

**NAGARJUNA GOVERNMENT COLLEGE (A)
NALGONDA**

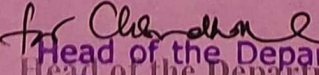
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**STUDENT STUDY PROJECT ON
TRADITION AND MODERNITY: TWO SIDES OF A COIN**

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Introduction

A tradition is a belief or behaviour passed down within a group or society with symbolic meaning or special significance with origins in the past. Tradition can persist and evolve for thousands of years – the word tradition itself derives from the Latin "tradere" literally meaning to transmit, to hand over, to give for safekeeping. The term tradition signifies certain customs, habits, tastes, beliefs and opinions which have been prevalent in the countries for a long time, which consequently acquires a contextual value.

It was originally used in Roman law to refer to the concept of legal transfers and inheritance. Tradition can also refer to beliefs or customs that are prehistoric, with lost or arcane origins, existing from time immemorial. Originally, traditions were passed orally, without the need for a writing system. Tools to aid this process include poetic devices such as rhyme and alliteration. Traditions represent a critical piece of our culture. They help form the structure and foundation of our families and our society. They remind us that we are part of a history that defines our past, shapes who we are today and who we are likely to become. Tradition reinforces values such as freedom, faith, integrity, a good education, personal responsibility, a strong work ethic, and the value of being selfless.

Modernity, a topic in the humanities and social sciences, is both a historical period, as well as the ensemble of particular socio-cultural norms, attitudes and practices that arose in the wake of the Renaissance. "Modernity" may refer to different time periods or qualities. "Modernity" as a historical category is marked by developments such as a questioning of the Late Latin adjective "modernus", a derivation from the adverb "modo" "presently, just now", is attested from the 5th century, at first in the context of distinguishing the Christian era from the pagan era. Modernity as opposed to tradition refers to an outlook that is generally future oriented and forward looking. Modernity rests on a rational interpretation of religious, social and economic institutions and phenomena. Modernity is identified very often with the industrialized western civilization where the family relationships, legal institutions and statecraft underwent tremendous transformation following the Reformation and Renaissance. Movements for abolition of slavery, voting rights to the women and universal suffrage were the natural outcome of the abandonment of traditional belief and practices in favour of a more democratic and equalitarian political and social system.

Traditionalism, which is based on tradition, is a dominant way of life. The word of tradition means "the handing down orally of stories, beliefs, customs etc. from generation

There are characteristics that tradition requires. These characteristics are; certain beliefs and custom. Also these characteristics should have a long history, otherwise; they cannot be tradition. And if there is no tradition, that means there is no traditionalism. Tradition disallows freedom. It is reluctant to change, resistant to the new. Traditionalism is an umbrella term for a multitude of movements and trends of the first half of the 20th century as a reaction to the increasingly accelerated modernisation process and to the hastily development of both society and literature, promoted traditional values of the old rural society and of orthodoxism. Traditional values derive from a two to four thousand year old religious tradition that will typically adopt a complimentary view, for instance, of genders: men and women have different and complementary roles.

Modernity was associated with individual subjectivity, scientific explanation and rationalization, a decline in emphasis on religious worldviews, the emergence of bureaucracy, rapid urbanization. Change or modernity can be used interchangeably they are presented in two forms its either positive or negative. Modernists were typically younger people, and wanted more excitement in life. The modernisation theories suggested that societies were converging toward modern values, gradually abandoning their traditional values. This period marked sudden and unexpected break with traditional ways of viewing and interacting the world. The fact that both modern methods and traditional ways are both important and valuable for our community cannot be over emphasized. Modernity meant new formats for new thoughts- innovative ways of writing and thinking, new fields of inquiry, the infusion of women into historically male-dominated work forces, the emergence of new art forms.

Harindranath Chattopadhyaya, Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Romesh Chunder Dutt, J.R.R. Tolkien, Oscar Wilde, D.H. Lawrence, George Orwell, Joseph Conrad, Wallace Stevens, Gottfried Benn, T.S. Eliot, Anna Akhmatova, William Faulkner, Dorothy Richardson, John Cowper Powys, Ezra Pound, W.H. Auden, Djuna Barnes, Andrei Bely, Gottfried Benn, Alexander Blok, Bertolt Brecht are some of the famous writers, who dealt with the theme of tradition and modernity. This particular project focusses on two novels. The Guide and Swami and Friends by R.K. Narayan.

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami, was an Indian writer known for his works set in the fictional South Indian town of Malgudi. This master storyteller was born on October 10, 1906 in Madras or present day Chennai. He was a leading author of early Indian literature in English along with Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. Narayan's first four books were the semi- autobiographical trilogy of Swami and Friends, The Bachelor

appeared in 'The Hindu' newspaper. The fictional town of Malgudi was first introduced in *Swami and Friends*. Besides novels, he wrote short stories, travelogues, condensed versions of Indian epics in English and his memoir. Narayan highlights the social context and everyday life of his characters. Narayan typically portrays the peculiarities of human relationships and the ironies of Indian daily life, in which modern urban existence clashes with ancient tradition. His style is graceful, marked by genial humour, elegance and simplicity. He won numerous awards and adulation during his life time. These include the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1958, the Padma Bhushan in 1964, and the AC Benson Medal by the Royal Society of Literature in 1980, besides the Padma Vibhushan in 2000. He was nominated to Rajya Sabha in 1989. This great story teller passed away on May 13, 2001 at the age of 94. Narayan played an exceptional role in making India accessible to the outside world through literature.

The Guide by R.K. Narayan was published in 1958. Conflicts between tradition and modernity become a prevalent and predominant theme in R.K. Narayan's *The Guide*. The independence had brought not only political changes but also social and religious changes. The social norms and religious milieus of India had been greatly influenced though people were still trying to rigidly cling to their ancient traditions and cultural values. There was a great conflict between traditional values and western modernity amongst the people of India. Malgudi's traditional domestic setting has no place for any women having a non-traditional identity. Rosie, as a rebel, reflects the complex blending of tradition and modernity. *The Guide* suggests that both have their merits, though ultimately the novel implies that there is a particularly special power embedded in tradition. Tradition and Modernity are two contrasting elements that predominate in almost all the novels of R.K. Narayan.

Swami and Friends is the first of a trilogy of novels written by R.K. Narayan in 1935. *Swami and Friends* is the story of a 10-year-old boy, growing up during this particular time, his innocence, wonder, mischief and growing pains. He is a student at Albert Mission School, a school established by the British which gives importance to Christianity, English literature and education. It is set in India but Swami's main concerns are the same as any middle-class pupil of his time and ours. Of course, there are cultural differences. He learns how to count with mangoes when a European boy would have heard about pears and apples. The fact that this is colonised India also seeps through the novel. His life is dramatically changed when Rajam – a symbol of colonial super power – joins the school and he and Rajam become friends. The influence of the Vedic scripture becomes more distinct in Narayan's novel in order to show the content and the conflict between good and evil. The place Malgudi becomes the backdrop of the customs, beliefs and way

AN ANALYSIS OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Narayan's novels are written in a bi-cultural perspective. The clash between ancient Indian traditions and values on the one side and modern western values on the other side is visible in many novels. Malgudi is the fictional setting of R.K.Narayan's novels and stories. This place has comparable standard to the other writers of English literature. It is compared to 'border countries' of Sir Walter Scott, 'Lake District' of William Wordsworth, 'The Wessex' of Thomas Hardy, or 'five Towns' of Arnold Bennet.

Malgudi is an imaginary South Indian town round which narayan has woven the complex pattern of the lives of his characters. The readers are taken to this imaginary land to laugh, sympathise and share the vicissitudes of its inhabitants. Narayan is at his best giving his fictional setting of Malgudi a reality of his own. Narayan's reality of Malgudi is the presentation of different human attitudes individually differing in their environment in a most realistic manner. It is usually built round Indian beliefs and superstitions. The smells, sights, sounds and flavours form the part of the experience of Malgudi. They are conveyed to all of us with extraordinary vividness.

The people of the Malgudi have strong faith on the traditions and customs of the place. The setting of the Malgudi is quite distinctive and the most part of the place is descriptive. The places of malgudi are not overshadowed by the people who inhabit it and they have nothing of special quality of their own. The portrayal of life is the main objective Narayan and it is adequate for the setting of Malgudi. There are characters that give meaning to the places of Malgudi and make them real and life like. There is a sense of familiarity of the place and streets of Malgudi. It is homebred. It creates a deeper and better understanding of its people and places establishing a close intimacy.

The aspect of Hindu sensibility that he explores relates to the complex fate of individual Indian view of life and not to an Indian affirmation of life. He has also tried to bridge the gulf between the past and the present. In almost all the novels of Narayan, Malgudi is also a character. Malgudi represented Indian in many aspects. The influence of changes of modernity over India has been narrated by Narayan with the help of his fictional town. But Narayan has kept his characters within the grip of culture. The Malgudian society and its tradition represent the society and the tradition of India as a whole.

The most dominant form of conflict in the fictional world of Narayan is one between tradition and modernity. This is a recurrent feature and there is a continuous nibbling, of the traditional values and modes of life by the forces of new civilisation. But in the conflict, it is the old tradition that gains and edge over modernity. The modern simply

circles. The Malgudi milieu stands in perpetual danger of numerous contradictions caused by old beliefs, superstitions and age-old culture on the one hand and glamour and attraction of the modern life-style and civilisation.

Religion in Malgudians who are in majority of the cases, Hindus, is deep rooted. Indians believe that marriages are made in heaven and solemnized on earth and the meeting between a bride and bridegroom takes place more by decree of fate than by coincidence or planning. The Malgudi culture is based on religion which sometimes borders on orthodoxy even to the extent of eccentricity. Malgudi makes advancement against the background of a changing Indian society. This advancement affects the place geographically, socially and culturally. Experience replaces innocence and Malgudi gets well set to embrace the modern spirit. The swift changes affect the orthodox Indian society with all its age old beliefs and superstitions.

Narayan's reality of Malgudi is the presentation of different human attitudes individually differing in their environment in a most realistic manner. It is usually built round Indian beliefs and superstitions. They are conveyed to all of us with extraordinary vividness. Narayan underlines the timeless quality of Malgudi in spite of disturbances and changes inside and outside. Malgudi is a place where people are not heroic. There is no control over the events but it seems as if they control everything.

The Malgudi existence is bi-polar-one resting on age old beliefs and values and the other on westernized way of living and economic progress. The grandmothers, uncles and aunts with their rigid religious beliefs and caste restrictions stand diametrically opposed to a set of young generation. The coming in of modern civilisation into an orthodox South Indian town manifests itself in many forms. In Narayan's fiction, the Malgudi men are caught in a mess caused by the tussle between the old tradition and modern civilization. Their life is crisscrossed by tradition and modernity. They encounter such situations as are incongruous and at times absurd. Individual aspirations and an urge for personal adventurism directly flow from the modern civilisation, the natural outcome of western education, adoption of new life styles and significant advancements made in the materialistic field.

A religious society is prone to stick to traditional modes of living and culture, which, under certain specified conditions, give rise to superstitions. As religion is something attached to man's beliefs and convictions, it paves way for traditionalism. Traditional beliefs and conservatism, notwithstanding, modernity carves out deep inroads into Malgudi culture. It appears in varying shades and colours and in manifold ways. It affects

geography reveals itself through events and establishes its identity. The weddings are marked by tallying of horoscopes and gold cornered, supremely fine and attractively printed invitation cards; shops, though ordinary looking and tiny, present shop keepers selling plantains, betel leaves, snuff and British biscuits.

R.K.Narayan's fiction attempts to comprehend, though in a low key, the clash of deep-rooted values of Indian culture with the modern West. Narayan's fiction reflects his intrinsic knowledge of Indian philosophy, classical literature, religion and ethics. It reflects, again through the lives of ordinary lower middle class people, the slow erosion of Indian traditions caught up in the crucible of change due to colonial influence. Narayan's small town of Malgudi has today rightly acquired a classic significance and it is considered as a microcosm of India.

DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF INDIAN SOCIETY

Conflicts between tradition and modernity become a prevalent and predominant theme in R.K. Narayan's *The Guide*, a classic of Narayan's works. The novel was published in 1958 when India had already become independent. The independence had brought not only political changes but also social and religious changes. There was a great conflict between traditional values and western modernity amongst the people. The interface between traditions and modernity is mediated with characteristics irony. Narayan is interested in looking at the extent to which the cultural life of the past can be viably integrated with the post – independence reality of India. The traits of Indian manners and customs are also reflected in this novel.

Narayan has given a clear picture of India at the time of narration without idealizing the country and he has not condemned it. The poverty of India has been reflected with a personal touch of the author. The villagers are shown as suffering from poverty and ignorance and their illiteracy has been reflected as the root cause for all their sufferings. They are as gullible and kind hearted as any Indian village habitats of India.

Narayan's *The Guide* depicts modernization overtaking protagonist-narrator Raju's hometown of Malgudi in Southern India during the early twentieth century. Not only new technologies associated with industrialization- such as the railroad- introduced during this period, but social relations are also upended as hierarchies of caste and gender are re-negotiated. The novel's attitude towards the relationship between tradition and modernity is complex and ambiguous. These forces are sometimes depicted as in conflict, and sometimes in harmony. As all of the characters grapple with tradition and modernity, *The Guide* suggests that both have their merits, though ultimately the novel implies that there is a particularly special power embedded in tradition.

The character groupings in Narayan's *The Guide* roughly corresponded to these two areas, tradition and modernity. Raju's parents and uncle, old Payola school master, Gaffur, the driver, Joseph, the steward of the bungalow where Macro stayed are all characters who exhibit the traditional Indian culture and ethos. Raju, Rosie and Macro, on the contrary, bear the features of western or modern culture and manners. The first group always tries to cling the traditional values and norms tightly where the second group being tempered with modern western craze attempts to break through all traditions and taboos. Thus the conflict between tradition and modernity is evident in the behaviour and conversation of these characters through the whole novel.

There is a situation in the very opening part of the novel where the conflict of modernity and tradition is depicted through the characters of Velan and Raju. Traditionally, the people of

respect. But Raju, when he was sitting lonely on the river steps, after his release from the prison, did not allow the villager, Velan to do so. Raju told that one should not bowed their head low before a human being instead of God.

The coming of modernisation is indicated in the novel by the sweeping changes that overtake the town of Malgudi during Raju's childhood. Primary among these changes is the construction of the railroad. As an emblem of modernization, the railroad brings about numerous changes to Malgudi. For one, the railroad opens Malgudi up to a wilder world, as people from all parts of India. The railroad also leads to greater economic property. Raju's father, who previously made a living from a modest shop, grows richer when he opens another shop in the newly build railway station. The family, therefore, benefits from the developments that overtake the town. Raju's own move from a shopkeeper to a tourist guide after the opening of the railroad reflects the way in which the railroad leads to greater and more varied opportunities for the townspeople. Raju's work as a tourist guide would not have been possible without the railroad, which brings the visitors who become his clients.

In opening up the town to a wilder world, the railroad also reveals the ways in which modernity leads to the re-negotiation of traditional gender and caste hierarchies. One of the people who appear in the town, thanks to the railroad, is Rosie, wife of Marco, the scholar who arrives in Malgudi to undertake research. In many senses, Rosie represents the ways in which gender and caste hierarchies are being upended in modern times. She is an educated woman, having gone so far in her studies as to gain a master's degree. Furthermore, she is a woman who has married outside of her caste-allying herself to Marco, and later to Raju. Although she does not marry Raju her relationship to him is unusual not only because they are an unmarried couple which, by the standards of the time and the society, is scandalous but because Raju, like Marco, is also of a higher caste.

Raju as a tourist guide meets a couple Marco and Rosie. Marco concentrates more on other materialistic affairs and gives less attention towards his beautiful wife Rosie. He neglected his friends Guffur's warning and even his mother's advice. He turned a deaf ear even to the voice of his own soul. Raju helped Rosie in making her dreams come true. Rosie became a professional dancer. Raju played well the role of an impresario and became popular and rich. Raju was possessive of Rosie and these possessive natures prevented him from showing the letter that came from a lawyer's firm in Madras asking for Rosie's signature on an application for the release of a box of jewellery. Raju forged her signature and mailed the document for which he was caught and sent to jail for two years.

Rosie, as a rebel, reflects the complex blending of tradition and modernity. The art of dancing is

suppressed. Being a post-graduate Rosie could not obey the suppression of society, yet she had a strong passion for the art of dance. She married Marco who was an educated modern man so that he can patron her passion of dancing. But Marco was a dominating kind of man who did not allow his wife to practice dance.

Rosie cannot cope up with the archaeological interest of her husband. Like other traditional wives of India Rosie longs for her husband's love, affection and care for her. Marco being an extremely materialistic man has no time to pass with his wife. These differences are the cause of their quarrel. Marco's behaviour led Rosie to an adulterous relationship with Raju. But at one point she realised that violation of traditional sacredness of married life might lead to her doom. She confessed her adultery with Raju and begged pardon from her husband. She did everything what a traditional Hindu wife does for the forgiveness from her husband. "He looked at me coldly. I stood like a prisoner at the bar. I have come to apologies sincerely. I want to say I will do whatever you ask me to do. I committed a blunder..." (Narayan, 133).

Rosie's emprise of a modern identity and life is ultimately reflected in the fact that she ends up as an independent women making a career for herself as a dancer. Unlike traditional women, she escapes dependence on men, leaving behind both Marco and Raju. And yet, the art that Rosie practices is the classical art of temple dancing, and ancient art form practised by generations of women in her family. It is through this art that she achieves her liberation. Indeed, her power as an independent women and an artist is associated with the traditional "snake dance" that she performs only on rare occasions. She uses an ancestral art, classical dance in order to achieve her liberation as women. Through the figure of Rosie, the novel suggests that tradition and modernity are not always in conflict, but can also complement one another and work in tandem.

In *The Guide*, the theory of "karma", a traditional belief of Hinduism, is depicted by the character of Raju. According to Hinduism it is a foregone conclusion that an individual lives and dies in accordance with his karma and vasanas (impressions the personality has gathered from own thoughts and actions of the past or previous lives). Desires and thoughts which spring forth from one's vasanas makes it appear inevitable. Rosie is the strong believer of this traditional theory. When she learns of Raju's arrest, she comments, "I felt all along you were not doing right things. This is karma." (Narayan, 193) The conflict of tradition and modernity is evident in Marco's character. Marco is very influenced by western materialism. He is an archaeologist who is assigned to discover the history of sculptures in the cave of Malgudi. Marco wanted her wife Rosie to help his study. He did not even want his wife to disturb his work. Marco inspite of being a scholar behaves like a traditional husband never evaluating Rosie's likings. It seems that he has married not to have a wife but one to do only his household chores.

who needs emotional support from her husband. Rosie's expectation from her husband was not much. What much she desires is an approval of her desire for dance, but she is never granted. Moreover he humiliates her. Like a traditional husband Marco wanted his wife to be subservient to him like his servant Joseph, who in his opinion was a wonderful man. "I don't see him, I don't hear him but he does everything for me at the right time. That's how I wanted things to be.... That's what I thought when I saw Rosie demonstrates to me in her hotel room." (Narayan, 78). The conflict of tradition and modernity is also evident in the behaviour of Raju's mother when Rosie comes to Raju's house for shelter after being deserted by her husband. The difference in attitude, as well as the temperament is seen here.

Raju's mother is a traditional Hindu woman who is denied public exposure. She is prohibited and hence afraid to go out alone, where as Rosie is a modern woman. The western influence is evident in her attitude, behaviour and temperament. She is not all afraid to go out alone. Being a traditional woman Raju's mother was very hospitable to Rosie. This incident marks the replacement of tradition by modernity. Raju's uncle was a man of traditional patriarchal society. Raju's mother thought that his brother will be able to make her son to abandon Rosie by force but the reality is not so. The Guide as a novel covers many sins and many virtues of its characters. R.K Narayan has given a true social picture of India through The Guide. The protagonist, Raju, goes to the Mangala village on the Sarayu River and he stays in a temple on the river bank. There he meets Velan, a simple villager, and it was this meeting which was fated to involve him in endless trouble. Later, he will be accepted as a saint by the rustiest of Mangala. A close reading of the novel illustrates that Raju is not a bad person. Though he flirts with Rosie, married women, his heart warns him of being in an Indian society and he is not at ease and peace. In his own words he establishes his fear: "My thoughts dwelt on her golden touch. A part of my mind went on saying. 'No, no. It is not right. Marco is her husband. It does not be a thought of Rosie, besides her modern- type relationship with Raju, regards Marco as her husband. Raju slowly changed himself without his knowledge as a real sage. In the course of his ordeals, he changes himself thoroughly and accepts the challenges of reality. He plays his role of a holy man with a ring of sincerity and embraces death at the end of novel.

Thus, 'Railway Raju', the Guide becomes a 'spiritual guide' and all his imperfections and impersonations turn into a real act of self-sacrifice. Narayan represented Indians through symbols also in many of his novels. In The Guide Narayan has used symbols which represent typical Indian tradition and culture. The temple, river, the fate and excessive innocence represents the old nature of Indian culture. The busy railway station as portrayed by Narayan originally symbolizes the upcoming of new culture and tradition. It represents the beginning of the modernity into Malgudi. The unwilling fast underwent by Raju is a symbol that indicates that a fake sanyasi has started his real sacrifice to the welfare of the Malgala villagers. The

In all possible ways the theme, the characterization, the use of language, the locale and the philosophy, the author has presented the novel as a typical Indian novel. Narayan has captured the flora fauna, the caste system, and the social and political conditions and also very influenced that has been enforced o Indian culture and tradition. The novel raises many disturbing questions about human motives and actions, compelling us to ponder problems such as appearance and reality, the man and the mask, ends and means. Of all Narayans novels The Guide teases us into thought to an extend no other novel of his does.

Narayans fictional technique is also at its subtlest in The Guide. The narrative alternates between the past and the present, 'swinging backward and forward' as Rosie does when she dances, thus emphasizing how Raju present is inexorably rooted in his past. The blend of the omniscient and the autobiographical methods of narration end the story with a double perspective. The novel, which opens with Raju in the ruined village temple about to be reverentially accepted as a sadhu, ends in the same locality with his enforced death, thus giving the tale a perfectly rounded circular structure.

Through Raju, Narayan points out the absurdity of man's attempt to aspire, marks insignificance and the mystery of life with all its ironies. The Guide has a double meaning and Raju is in a sense a double character. As a tour guide and lover, he is impulsive, unprincipled and self-indulgent. After his imprisonment and transformation as a holi man, he is careful, thoughtful and self-disciplined. A rogue and a picaro is thus transformed or metamorphosed into a saint or saviour. He may or may not have died, but he is certainly regenerated. Narayan's presentation of superstitions, rituals and faiths and believes point out that his novels are abound with Indians, but in one impart respect he deviates from Indians. That is, he steers clear of didacticism. The conflict between the older and new values, ideals and believes is very prominent in the novel's narration. In this fusion of the two sets of ideals and lifestyles, the characters point towards the social issue, situations and challenges to survival faced by India as whole in its progress towards western modernity. Raju can be considered as the average Indian in contact with the new modern concepts of life and survival.

Indian modernity marks its own distinct path. This path consists in taking critical aspects of western modernity and trying to combine them with India's usable past. But because both western modernity and Indian traditions have multiple possibilities and processes, the self-constitution of India's modernity becomes a plural and diverse adventure rather than any simplistic supplanting of tradition with modernity or the revival of tradition at the expense of modernity. Indian modernity is thus neither anti-traditional nor forces which are sometimes complementary and sometimes contradictory.

India's experiment in modernization. Narayan ridicules the exclusive orthodoxy of Indian conservatism and is clearly sympathetic towards modernity. His ironical attitude itself is largely western. It has few parallels in pre-modern Indian authors.

Narayan's attitude towards the relationship between tradition and modernity in *The Guide* is complex and ambiguous. On the one hand, the novel depicts the forces of tradition and modernity as deeply in conflict. On the other hand both forces seem to achieve balance in a figure like Rosie, who deploys the traditional art of classical dance practiced by generations of her family to achieve her liberation as a modern woman. Raju, however, is drawn back into the traditional in spite of himself ending his life as a holy man providing spiritual guidance to destitute villagers. The spiritual transformation that Raju undergoes in this traditional role suggests that the novel does ultimately privilege tradition over modernity.

A CROSS SECTION OF INDIAN SOCIETY

The most dominant form of conflict in the fictional world of Narayan is one between tradition and modernity. This is a recurrent feature and there is a continuous nibbling of the traditional values and modes of life by the forces of new civilization. But in this conflict, it is the old tradition that gains an edge over modernity. The modern simply touches the outer fringe of the society and does not, however, penetrate the innermost circles. The Malgudi milieu stands in perpetual danger of numerous contradictions caused by old beliefs, superstitions and age-old culture on the one hand and glamour and attraction of the modern life-style and civilization.

Narayan is clear on the point that Indian sensibility is different from the western sensibility and hence his novels have to embody a widely different mentality, feelings and responses. The Malgudians are thoroughly religious, God-fearing and conservative in thought and attitude. Narayan's novel *Swami and Friends* presents a traditional society. It experiences tangible changes because of the incursions of modernity. There is everywhere, a perceptible clash, and ever-going conflict between the old and the new, the ancient and the modern spirit and the orthodox and the liberal approach to social problems. Malgudi makes advancement against the background of a changing Indian society. This advancement affects the place geographically, socially and culturally.

Experience replaces innocence and Malgudi gets well set to embrace the modern spirit. The swift changes affect the orthodox Indian society with all its age-old beliefs and superstitions. The incongruities and contradictions proceed from collision of old conventions with the modern spirit. The Malgudi existence is bi-polar—one resting on age-old beliefs and values and the other on westernized way of living and economic progress. The grandmothers, uncles and aunts with their rigid religious beliefs and caste restrictions stand diametrically opposed to a set of young generation. The coming in of modern civilization into an orthodox South Indian town manifests itself in many forms. "Into this small South Indian town with its orthodox Indian values, the modern civilisation comes in all manifestations raising a flutter here and there, disturbing the quiet waters of Malgudi life." (Narayan, 124)

In the novel *Swami and Friends* the central theme is either growth towards emotional maturity which involves a crisis involving relations with others and the growth is made possible largely by the stability, solidarity and security of their respective families. Malgudi, during the 1930s, is a small town with an officer's club, two schools, a Municipal Board and a Town Hall. Its

mango grove and Mempi forests and there only to signify the existence of traditional resorts for sportive fun and frolics but new extensions, cricket clubs and various other features of modern civilisation add new dimensions and hue to the milieu.

Malgudi's ties with ancient traditions are strong but not so lasting as to counter the compulsion of outward changes. The geographical changes are perceptibly apparent. The appearance of railway station adds to the tourist attraction of the place. The Englandia Insurance Company, Truth Printing Works, The Regal Hair cutting Saloon, Anand Bhavan, The Central Cooperative Land Mortgage Bank, the Sunrise Studio, Lawley Extension and many other institutions bring Malgudi's existence closer to modernity.

Narayan has his roots both in religion and in family. Coming as he does of a traditional Hindu Brahmin family, he has to his credit all the religious traits attributed to him in his writings. Narayan's characters too are Hindu's, leading one of them being Brahmins. They represent Hindu view of religion as it is found in South India today. Swaminathan's blood burns with resentment while Ebenezer, the Christian fanatic tears his left ear off in disgust.

Narayan himself recounts his personal experiences "The Scripture classes were mostly devoted to attacking and lampooning the Hindu God's and violent abuses were heaped on idol worshippers as a prelude to glorifying Jesus." (Narayan, 112). The machinery preachers incite the listener's to embrace Christianity for receiving God's benedictions by hurling abuses on Hindu religion and its ideologies. The conflicts surface with Hindu boys suffering in Christian schools and Christian missionaries meeting the same treatment in streets. This leads to religious animosities between the two sects- the Hindu's and Christian's who had lived together in close harmony until the war of words started by the latter over the former gripped them. The Christians too fail to digest criticism of their faith. Swaminathan calls to question the godliness of Christ only for his non-vegetarianism.

The idea of a novel is best summarized in the words of Iyengar: "In my beginning is my end to my end is my beginning". The novel tradition in India, ever since independence, has been used as a medium by the writers to express the way of life of the group of people with whose psychology and background he's most familiar. The evident example of the same being writers like Mulk Raj Anand who painted the picture of India and presented it as if first hand. But in the same time, R.K. Narayan emerged as writer who used the novel as medium of reflection of India but Narayan's picture is overtly the Utopian picture of India. Narayan is able to maintain a sufficient distance from the "political" and "nationalist" using his "Touchstone method" and yet cater to the paradox that permeated in the lives of the Common Indian of the time. Narayan's Malgudi is neither a village nor a typical city but a town of modest size. It is a place that

Malgudi spread as Amazon are hints that point to the fact that Malgudi is a small representation of Narayans India which is steadily intermixing with the world.

In the early twentieth century when the common Indian struggled to find an identity amongst the tussle between the humbled traditional and the invasive modern norms of the society, it becomes imperative that Malgudi would encounter the same with a certain seriousness and comic element. Hence, in a remote town like Malgudi, which stands at a large distance from Madras, one can find the Ellaman street and Grow Street and the Abu Lane and Vinayaka Mudali Street existing simultaneously. Such blending becomes explicitly evident in the household of Swami, where three generations of Srinivasan Family emulate the three stages of transition from the traditional to the apparently modern society.

Swami's grandmother epitomises the life of the traditional with her faint atmosphere of cardamom and cloves. She sleeps on abed made of fine carpets; bed sheets and five pillow and narrate stories of Harichandra to the much ignorant Swami. It is this 'aura' of the grandmother that makes Swami refuses for Rajam to meet her with brutal candour. While Swamis father expresses the stage of partial acceptance as he dresses for the court in black silk coat and turban. Thus, while Swami and his friends with look much fascination at the toy gun in Rajam's possession, one and all of their tussles are sorted out through simple hand to hand duels. On the other hand, while the children read about the Bible, Rajam attempts at quoting from the Veda's and Swami troubled by the supposed death of an ant "took a pinch of earth and uttered a prayer for its soul. While these manifestations of modernity". Overlay the earliest formation of tradition and customary life they do not necessarily replace them ".

Malgudi is a town which has a railway station which stands as a direct symbol of industrialization brought with colonial rule but yet the 12:30 mail " glided over the embankment, booming and rattling while passing over Sarayu Bridge" (Narayan, 155). On one side of the town lie the fields and to the other the colonial structures like court, were Swami's father works and the Police Station. Malgudi thus, becomes a town which is as wilds as the Memphis Forest at its core- a town of peasants and herds- but equally modernised and raised to the stature of a near presidency. And to personify the town Malgudi, one can imagine it to appear like the Common Man of R.K. Laxman, Narayan's cartoonist brother "who is clad in dhoti and a plaid jacket". While mapping the layouts of Malgudi it is understandable that the town dwells on a structure where "life" happens in a natural environment such that modernity seems to become more of a psychological phenomenon than physically transformational. The protagonist of this novel and Swami represents the element of tradition. The boy is an average student and never concentrates on his studies. Arithmetic, English Literature, Scripture and History are the subjects that will be taught to students. He is interested in spending time with

and is slow in his performance which infuriates his teachers, particularly his Arithmetic teacher, the fire-eyed Vedanayagam. Usually the boy is reluctant to go to the school particularly on Monday mornings. He annihilates Arithmetic teacher as well as scripture teacher. They have a dream to play cricket and win the cup. The plan to get the permission of their headmaster and drill master to practice cricket in their last hour. In spite of getting permission they are seriously treated and Swami voluntarily leaves the school with fear. In traditional environment children do not dare to question parents particularly fathers. Swami's father is strict and never allows the boy to join with undisciplined children roaming in the streets. Swami asks his father about the necessity of studying even in the summer. "Should I read even when I have no school?" "Do you think you have passed the B.A.?" Father asked. "I mean, Father, when the school is closed, when there is no examination, even then should I read?" "What a question! You must read." (Naryan, 84) Swami is very sensitive and innocent and believes in friendship very strongly. He has been very much fascinated by Rajam, the police inspector's son. Rajam is the representation of colonial power and modernity. At the end of the novel when Rajam has been leaving the vicinity of Malgudi and of course, the total place, it was a hard moving scene to Swami as well as to the readers. Swami feels morose and became frantic at the thought of losing a good friend he has acquired a nick name also for being friendly with Rajam at the time of his new arrival at which the former disillusioned and great brawl took place among the friends. All his old friends stopped talking to him and teasing him and Somu, Pea, Sanker and all of them were torturing the boy and trying to avoid him. Being overwhelmed by the anger and frustration, Swami slapped Pea and Sanker and soon there took place pandemonium. They have been rolling over tearing, scratching and kicking one another. Since the interval has been over, with the arrival of their teacher they have got separated and as the teacher is a pleasant personality. First of all Mani asked for permission and without being given the permission, four boys go out of the class and reached a secluded place adjacent to their Albert Missionary School and started a fierce fight. Swami reached the school and was able to bring the news to the notice of the Head Master. They have been easily got separated with the intervention of the latter about which Swaminathan falls into confusion about the strength of Somu and Mani whom he believes the mightiest in the world. Thus, it is not very difficult to find out resemblances between Narayan's own experiences as a child and grown up man and experiences of his child hero Swaminathan in *Swami and Friends* and of Krishnan in *The English Teacher*. Most of what he has written is the replica of his feelings and experienced life. Inevitably, his treatment of human relations in his novels is so convincing and life-like. Narayan's treatment of different relationships is based on the conflict between the "Traditional Indian Values and resources on the one hand, and modern ideas and attitudes on the other." The portrayal of these relationships displays Narayan's power of minute observation and his creative genius. However, he evinces remarkable literary

are seen in the light of a departure from the cultural heritage of Indian past, yet in no way it is an absolute or the dismal break with the old values and institutions. Naturally, these human relationships bear the impress of changing times. Malgudi, the fictional town in Narayan's novels, is shown passing through the process of modernization. Its agricultural look is gradually passing away and it is now a semi-industrial town. An individual's relationships with society are based on this duality of consciousness, on the "conflict between two sets of values: supremacy of social hierarchy, and emergence of the individuals." This is so because Narayan sees society tenaciously holding on to the older values and following tradition in its wider application to life, while on the other hand, he sees an individual inspired by modern scientific and commercial outlook. As there is a conflict between an individual and society, so also there is a conflict within the consciousness of the individual himself. Buried deep in his sub-consciousness are the whole some links that connect him with social morality and the security of tradition. Much of the acrimony in this relationship is due to modern education. It has inculcated essence of independence in men and women. Some of the female characters who try to seek an independent life. In their craze of independence, they flout the traditional moral values and create unhappiness for themselves and for others. Narayan is a traditionalist and values only the old ideals of this relationship. He upholds the security and charm of the arranged marriages as opposed to the civil marriages of modern times. The other differences which divide them so irreparably is owing to what is generally termed as age-gap. It comprises a decisive change from what is known to what is new and fascinating. The father commonly adheres to the old and tested notions, while the son, in the light of modernity, rebels against them.

R.K. Narayan's portrayal of traditional aspect with modern and efficacious manner attracts the reader to read and the researchers to research. Through the characters of Swaminathan, his father, mother and cook represent tradition throughout the novel. His realistic and subtle humoristic approach is indeed creditable and won many accolades throughout the world. Swami, Shankar, Mani, and the Pea are ambitious about winning reputation for their cricket team. They go for so many innovative proposals to make their match appreciable. Innocence, roughness, audacity in practicing the game, every element focuses traditional and modernity perspective. The central theme of the novel is growing up of young Swami. He is a spontaneous, impulsive, mischievous and yet a very innocent child. His character is a child in the fullest sense of the word. Through Swami's eyes the reader gets to peak into the pre-independence days in South India. The life portrayed in the novel is accurate in its description of the colonial days – the uprisings, the rebellions, the contempt and the reverence the natives had for their subjugator, together with varied elements that have become one, such as tradition and modernity. Unlike many colonial and post-colonial writers, Narayan does not directly attack or

the colonial system, are scattered throughout Swami and Friends he has rather directed his creativity at depicting the life of the people at the time. It is almost as if he is charmed by these unsophisticated and simple, yet eccentric people and their lives. After the impact of imperialism and new kind of subjectivity and society emerged in India. Indian modernity was not just a copy of western modernity. The components of Indian modernity included enlightenment, rationality, science and western knowledge. Indian modernity marks its own distinct path. This path consists in taking critical aspects of western modernity and trying to combine them with India's usable past. But because both western modernity and Indian traditions have multiple possibilities and processes, the self-constitution of India's modernity becomes a plural and diverse adventure rather than any simplistic supplanting of tradition with modernity or the revival of traditions at the expense of modernity. Indian modernity is thus neither anti-traditional nor necessarily pro-western. It is, instead, a complex interplay of multitudinous forces which are sometimes complementary and sometimes contradictory. Reform, revival, resistance, conflict, collusion, collaboration, capitulation, compromise, adoption, adaptation, synthesis, encapsulation, heredity and multiculturalism are all a part of India's experiment in modernization. Naraysan's novels help define what is especially different about Indian modernity. His books not only reflect the course of India's recent social and Cultural Revolution, but actively articulate and arbitrate its various attitudes and stances.

CONCLUSION

Tradition is a ritual or belief that in the form of values passes down from generation to generation within a society. The tradition that is maintained in the present has its origins in the past. It also includes the ideas which are mostly considered as useful and socially meaningful. Traditions can persist and evolve for thousands of years. The word 'Tradition' derived from the Latin word 'tradere' which literally means to transmit, to hand over, to give for safe keeping. Tradition has a very strong hold over Indian society from the time immemorial and new traditions continue to appear with changing times. Traditions are often presumed to be ancient, unalterable and deeply important and are required to be practiced by future generations. Tradition is often contrasted with modernity, particularly in terms of the society.

Modernity can be defined as those sets of ideas or beliefs which are ever flowing and evolving like a stream. It relies on a 'expressive' model of communication in which each person is a unique self and this interior uniqueness finds its expression, to a certain extent through the act of communication with other unique selves. Modernity aims towards a progressive force promising to liberate humankind from ignorance and irrationality. This rationalisation sometimes may have negative and dehumanizing effect on modern society

When both the terms are discussed in a social setup, traditions represent the actual identity of a particular society while getting rid of them is supposed to be a sign of modernity. Traditions quite often, keep us united but modernity usually takes us apart from each other. A tradition implies an established method or practice; a belief or custom passed on to us by our ancestors. Much of what we do today has its roots in the past. Modernism is in total contrast with the ideas or methods of the traditions. Modernism is also necessary as we must adapt ourselves with the changing times else we shall deprive ourselves of the opportunity to make any progress or development. The world has to move on. In every era, there is the presence of the conflict between the traditional and the modernism. Modernism is basically a modern concept which emphasizes on individuality, success, competition, jealousy, revenge and above all self-centredness. The most dominant form of conflict in the fictional world of Narayan is one between tradition and modernity.

Narayan's fictional world is replete with conflicts because the incursions of modernity into the traditional setup of Malgudi. In *Swami and Friends*, episodes and characters are so presented as they seem to stand in a perpetual state of friction. Traditional men and women of Malgudi find it hard to digest the pills administered by modernists. In a tussle that ensues between tradition and modernity, it is the former that wins; the latter only touches the outer skirts. The continuing enigma leads to distortions that pervade among the warring elements. But ultimately the things get reconciled to the realities of life and situation. Occasional deviations lose their significance when confronted with bitter truths of the situation and the society.

The coming of modernization is indicated in the novel by the sweeping changes that overtake the town of Malgudi during Raju's childhood. Primary among these changes is the construction of the railroad. As an emblem of modernization, the railroad brings about numerous changes to Malgudi. For one, the railroad opens Malgudi up to a wider world, as people from all parts of India and even further afield begin visiting the town. The railroad also leads to greater economic prosperity. The family, therefore, benefits from the developments that overtake the town. Raju's own move from a shopkeeper (like his father) to a tourist guide after the opening of the railroad reflects the way in which the railroad leads to greater and more varied opportunities for the townspeople. Raju's work as a tourist guide would not have been possible without the railroad, which brings the visitors who become his clients.

This project mainly focuses on the themes of tradition and modernity in the novels *The Guide* and *Swami and Friends* by R.K. Narayan. It deals with the different ideas related to this concept and most importantly focusing on the impact it had in the society. It is

there is a continuous nibbling, of the traditional values and modes of life by the forces of new civilisation. But in this conflict, it is the old tradition that gains an edge over modernity. The modern simply touches the outer fringe of the society and does not, however, penetrate the inner most circles. The Malgudi milieu stands in perpetual danger of numerous contradictions caused by old beliefs, superstitions and age-old culture on the one hand and glamour and attraction of the modern life-style and civilization on the other.

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