



R. K. Narayanan's Exploration of Multiculturalism in the Malgudi Region

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Abstract

R.K Narayan's study sheds insight on regional cultural studies during the Malgudi era. The study begins by defining cultural studies and its theories. Later in the study, the paper discusses the regional description in Malgudi Days. Malgudi's setting is outstanding, as many other authors have stated. Malgudi is a fictional small village in South India. This dissertation seeks to investigate the cultural diversity of the Malgudi region during the Malgudi period. R.K Narayan describes the mindset of various individuals in various locations. Finally, the research finishes by giving R.K Narayan's style as well as the regional study based on the Indianized description.

Keywords: Regional, Multiculturalism, Malgudi, R.K. Narayan, Geographical area.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism studies is an innovative multidisciplinary research and teaching discipline that analyses how "culture" develops and modifies human experiences, everyday life, social interactions, and power. The field's research and teaching investigate the relationships between culture as human expressive and symbolic activities and cultures as unique ways of living. Multiculturalism studies draws on methods and theories from literary studies, sociology, communications studies, history, cultural anthropology, and economics, combining the strengths of the social sciences and the humanities. Multiculturalism studies addresses new concerns and challenges in today's society by working beyond these boundaries. Rather than seeking answers that will stand the test of time, cultural studies creates adaptable tools for a continually changing environment. Cultural life is involved with more than just symbolic communication; it is also the realm in which we create collective goals for ourselves and begin to cope with them as evolving communities. A cultural study is concerned with understanding the processes through which societies and the many groups within them come to grips with history, communal life, and future difficulties.

Since culture is now regarded as the source of art and literature, cultural criticism has gained traction, and as a result, Raymond Williams' term "cultural materialism," Stephen Greenblatt's term "cultural poetics," and Bakhtin's term "cultural prosaic" have all gained prominence in the field of Cultural Studies and cultural criticism. The techniques of Cultural Studies-

- 1) Transcend the boundaries of a certain field, such as literary criticism or history
- 2) They are politically involved.
- 3) The techniques of Cultural Studies.
- 4) Examine not just the works of culture but also the means of creation.

In Multiculturalism Studies, representation is a significant idea and denotes a language in which all objects and interactions get defined, a language tied to questions of class, power and ideology, and located within the context of "discourse". The cultural practise of providing dolls to girls can be understood within the patriarchal discourse of femininity, which states that females are weaker and more delicate and require soft things, and that grooming, care, and other feminine tasks are learned through dolls. This gender discourse is linked to the masculine discourse and the larger framework of power relations in culture. For Culture Studies, identity is formed through experience, which includes representation—the consumption of signs, the creation of meaning from signs, and the knowing of meaning.

R.k Narayan's Geographical Description in Malgudi Days

R.K. Narayan's Malgudi men and women symbolise India's indigenous and adopted cultures. Narayan's literature is preoccupied with major issues of culture and identity in both the colonial and postcolonial eras. The novel's social framework is formed by the following Malgudi landmarks: Malgudi station, the central co-operative Land Mortgage Bank, The Bombay Anand Bhawan, Kabir Street, Lawley Extension, the Regal Hair-cutting Saloon, the statue of Sir Frederic Lawley, the Sarayu River, Groves, Nallapa's Mempi Hills, Hotels, cinemas. Malgudi has numerous transformations as time passes.

Characters in various novels go through different stages of development. Malgudi is neither a village nor a city in Swami and Friends, but rather a small town that grows in time and place as the series progresses.

It evolved from a modest rural community to a city with some industrialization. The Malgudi of Swami and Friends and The Vendor of Sweets are not the same place. Even inside The Guide, the same work, we may observe it going through different stages of development. From a topographical perspective, the Albert Mission College, run by Principal Brown, the Central Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank with its imposing structure, the newly constructed bungalows in the Lawly Extension, Englandia Banking Corporation, and The Sunrise Pictures all eloquently tell the tale of the town's expansion.

India is seen by Narayan from within. Malgudi offers a small representation of India. From Swami and Friends to A Tiger for Malgudi, Narayan opens up fresh perspectives on life in Malgudi. In his early writings, Malgudi is a small town rather than a village or city. It is drowsy, diminutive, and quiet. We move through time with each successive novel, gaining definition and importance for Malgudi. The significant landmarks are unaltered.

By its side, the River Sarayu runs On the meandering Sarayu, a few boats drift leisurely by the north side of the town; the owners are content if they capture just one fish. Other notable locations include the Mempi Forest, which can be reached via Grove Street, the Nallappa Mango Grove, the Trunk Road to Trichinopoly, and the Malgudi Railway Station, from where one can catch a train to Madras. The Market Road, which is the lifeblood of Malgudi, the Racecourse Road, as well as various streets and lanes like Kabir Street and Kabir Lane, Vinayaka Mudali Street, Anderson Lane, Sarayu Street, Kulam Street, Smith Street, Abu Lane, Ellammal Street, Keelacheri, etc. are all important thoroughfares in Malgudi. Malgudi increasingly changes as time goes on. With modern streets, banking institutions, movie theatres, smugglers' dens, and even a circus, it cultivates a metropolitan culture.

This transformation impacts not just the landscape of the area, but also the cultural and social milieu. Narayan observes and beautifully portrays how a deeply traditional community eventually becomes conscious of change. His works discreetly reflect the shifting social, political, and cultural elements that shape Indian life.

In his stories, Malgudi's innocence eventually gives way to experience, and he learns to embody the modern spirit. The diverse factors acting on the societal and individual planes throughout transitional periods in Malgudi history add to R.K. Narayan's word of fiction's humorous scenario.

All of this, however, would take place much later, in the aftermath of independence in the late 1940s. Malgudi, however, had a municipality, a Town Hall, a Club, and two schools—the Albert Mission School and the Board High School—even in its early thirties. The schoolboys are interested in cricket and discuss about Bradman, Hobbs, and Tate.

Malgudi is also influenced by the national liberation movement. Malgudi is well entrenched in the national mainstream. Malgudi also has a Central Jail, a Police Department, and a Circuit House. Sriram from Waiting for the Mahatma and Raju from The Guide are both imprisoned at Malgudi Central Jail. There is also a hospital because there is a Hospital Road in Swamy and Friends. Mr. Hentel is a manager in seamy and pals, one of Magudi's industries. We hear two weaving mills and a Mill Road in The Bachelor of Arts. There are two major supply stores: the Cooperative Store and the National Store. Mr. Sampath and Natraj are in charge of printing presses.

Narayan says,

Malgudi was a revelation to me since I lacked the interest in facts and other information that would be required to write about Malgudi or any other actual place. At first, I just saw the railroad station, which had a little platform with a banyan tree, a station master, and two trains every day—one coming and one going—instead of my entire town. The train had just arrived at Malgudi Station when I first sat down to write about my hometown on Vijayadasami.

Maludi Days: Understanding Multiculturalism

Malgudi is Narayan's humorous projection. Nationalists and nationalism are viewed with the same comedic irony in this make-believe community. This comedic irony is used to mock liars, hippies, domineering wives, and grandparents who are too lenient. This amply demonstrates the author's maturity and creative vision. The treatment of India's Malgudi is similar to that of R.K. Narayan. It is teeming with sanyasis, lechers, adulterers, money-grabbers, knaves, prostitutes, and would-be gangsters. The area is really chaotic. Wives often betray their husbands. Men are mesmerised by the actors' fictitious beauty and feminine sex. Children are rebelling against their parents and the established norms. When reading one of R.K. Narayan's novels, one experiences both happiness and pain. Similar to William Shakespeare's tragedies, there is a hint of melancholy and disappointment. Readers are forced to accept both the tragic and humorous perspectives of life by R.K. Narayan's works.

When one considers that the author of the novel is writing about a society in which girls are married at the age of fourteen, the attitude of universal indifference toward women's education requires very little justification. An unmarried girl over this age is considered to be an embarrassment for the family. When Chandran's mother is informed that the lady his son wishes to marry is approaching the age of sixteen in the Bachelor of Arts, she exclaims, "Sixteen! If they kept the girl unmarried until she was sixteen, they can't be doing well. She had to have gone through puberty years ago. They cannot be fine. In this community, we have a reputation to uphold."

The lines that follow reveal the ribbon vendor's feelings for a dog. The following lines are dedicated to the sensitive nature of Indians and their constant concern for all individuals.

"The ribbon vendor shouted, "Death alone can help that dog," as he sighed and turned to face it. What can we do with a creature that goes back to his fate with such a generous heart?"

Conclusion

Narayan uses straightforward words to present elegant prose. In his novels, he uses language that the average person uses in everyday life. "Narayan utilises a pure and limpid English, easy and natural in its form and tone, but always an evolved and conscious medium... Narayan's language is brilliantly fitted to transmit a new sensibility," writes William Walsh about Narayan's use of the English language. Saree, Deepavali, Pyol, Dhoti, Puja, Ahimsa, Jutka, Idli, Pulav, Khadi, Jibba, Puranas, and other terms that have already entered the English language are examples of Narayan's support for Indianness. Although Narayan is regarded as a pure artist who adheres to the principle of "art for art's sake," the overall impression of his inventiveness subtly suggests that he writes for a reason. Although Narayan's main goal is not to actively preach any philosophical idea, he is nonetheless successful in making some important life lessons visible through his comedic vision. He has thought ahead to how people will act in real-world situations. His main areas of focus are problems involving father-son or husband-and-wife relationships. His humour is laced with melancholy and sarcasm that captures life as it really is, complete with all of its mistakes and faults. His effort appears to raise awareness of some unspoken, impure standards. Narayan has sought to identify the real gap between norms that are preached and those that are actually practised through his works.

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