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## The Vision of Pragmatism of Life Style by R. K. Narayan in ‘The Guide’

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### **Abstract:**

*Language is the back-bone of a country. The language develops in a chronicle way in accordance with the development of the science. English language is the origin from England. Due to its simplicity in the language, it spread all over the globe and became a link language.*

*R. K. Narayan is a leading Indian, regional novel writer in English. Most of his novels reflect the true life conditions of South India. Because of the elegant presentation of the novels, the westerners feel very happy to read. Though there are many equivalent novelists in India, R. K. Narayan ranks the first.*

*A speciality of R. K. Narayan is to present a novel to end in tragedy but run all through in comedy. In the cited novel he brings the true replica of a south Indian family, the culture and beliefs. The novels of R. K. Narayan were accepted in full quorum by the westerners.*

*‘The Guide’ written by R. K. Narayan is taken for discussion of Indian culture, colonialism, gradual adaption to western culture.*

The development of the Indian novel in English was initially not up to the mark and at low profile. It was not technically strong, nor innovative. According to Meenakshi Mukherjee traces of both, the prescribed novels and the Victorian pulp can be found in a curious amalgam in the early novels in the Indian languages. H.M. Williams, another critic felt that the history of the Indian English novel was a development from poetry to prose and from romantic idealization to various kinds of realism and symbolism. In the 1920's up to, until the 1940's India witnessed to a turbulent period in her history. The novelist found different themes for their stories like the freedom struggle, Gandhian ideology and its impact on society, need for social reforms, eradication of social evils, India's modern destiny, the Partition, the emergence of the new urban India, the problems of rural India and so on. When we look at these aspects in R.K.Narayan's novels, we find rich material having socio-cultural relevance.

Narayan's place, among the Indian novelists is supreme. His works have been translated into several European and Indian languages. He has won a considerable audience in Britain and in America. Even today, his popularity is on the rise.

R.K.Narayan is one of the leading figures in Indo-Anglian fiction. He had written about a dozen novels and 51 short stories. His novels can be classified under four categories: the school and college novels of his earlier period such as Swami and Friends, Bachelor of Arts and The English Teacher; domestic novels such as The Dark Room; novels dealing with money such as The Financial Expert, Mr. Sampath, The Guide and The Man-eater of Malgudi; political novel like Waiting for the Mahatma.

Most of the novels of R.K.Narayan have their setting in an imaginary world does not mean that, they have not been written with any specific purpose, social or moral didactic. For this reason, it is possible to describe R.K.Narayan as a pure novelist. Mulk Raj Anand, who was also a leading novelist, felt the importance to write novels in order to project awareness of the social conditions prevailing in India of his time. R.K.Narayan was inspired to write his novels by the creative urge within him, and his novels were aimed at simply depicting the conditions of life, which he saw around him without any feeling of indignation or resentment.

R.K.Narayan showed himself to be a coolheaded man, wanting to represent life, or to use the famous Aristotelian phraseology, to imitate life, that is, to depict it just as he saw it, with all its smiles, laughs, sorrows, and tears. There is a big difference between the pure artist and the artist who writes with a purpose. R.K.Narayan belongs to the category, of presenting a true picture of the society without any mercy but with a jovial way. A novel is essentially an entertaining form of literary writing. Nobody would read a novel, which has no entertainment value. In addition to providing entertainment, a novel may carry a message for the readers, a political message, or a social message or a message with regard to everyday conduct and behaviour.

R.K.Narayan remains unruffled by political movements. Like Manohar Malgaonkar he does not disparage the Indian politicians nor does he believe in exalting the importance of Indian spiritual heritage like Raja Rao. He is a class in himself. He is a writer of average emotions. He springs surprises and even gives mild shocks, but he never indulges in those aspects of life, which are morbid. Unsocial activities, perversion, or physical violence does not find any place in his fiction. He does not indulge in sensations. He believes in domestic harmony and peaceful relations. He is the only major writer in Indo-Anglian fiction, who is free from didacticism or propaganda. He has no desire to preach, to advice, to convert.

The basic theme of his novels is the place of man in this universe and his predicament. R.K.Narayan himself has remarked in an article the mood of comedy, the sensitivity to atmosphere the probing of psychological factors, the crisis in the individual soul and its resolution are the necessary ingredients in fiction. He wants to suggest that life is illogical and man is always trying to translate his fantasies into reality. Therefore, through the reversal of fortune, R.K.Narayan completes the story of man's rise and fall, and thus presents a total view of life.

R.K.Narayan may be described as a novelist of the middle class. His novels present members of the Indian middle class as engaged in a struggle to extricate themselves from the automatism of the past'. But R.K.Narayan is more concerned with the analysis of the character of the individual in his course through life.

The central theme of *The Guide* is the transformation of Raju from his role of a tourist guide to that of a spiritual personality. This is the depiction of the pleasure of comedy environment turning to the tragedy. The title of the novel, *The Guide* has a double meaning. In addition, Raju is playing double character. As a tourist guide and lover, he is impulsive, unprincipled, and self-indulgent. After his imprisonment, his transformation as a holy man, he is careful, thoughtful, and self-disciplined.

The novel tells two roles of Raju's relationship with Rosie and relationship with the villagers as a holy man. The novel begins with Raju sitting besides the temple and meeting a villager named Velan, who mistakes him for a holy man. The novel is, then altered as per the roles played by Raju, a holy man, and his previous career as a tour guide and lover. His dualism reflects in character. He is transformed from a sinner to a saint, though he is never truly a nice man nor a saint. He has a soft corner for empathy, and he holds sympathetic character throughout the novel.

R. K. Narayan very classically elevated for characters of woman hood in a fitting manner, placing in a very high position of dedication. They have to change the life pattern of pre-marriage to post-marriage and as per the thoughts of the life partner. They never counter the life partner and go along with the policies of their partner and be always in a low profile. Mostly the question counter argument does not arise in an Indian family on those days. These are the policies and programme of R. K. Narayan, depicting the role of women in his novels.

R. K. Narayan had a wider knowledge of geography of his locality and he gradually puts all the information in his fictional village Malgudi. Initially the Malgudi was shown with a river flowing perennial, a dense mountain a slum area and old style jutka. The life style was very simple. The wards were brought under religious habit.

As days gone, the Malgudi was given a face-lift much pertaining to British colonial themes. Hospital, Church, Christian school, road side shops, Railway station, post office, travelers bungalow Co-operative Bank and developed roads have been picturesque.

In *The Guide*, Raju comes into conflict with the traditional morality as he seeks to realize his aspirations. The result is, the accepted order to disturbed, and there is chaos and disorder. He seduces Rosie and thus in guilty of immorality. When she comes to live with him, conventional morality is violated, and there was the displeasure all around. The neighbours are annoyed, and his widowed mother is forced to leave the home with her brother. As Raju does not attend to his work, has to give up railway stall and soon it is in financial trouble. He is unable to pay his debts and has to face prosecution in the law of courts. His violation of conventional norms creates chaos and disorder in his own life in his social environment.

Raju is an egotist, an individualist, a self-seeker who exploits Rosie, both sexually and vehemently. They earn fabulous amount but spends it all in intoxication, gambling, and extravagant living. He is injustice and forges Rosie's signature to get a box of jewellery. It is a criminal act and he is jailed. It is a clear violation of norms of human conduct, and his example show that crime plays its role.

Real salvation or happiness lies in good relation. He plays the role of a Saint, exploits the credulity of the innocent people of Malgudi. He lives on them as a parasite, and expects food from them even when, they themselves are victims of famine and drought. Nevertheless, he is not happy internally. Happiness comes to him only when he begins to act as a selfless man. He goes on fast for more than a week and gets impressed as a man of dedication.

At the beginning of the story, Raju was positioned as a man of unpleasant characters, gone to the extent of loving a girl. However, his own mother, resulting departure from Raju, did not accept this sort action. This is a clear unusual picture of a typical south Indian family.

R.K.Narayan is an intelligent novelist and in order to make the readers to feel a sign of relief, turns the story in a positive way. After return from the jail, Raju realized his past mistakes and became a man of soft and good habits.

It is now that spiritual regeneration takes place. Raju rises above his self, recognizes the claims of humanity, and learns to sacrifices for others. He may die, but his very death is his spiritual rebirth. Raju has matured and achieved self-realization and self- fulfillment and takes a new birth. The realization of one's highest aspirations comes not through self-seeking but through self-negation and self-effacement.

Narayan's vision is essentially comic. His connections are comedies of sadness; he is the practitioner of the serious comedy; He has achieved in his comedies what is, generally achieved in the tragedies. The theme of his comedies is essentially tragic. A tragedy is concerned with inner illumination, with spiritual clearing and regeneration.

*The Guide* is a true Indian novel. Its Images, Symbols, Manners, habits, attitudes, and sentiments combine together to give the feeling that R. K. Narayan is a true son of the Indian Soil. All these points he has touched in the life of Raju and finally made him as a cherishing person.

'*The Guide*', is the most representative of the novels of R. K. Narayan. As in other novels, the hero here also rises from the average to a most exalted position and subsequent reversion to the original position.

He chooses his novels the characters from the middle class of south India. However, they are drawn with a convincing psychological consistency. These characters are full of life and vitality. They are thoroughly human in likes and dislikes.

When Raju's father opened a stall at the railway station, a new life came to Raju. He read the old magazines and papers in the stall and became an intelligent man. His speech easily attracted others. He was popular with the tourist guide people coming from faraway places. He helped everyone who came to him. He had the topography of Malgudi in his fingertips.

The message of this novel is not philosophic in the technical sense and it is the result of his observations of life. His purpose seems to be, to analyze human nature, and human relationships. He is the novelist of human conduct. His vision is essentially comic and optimistic. He recommends normal life and normal human relations that are permanent source of joy. Life must be lived despite many shortcomings.

The novelist explored the possibilities of the strange and sudden rise and fall in man's life through the character of Raju, the hero of the famous novel. The novelist narrates the social and economic life of the country. The old Indian society is described with typical spirit.

Malgudi, a village, is also pictured and its people's life, is narrated in an Indian sense. The ex-convict Raju goes to Sarayu River. There a local resident Velan turns Raju into a saint; he is respected and worshipped by the villagers. The novel depicts the life of rural Indian generally. There are some factors and features practiced by the villagers. They are known as superstitions, gullibility poverty, and simplicity, flowing up like that of animals, low economy, and dependence on the monsoons. The life of the villagers is pictured through the character of Velan. The novel is a note of social values and Indians. The villagers follow the superstitious beliefs. Incidentally, they raise an ex-convict to the level of the holy man. The primary education is also a great social problem in the village.

In the Indian society, traditionally male are the dominators. Due to this aspect, the women could not get their identity. However, the modern Indian women as represented by the characters of R. K. Narayan are definitely working towards the goal of defining their identities.

Malgudi with its people is simple and casual, its climate and its value is real. R. K. Narayan establishes the intimate sense of reality in his saga of Malgudi. His chief concern is man and man's relationship in the society, the normal and uniform life. He makes us believe in the reality of Malgudi and to get into our imagination, we remember its existence forever.

In this article, an elaborate attempt was made to find out the important aspects of the Indian society at the time of R. K. Narayan, through the novel *The Guide*. R. K. Narayan is a regional novelist and his thoughts are confined to local atmosphere. He very sincerely narrates the typical south Indian happenings of a family. His way of writing is penetrating, expressing even a tragedy under a comedy track. No doubt, the readers will get a clear scenario and feel delighted over the smooth but strong presentation of the sequences of R. K. Narayan.

To conclude, it is emphasized that best regional novelist in India is none other than R. K. Narayan.

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