



A BRIEF STUDY OF CHARACTERIZATION IN THE NOVELS OF ANAND AND NARAYAN

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ABSTRACT

Narayan is one of the great triumvirate of the Indian English fiction. His characters are true domiciles of Malgudi. He has presented "a considerable section of Indian society striving to live its daily life in a definite historical situation that is not of a few intellectually or emotionally adventurous persons. He is talking, but of more sizeable and static section of Indian society." He has portrayed a variety of characters covering the whole gamut of life living in the locale of Malgudi. There are vendors, tourists-guides, money lenders, professors, drivers, travelers, dancers, school masters, children, housewives. His characters represent varied facets of human nature which are neither good nor bad. Human nature is presented veraciously and interestingly and memorably, there is no overt condemnation or praise. He has not idealized or glorified them. There is truthfulness, compassion and authorial detachment. He portrayed his characters as he saw them in real life. There are elements of frustration, illusion, deception and achievements.

Mulk Raj Anand not only humanized the English novel but also enlarged its scope by introducing into it new themes and entirely new set of Characters. His novel present a fictional world peopled by a striking variety of characters, covering a wide area of Indian social and political scene, over a period of more than thirty years. His fiction is a huge country fair where all kinds of people rub shoulders. He covered the entirely social gamut from the maharajas to mendicant; from the Anglo-Indian to the Untouchables, there are Nabobs, landlords, soldiers, lawyers, politician, revolutionaries, priests, teachers, merchants, contractors, money-lenders, clerks, factory workers, coolies, sweepers, washer-men, cobblers, barbers, carpenters, fruit-vendors, farmers and coppersmiths.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION:

The novel, a popular form of literature, contains all the accessories of drama minus the presentation on the stage. It is defined as "long narrative in prose detailing the actions of fictitious people". George Meredith called it "a summary of actual life". The chief elements of fiction are: Plot, character, setting, conflict and point of view. Aristotle said, "Plot is the soul of tragedy". Characterization is an important aspect of novel. Some works are character driven. The focus there is on the character's personality than on the events. The significance of characterization is as important as the plot. Characters delineate the plot elements. A novelist focuses on revelation of different traits of a character such as general, personal, physical and emotional. There are confession, self revelations and actions. There are principal characters, subordinate characters and minor characters. Krishnan, in English Teacher, Mr. Srinivas, in Mr.Sampath, Jagan, in The Vendor of Sweets, Chandran in Bachelor of Arts. Margayya, in The Financial Expert, Raju, in The Guide, The subordinate characters supplement or complement the hero's action/s. The subordinate characters in Narayan are Ravi in Mr. Sampath, Mali in Vendor of Sweet, Balu and Dr.Pal, in the Financial Expert. Minor character like Marco, Gafur also have their own significance in the scheme of things.

Characterization is an important aspect of novel. Characters are described by the course of their development in a work of literature. The two types of fictional characters described by E M Forster in his "Aspects of Novel" (1927) are 'Flat' and 'Round' characters. Flat characters are two-dimensional in that they are relatively uncomplicated and do not change throughout the course of a work. They are often said to have no emotions. By contrast round characters are complex and undergo development, sometimes sufficiently surprise the readers. We see them with a multi-faceted personality and background.

Narayan focused more of characterization than on plots.

Narayan concentrated mainly on the portrayal of characters: He said "my focus is all on character. If his personality comes alive, the rest is easy for me." He in his interview to William Walsh he said: "My main concern is with human character—a central character from whose point of view the world is seen and who tries to get over a difficult situation or succumbs to it or fights it in his own setting."

Narayan showed interest in varieties of people, especially the vast majority of the average and the ordinary, and in the limitless

possibilities of their lives. The Malgudi, his Casterbridge is a wholly imaginary suburban locale, there indeed one finds "God's plenty." to study at close quarter's human individuals and human relationships in all their variety and intricacy. It also helps him in creating the illusion of realism,

Characters from middle class background

Narayan deliberately restricted himself to and insists on matters of everyday life, He chose ordinary men and women for his fictional contemplation. His protagonists are anything but outstanding and adventures. His novels are peopled by average and ordinary men and women, who generally belong to the middle, and lower middle-classes of Indian society..He him-self came from the middle-class. Therefore he has given an authentic and convincing account of them. Their world is the precise area of his creative genius. As H.M. Williams has noted, "Private life, family relations,, individuals and their ambitions, success and frustrations of simple Indians have provided Narayan with a plethora of subject-matter."

Narayan's Heroes victims of life's irony

The heroes of Narayan are rarely very adventures and vibrant. They do not control events, the events control them. They are helpless creatures torn by desires and tossed by the caprice of fortune. Chandran, the Bachelor of Arts, intensely in love with Malathi, at last runs away from home. Mr. Sampath, the cunning shark, also is impelled by luck and at last leaves Malgudi forever. The English teacher, Krishnan when his wife is dead, finds solace in the communion, and Raju, the railway guide on whom the sainthood is thrust, become a willing martyr.

Realistic Heroes

Narayan's heroes are not impressive figures. His are the most realistic novels in the Indo-Anglian fiction. His characters are not archetypal. He gives wealth of details and accuracy. We see them around us in flesh and blood. In his novel, The Guide, railway Raju, the tourist guide, presents a realistic picture of the life of a tourist guide with perfect realism..There are the details of the tourist trade and also analysis of the attitude of guides to his customers. In Mr. Sampath, there are details of a film production which are as interesting and also realistic. Krishnan, in The English Teacher, his constant self-criticism, going to classes unprepared comments on the English spelling, his spending of time is marking the attendance, killing time in composition class are realistic. In Waiting for the Mahatma,, there is wave of patriotism. There is also the entry

of Mahatma Gandhi on the scene. He is made to stay in the Harijan Colony near the river. Narayan's realism is convincing and credible.

His characters are distinct from one another. We cannot put all of them in one class. Ramani is quite different from Mr. Sampath, Margayya from Raju, Shanta Bai from Susila or Rosie.

In Narayan's novels there is place for the so-called villains. There are some dishonest traits in the characters **Mr. Sampath, Margayya, Rosie, Raju**. But one feels compassionate towards them looking at their mistakes owing to the circumstances or fate.

There are some enigmatic characters who, frequently appear in Narayan's novels. Marco is one such character in **The Guide**. He is self-centered and eccentric. He claims absolute right over Rosie's body and soul. Raju says, **"Dead and decaying things seemed to unloosen his tongue and fire his imagination, rather than things that lived and moved and swung their limbs"**

Typical Indian Heroines:

Among his women characters Savitri, in **Dark Room** stands for a devoted and submissive wife. She is representative of wifely devotion in the Indian myths and legends. There is her silent suffering and temporary rebelling, and rebellion ending in abject surrender. It throws light on the male-dominating Hindu family culture. Savitri does self-evaluation when she says **"We are responsible for our position. We accept food, shelter and comforts that you give, and are what we are..... I don't possess anything in this world"**. She realizes her place in society. She says **"What possession can a woman call her own except her body? Everything else that she has is her father's, her husband's or her son's"**. There is the final acceptance of the defeat when she says **"I am like bamboo pole which cannot stand without a wall to support it."**

Rosie in **The Guide**, though modern, not meek and submissive like other heroines, resigns to her fate after all the excursions and confrontations. When Raju is arrested for the forgery she tells him. **"I felt all along you were not doing the right things. This is Karma. What can we do?"** In spite of her second relation with Raju, there is typical middle class morality and subservient attitude in her, when she says **"after all he is my husband. I have to respect him. I cannot leave him there"**.

CHARACTERS IN MULKA RAJ ANAND:

Mulka Raj Anand was a novelist of urgent social concerns and preoccupations. He is considered the Messiah of the exploited and downtrodden. He focused on the tyranny of the caste system, its injustice, and its social, moral and economic consequences. His heroes are victims of all kinds of exploitation. There is the exploitation of children, like Munoo in *Coolie*, Bakha in *Untouchable* and Bhikhu in *The Road* and Gangu in *Two Leaves and a Bud*. In his preface to "Two Leaves and a Bud". He said "All these heroes and the other men and women in his novels, were the reflections of the real life people, he had known during his childhood and youth. He further said that they were flesh of his flesh and blood of his blood. Anand introduced the economically and socially marginalized sections of society into his novels, making them the focus of his narratives.

Untouchable is one of the classic examples of the story of the exploitation of the underprivileged class. He is a symbolic figure, a larger than life figure, a true representative of the oppressed. Anand entitled the novel 'Untouchable' and not 'The Untouchable'. By doing so, he made Bakha a universal representative of the untouchables. Though the scene of the novel belongs to a small, inferior town of Punjab, the happenings are pan Indian in character. Bakha starts his day welcomed by the abuses of his father. He is forced to clean the Latrines with a brush and a basket. While walking through the streets of the town, a caste Hindu gets defiled by his touch to which he tries to apologize, joining his hands in humility, he stands deaf and dumb. The people gather around the

scene and abuse Bakha. He pleads but no one feels pity for him. The defiled man gives a slap on Bakha's face and leaves the place.

The theme of exploitation is best expressed through the character of Sohini, Bakha's sister. She exemplifies the sex exploitation. She becomes the victim of sexual exploitation due to her caste and poverty.

Bakha's father Lakha is the symbol of passive submission to the exploitation by the high castes. He represents the force of tradition, orthodoxy and conservation.

Coolie, Anand shows the exploitation of Munoo. His father is victim of the feudal exploitation and mother of poverty and hunger. As the central theme of the novel is exploitation, Anand portrays two classes of characters: the exploiter and the exploited. Munoo is the only major character and a number of minor characters are placed around him. There are two classes of characters of British origin in Anand's novels. First there are owners of the capitalist machinery like cotton mills, tea estates and banks. Secondly there is the entire British bureaucracy. In *Coolie* most of the British characters belong to the first category. They are shown as racist. They willfully banish the natives. They are paragons of the capitalist exploitation. They are symbols of callousness of capitalists. In the group of Indian minor characters Daya Ram, Babu Nathu Ram, Ganpat, Bibi Uttam Kaur and Sir Todar Mal and his wife belong to the class exploiters in a restricted sense.

The Road, deals with the theme of exploitation of children. Here the main character is Bhikhu. It is said that the theme of *Untouchable* (1936) is repeated twenty five years later in *The Road*. Though the setting and characters are changed, the theme of exploitation of the low caste by the high caste is the same. Bulandshahr of Uttar Pradesh is replaced by Govardhan of Haryana, Bakha is replaced by Bhikhu. Pandit Kalinath is replaced by Pundit Suraj Mani. Mala and Raukmini are on the place of Sohini of *Untouchable*.

Anand wanted to show that even attainment of independence did not bring significant change in the misfortune of the untouchables. In *Two Leaves and a Bud*, Anand describes the poor condition of Gangu. The disadvantage of capitalism are experienced by the villages. Gangu is a sufferer of the cruel behaviour of the landlords like Munoo. All are exploited by the high caste Hindus of the Indian Society.

His uniqueness lay in presenting the most comprehensive picture of the Englishmen in India during the colonial period. His British characters reveal great variety of types. First there is, the "Pucka-sahib" as Reggie Hunt and Charles Croft-Cooke in **Two Leaves and a Bid**, the opposite type is the liberal Briton, a rebel against the cult of the white man's burden. This type is ably represented by Dr. John de la Harve in **Two Leaves and a Bud**; the kindly Captain Owen who figures in both **The Village** and **Across the Black Waters**. In between those two extremes stands a well-meaning English man, still unable to establish a rapport with the colonial Indian, owing to mists of misunderstanding. Mr. England in **Coolie** is a fine example of this. His visit to Babu Nathoo Ram's house shows a saga of disastrous misunderstanding on the part of both the guest and the host. There are eccentric Englishmen in Anand's novels. Sir Hercules Long in **The Village** is seen writing "interminable treatises full of wise saying for the edification of illiterate villagers".

Voicing the exploited

Anand's displayed how the British Empire degraded and debased the character of the Indians who were serving it. It created a group of native flatterers who became easy victims for exploitation in the hands of their masters. And the Indians such as Nathoo Ram, Daya Ram lost their sense of humanity, decency, and self-respect. On the other hand we have Dr. Prem Chand who is an independent medical practitioner and is not subservient, conducts himself with dignity and self respect.

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