes away from her moral and spiritual being. She loses her faith in the social customs and institutions and refuses to get tied in the bond of marriage with Raman. She represents those modern young women “for whom the cult of independent individuality is the supreme value in life” (Walsh, “Narayan’s Maturity” 171). Thus, the dialectical tension fails to bring any transformation in her. Rather, it brings split in her personality and the deviation resulting from this split and disintegration. She too is a psychopath like Mali and Tim who fails to get to the reality of life and follows her own dreams and wishes without taking any account of the feelings and aspirations of the people she is related to.

It is fitting to encapsulate this chapter which deals with the deviant characters of R. K. Narayan with a befitting encapsulation. Sampath is an obsessive character who makes it with Shanti for a while, but is left high and dry to return back to his wife. He is a trickster like Mali and Rann who takes fun in using others for his own-
selfish plans. Ravi is obsessive and appears to be in the complete hold of his Id or Shadow. He fails to see the light of reason and morality and runs after Shanti after feeling bewitched by her beauty. Both Mali and Tim are psychopaths and fail to adjust in their social set-up. They represent the rootless individuals of Indian society who feel fascinated by the western materialistic culture and fail to find any identity. This aspect of characters is also observed by Shyam M. Asnami with regard to the modern writings and is true in respect of Narayan’s novels too: “

In modern writings the themes of individual’s predicament in the form of rootlessness and crisis of identity, mainly lying behind in desperate affirmation of traditional culture, have been explicitly expressed. (42)

Both Mali and Tim live a life of illusions and are appropriately rewarded in the end. Vasu turns into an inhuman being during the journey of his life and does all *asuric* deeds. He is a parody on *asuras*, the devils of Indian mythology like *Bhasmasur* who received not restraint on themselves and created havoc in the whole universe. But they carried with them an element of self-destruction which comes into play at the most appropriate moment and results in their perishing at their own hands. Vasu too does not receive any restraint, knows no law, creates great hullabaloo in the peaceful world of Malgudi, but ultimately gets killed by his own-self.
Notes

1. Individuation is a state of complete personality. ‘Individuation’ is often equated with ‘self-realization’, but it is worth quoting and understanding here that self-realization is an Indian concept, rather a Hindu concept in the sense that Indian and Hindu culture postulate that there is a self beyond our individual self. Though it should also be understood that in certain ‘darshanas’ (concepts) no self is postulated. For example ‘Charvak’ is out and out materialistic and sensual in its approach towards life. Individuation is a Jungian formulation which means ‘coming to self’ and is related to those archetypes designated as the shadow, the persona and the anima. (See: C.G. Jung, Symbols of Transformation)

2. Sachchidananda in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo refers to the Absolute Spirit or Absolute God which is actively involved in the cosmic evolution, and the quest of individual evolution becomes fruitful only when he reaches or achieves Sachchidananda, the ultimate goal of evolution.

3. Jiddu Krishnamurti (1995-1986) is regarded by millions as one of the greatest religious teachers of all times. He was picked out on the beach near Adyar in Madras by Charles Webster, a well-known theosophist. The idea was to gradually groom Krishnamurthy to be the vehicle for the world teacher (The Lord Maitre a, the Christ). Krishnamurthy had several psychic experiences including astral initiation from Kuthumi, the occult master who was acclaimed to reside somewhere in Tibet in human form. Subsequently, however, Krishnamurthy lost faith in theosophical doctrines, but he continued to have spiritual experiences related to the awakening of Kundalini. Krishnamurthy said, “I maintain that truth is a pathless land and you can not approach it by any path whatsoever, by any religion or by any sect. that is my point of view and I adhere to that absolutely and
unconditionally. Truth, being limitless, unconditioned, unapproachable by any path whatsoever, can not be organized. If you first understand that then you will see how impossible it is to organize a belief. A belief is purely an individual matter and you can not and must not organize it”.