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Social Values and Family Relationships In The R.K. Narayan`S Fictional World

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Abstract

The present study deals with study of R. K. Narayan`s novels in the context of the family relationships. Narayan is popularly known as the novelist of Malgudi. This association between the writer and his locale has grown over the years into a sort of identity-mark and a generic term defining and determining his range and milieu. The family relationship in depend upon time, situation, circumstances and the temperament of the characters and are sometimes happy or at other unpleasant, but show the vivacity and vitality of full blooded life. the humour of situation and character represent the higher forms of humour. R. K. Narayan depicts with equal ease both the genders male and female. If varieties of male characters please him with their peculiarities, his female characters are never inferior to any. There are husband-wife & father-son relationship, parental love and lack of communication between the old and the young generation.

Introduction

R. K. Narayan`s world is the typical Indian world of the “Young romantic lover” who is out of place and therefore cannot survive in the rigid custom-bound traditional, conventions, superstitions and age-old rituals. Match-making is an elaborate procedure with its set pattern. A marriage proposal to be sent by the bride`s family, the approval, the match making meetings, the fixing of the match and the elaborate arrangements for the wedding are these stages. A Bachelor of Arts makes a steady progress to be associated with the image of the romantic lover. The “romantic lover” proves to be a backbone of the rational approach. In order to safeguard memories of “the eternal values of human life”. The network of human relationships is integrated with the artistic fabric in the fictional world of R. K. Narayan.

“The Bachelor of Arts” is a novel in which a college student turns a lover, then a wandering ascetic and finally a loving and caring husband. The college student is set in a house of considerate but custom-bound parent with a younger brother. All the members of this core family and the extended family are intimates attached due to mutual trust, understanding and respect. The college life and is surrounded by friends like the debating union secretary Natesan, his close companion Ramu, his poet friend Mohan and the revolutionary Veeraswami and his teachers are Prof Gujapathi of English and Prof. Raghavachar of History, Principal Brown is ready to preside over any function as the occasion demands. In the life of Chandran the graduate enters the romantic phase. He is

struck by love at first sight when he observes Malthi on the bank of the Sarayu River. This leads to the contact between the two Iyer families. Stars, come in the path of lovers, and in India, to marry in opposition to the impact of the stars is impossible. The talks about his marriage soon prove to be futile. The inevitable takes place and ill-matched horoscopes will not allow the lovers to pursue.

Social values and Human relationships

A number of critics have discussed the theme of human relationships in Narayan's novels besides the theme of man-woman relationship. Even Narayan himself accepted it that his novels are the studies of human relationships in, both marital as well as extramarital environments. He presents the various kinds of characters who aspire something better in their life. His fictional town Malgudi, the great corporate literary creation of all his novels is today more than a geographical, regional or national representation. It is universal because what happens in Malgudi happens in the world. It is not hard to locate a Swami or a Chandran, or a Krishna or a celebrated Raju guide, or a cunning printer Sampath or a gentle editor Srinivas or a busy Nargayya or a passionate Raman in the human community anywhere in the world. His women characters like a devoted and submissive wife Savitri, a glamorous Shantabai, a passionate Rosie, a self-centered Daisy an intelligent and devoted Susila and well-determined Bharati get their place everywhere in the society. The human relationships presented in R. K. Narayan's novels are highly characterized by universality.

The failure in love takes the bachelor to the path of renunciation of the worldly pleasures. For about eight months, he moves from place to places. He then realizes that he should return to his native place, the familiar faces and the changed atmosphere. He returns to Malgudi. The network of relationships is expanded. He becomes an agent of a newspaper. He achieves the sales-promotion ratio in a satisfying manner. Now is the time for him to go to Talapur. He finds an extension of his own family and accepts Susila as his wife. The Bachelorhood is lost forever and he has acquired the status of a husband. He gets into the world of romance imaginative, integrated world of love and prosperity. Human relationships are the key to R. K. Narayan's art of novel writing.

Hindu society is divided into castes and sub castes and marriages are often arranged within the caste as is evidently seen and observed even today. Raju's mother does not accept Rosie as her daughter-in-law; Raman's aunt is opposed to his marriage with Daisy; even Jagan, the Gandhian follower is shocked to know his son's relations with a half-Korean half American girl that he has brought from America. When Chandran is opposed by his parents to marry the girl he loves, he sounds rational.

However, Ponni, a low caste woman we meet in The Dark Room, does not seem to suffer at the hands of her husband, nor does she have any pessimistic outlook, in her life. She is full of life with an independent mind of her own to face the challenges of life.

Conclusion

R.K. Narayan's characters, unlike the English novelists, are not topical or of utilitarian value; they are really true to life and deep rooted in their tradition and culture. His approach to his character is greatly based on his personal experience. What amuses Narayan most are the oddities, angularities, and eccentricities in his people. He seeks to delineate through his novels the way of life of the group of people with whose psychology and background he is most familiar. It is his intimate relationship with the characters, his involvement in the milieu he creates which holds his novels together. He really enjoyed in his literary compositions but he was very careful to make necessary corrections revisions and tightening of the sentences. After such careful craftsmanship R.K. Narayan was able to produce novels, which have a grasp of social structure of his society and an extraordinary fluency in human relationships.

In the people of R.K. Narayan vices and weaknesses are presented in a tolerant way. There are no devils and angels in his novels, they are only human beings. Taken as a whole, there is a message of moderation in his novels. Some of his people have been acclaimed all over the world. Mr. Sampath, Margayya, Raju and Vasu—these protagonists are not common in the sense, they are complex characters. His characters like Chandran, Mali, and Raju try to do something larger than life. They rise but crash. They forget the golden principle of moderation. Through them, Narayan is teaching in an indirect way the lesson of moderation. Man keeps himself in restraints. They in the beginning seem to be incredible but it goes to the credit of Narayan that they become such great characters. He does not seriously describe in detail any social problems in his novels because he is a pure artist not a social reformer. His novels are not a medium for propagating his views-political, economic, moral or religious. He is always impartial and dispassionate in presenting the segments of life in his novels. As far as the purpose of his novels is concerned, his novels aim to provide pure entertainment to the reader, with a moral vision.

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