

## Depiction of realistic panorama of our society by R.K. Narayan

Dr. Shruti Agrawal

Assistant Professor, Communication Skill Barkatullah University, Bhopal.

### Abstract

Literature has thousands of threads which can weave the beautiful piece of art. Each thread has its own importance in the creative work. There are different narrative techniques for narration of literature. Therefore this paper is an attempt to explore the narrative technique Realism in literature which describes life without idealization or romantic subjectivity.

**Keywords:** Creative, Technique, Narrative, Realism, Subjectivity, Romance, Literature

### 1. Introduction

The term refers to the concerns of commonplace of everyday life among the middle and lower classes, where character is a product of social factor and environment which is the integral element in the dramatic complications in literature an approach that proceeds from an analysis of reality in terms of natural forces. Galsworthy defines realism as-

**“The word ‘realist’ characterizes that artist whose temperamental preoccupations is with revelation of the actual spirit of life, character and thought with a view to enlighten him and others.”**

According to Dictionary of Literary terms by Coles; Realism, in literature, is a manner and method of picturing life as it really is, untouched by idealism or romanticism. As a manner of writing, realism relies on the use of specific details to interpret life faithfully and objectively.

The term ‘Realism’ is widely accepted according to need and time. Realism in literature and the visual art used to describe a variety of approach in which accurate depiction of reality is the aim. Each of these uses involves a contrast between human thought or imagination and an external reality independent of mind. The notion that reality has a cognitive or normative authority over the mind is also generally present.

### 2. Function of a Realist

Realism in art and literature is an endeavor to portray life as it is. It shows life with reality, omitting nothing that is ugly or painful, and idealizing nothing. To the realists, the writer’s most important function is to describe as truthfully as possible what is observed through the senses. Realism began as a recognizable movement in art in the 18th century, by middle of 19th century it turned into main art form.

Realism is the acknowledgment of the fact that a work of literature can rest neither on a lifeless average, as the naturalists suppose, nor on an individual principle which dissolves its own self into nothingness. The central category and criterion of realist literature is the type, a peculiar synthesis which organically binds together the general and the particular both in characters and situations. True realism depicts man and society as complete entities instead of showing merely one or the other of their aspects. It is not just an echo but the real sound of an individual or society or jointly voice of their being.

The major problem of realism is the satisfactory presentation of the complete human personality. Literature is saturated with social and moral humanistic problems and the expectation for a realistic creation of types is in contrast to the trends in which the biological being of man, the physiological aspects of self-preservation and procreation are dominant. In this case if the writer depicts any other aspect of life with his own creative mind then it may divert it from realism and lead to other type. So the scope for imagination in this style is quite less. Here this responsibility is completely fulfilled by R.K. Narayan in his novels that he has mastered the art of reality in apparel of fiction.

### 3. Dimension of Realism

Realism is three dimensional – an independent life, characters and human relationships. There is no place for emotions and intellectual. All it opposes is the destruction of the completeness of the human personality and of the objective typicality of men and situations through an excessive cult of the momentary mood. The struggle against such tendencies acquired a critical importance in the realist literature.

Realism is nothing but an acute observation of life as it is. It is a simple recording process from which any deviation is voluntary. Now we know that we literally create the world we see-is necessarily dynamic and active. Reality is that which human beings make common by work or language. It is challenge for realist to establish the form without any characteristics of any other style of literature and yet to maintain the charm of realism. There are different obstacles in the path of realist to prove it as per expectations. It is very difficult to achieve this at the first attempt. Not only a great deal of hard work but also a serious moral effort is required for this.

It is the desire of the reader to share in the lives of the millions around him. It may be worthwhile to read romantic fiction for thrill, relaxation or amusement, but for a proper appraisal of life the realistic novel alone provides the answer. Characterization grows in complexity as realism advances as in the case of Mulk Raj Anand, Dickens and Premchand, R.K. Narayan

### 4. Needs of Realism in Indian Perspective

The picture of India as painted by these Anglo-Indian novelists leaves much to be desired. Often it barely scratches the surface of Indian reality and means to give altogether an

exotic image of this country so much cherished in the west-through touches of romance, mystery, satire, farce, and fantasy-even melodrama. The 'Trimurti'-M.R. Anand, R.K. Narayan and Raja Rao-have by their herculean efforts tried to retrieve the true realistic 'inside' view of India and her people. We can hardly deny that there are fundamental differences in their perspectives; yet we have to concede that their 'common endeavor', with its elements of propaganda, art and philosophy, has challenged the current norms of realism as understood and practiced in the west.

Realistic fiction has been primarily a revolt against the sentimentality and melodrama of romantic idealism. Characters in realistic fiction tend to be more complex than those in romantic fiction. Settings are more ordinary, plots are less important, and themes are less obvious. A realistic fiction deals with probable commonplace events and believable people; it presents unpleasant and even offensive subject-matter. This sordid quality is especially associated with 'Naturalism' which is but an outgrowth of realism.

Realism is thus the basis of all art. When our painters represent peasants with regular features and irreproachable linen, when their milkmaids have the air of keep-sake beauties whose costume is picturesque and never old or dirty, an attempt is made to idealize but the result is simple falsification and bad art. To misrepresent the forms of ordinary life is no less an offence than to misrepresent the forms of ideal life. Either gives us true pictures, or leave them untouched, either paint no drapery at all or paint it with the utmost fidelity of their class. In the same way, a novelist express his mind in and his novels, according to his poetic disposition, with the choice and treatment according to his poetic disposition, with the choice and treatment of his subject to be poetically but it must always be real-true. If he selects the incidents and characters of ordinary life, he must be rigidly bound down to accuracy in the presentation. He is at liberty to avoid such subjects, if he thinks them prosaic and uninteresting, but having chosen, he is not at liberty to falsify under pretence of beatifying them; every departure from truth in motive, idiom, or probability is to that extent a defect.

If the writer's knowledge or sympathies do not lead him in the direction of ordinary life, if he can neither paint town nor country, let him take to the wide fields of history of Fancy. Even there the demands of truth will pursue him; he must paint what he distinctly sees with his imagination; if he succeeds, he will create characters which are true although ideal. It is a greater achievement for a work of art to represent the ordinary life truly than the extraordinary life incompletely.

### 5. Representation of reality

Realism thus appears as in part a revolt against the ordinary bourgeois view of the world; the realists make a further selection of ordinary material which the majority of bourgeois artists prefer to ignore. Thus 'realism', as a watchword, passes over to the progressive and evolutionary movements and Mulk Raj Anand and R.K. Narayan are the writers of this movement.

In realistic novels, the society is not a background against which the personal relationships are studied, nor are the individuals merely illustrations of aspects of the way of life. Every aspect of personal life is radically affected by the quality of the general life, yet the general life is seen at its most important in completely personal terms. We attend with

our whole senses to every aspect of the general life, yet the centre of value is always in the individual human person-not in an isolated person, but there are many persons who are the reality of the general life. It is a kind of personal or general portrayal which finally leads to represent entire society or mankind as a whole. Dickens' David Copperfield and R.K. Narayan's Raju are examples of this 'individual human person' the 'type' and the 'representative'.

### 5.1 Social Perspective of Indian Society by Narayan

The realist novel is separated into the social and the personal novels; social novel is further separated into social documentary and social formula. The same point holds for the 'personal novel'. Some of the best novels of our time describe selected personal relationships in a careful and subtle manner. Narayan socialises human emotion and he does it on two counts - socialisation and moralisation. The social anxiety of Narayan remains largely aesthetic in his approach to the material he deals with Narayans conception of social life and its moral problems are well painted in \_ "The Dark Room, Mr. Sampath, The financial Expert, The Guide, The Man Eater of Malgudi and the painter of signs".

Narayan, from point of views of social reality seems to be socialist messiah of his time and society. He considers that the only real literature is the expression of the historically developing nation spirit, the dialectic movement of the political and economic idea. That movement provides a norm for distinguishing between the eternal and the ephemeral in literature. So, the greatest author is most closely identified with the community and its evolution, one who divines the need of one's time, express its spirit, and represent his contemporaries.

The realist novel needs a genuine community a community of persons linked not merely by one kind of relationship - work or friendship or family but many interlocking kinds. It is commonplace in Narayan's novels.

Narayan remains a pure artist. He does not bother to expound a social philosophy or to propagate a point of view. The various facts of life have been interpreted through the people of Mulgudi. As an artist he has dissected the social motives successfully with the help of realistic characterisation. He does it with the help of his characters. The social world of Narayan has softer texture as compared to the life in the novels of his contemporary writers.

It is very important to look into the contemporary social, political, religion, traditional, cultural and economic issues in India. As it is a representation of the real social life of Indian, it is counted as a social document painted with rustic brush and dipped into the colour of social and religious layers.

### 5.2 Narayan as Social Writer

The social commitment is a motto of new socialist perspective is realism. It is aware of the structure, development and the ultimate goal of human society-a sense of totality of things. In this way socialist is less committed to the probing of a totally-a process which may never come to an end and remains an ideal to be achieved constantly. Narayan stepped out into a regenerative humanism which he is still pursuing with vitality and assurance.

Narayan is a social realist and always concerned for the social integration and order the central problems posed in aesthetics

which is why realists in fiction have considered literature and art as the instruments of socialism.

However, true social realism not only realization and depiction of the situation but realists do more than that; they set it up as a demand to be made on men. They know that this distortion of objective reality due to social causes, this division of the complete human personality into a public and a private sector is a disfigurement of the essence of man. That is why they protest not only as painters of reality, but also as social artist. This great passion for the betterment of mankind is the valuable aspect of social realism. This tasks and responsibility of literature are exceptionally great. But only truly great social realist can cope with responsibility of betterment of mankind.

### 5.3 Dominance of Emotion in Society

Realism became popular as it presents the emotion of mass and every member of the mass relate the subject matter with himself. Social realist writers in fiction always take the most important burning problems of the community for their starting point; their pathos as writers is always stimulated by those sufferings of the people which are the most acute at the time; it is these sufferings that determine the objects a direction of their love and hate and through these emotions determine also what they see in their poetic vision. In the process of creation their conscious world view comes into conflict with the world seen in their vision and what really emerges is that their true conception of the world is only superficially formulated in the consciously their deep ties with the great issues of their time, their sympathy with the sufferings of the people in society can find adequate expression only in the being and fate of their characters which is the real charm of realism.

As literature is mirror of life which can be justify through realism only. Only realism reflects the life of an individual or mass with humanistic and socialistic approach and zest of their betterment. In this way great realism and popular humanism are merged into an organic unity. Every great realist finds a different solution for the basic problem in accordance with his time and his own artistic personality. But they all have in common that they penetrate deeply into the great universal problems of their time and inexorably depict the true essence of reality as they see it. The development of society moves in a direction which renders inevitable a conflict between such aspirations of men of letters and the literature and public of their time. In this whole age a writer could achieve greatness only in the struggle against the current of everyday life.

### 6. Conclusion

A distinction is drawn between Art and Reality and an antithesis established between general do not lose sight of the fact that art is a representation of reality – a representation which must be limited by the nature of its medium; the canvas of the painter, the marble of the sculptor, the chords of the musician, and the language of the writer, each bring with them peculiar laws but in all laws, art always aims at the representation of what is true.

It is the perspective of socialism which can help the critical realist understand his own age from the inside as a dynamic reality yet it cannot help him assess the future from the same angle, but the very basis of socialist realism is the desire to probe into the future to portray from the inside people on the march to build their future. Narayan belongs to this category

through his observation. It is his view that writer should observe inner and outer parts of life and try to feel the present state of mind of mass. In his view;

The novel should interpret the truth of life from felt experience, and not from books. And one should adventure through new areas of life and always try to see, in the intricate web of circumstances of human existence, the inner core of reality, or at least attempt to probe the depths of human consciousness.

### 7. References

1. Swami and Friends London: Hamish Hamilton, 1935.
2. The Dark Room London: Thomas Nelson, 1937.
3. The Dark Room London: Macmillan, 1938.
4. The English Teacher London: Eyre and Spottishwoode, 1945.
5. Mr. Sampath London: Eyre and Spottishwoode, 1949.
6. The Financial Expert London: Methuen, 1952.
7. Waiting for the Mahatma .London: Methuen, 1955.
8. The Guide London: The bodley Head, 1958.
9. The Man-Eater of Malgudi London: Heinemann, 1962.
10. The Vendor of Sweets London: The Bodley Head, 1967.
11. The Painter of Signs New York: The Viking Press, 1976.
12. A Tiger for Malgudi London: Heinemann, 1983.
13. Aghihotri GN. Indian Life and Problems in the Novels of Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, and R.K. Narayan Meerut: Shalabh Prakashan, 1993.
14. Hormstrom, Lakshmi. The Novels of RK. Narayan Calcutta: The Writers Workshop, 1973.
15. Mukerji, Nirmal. The World of Malgudi, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1960.
16. Naik MK. The Ironic Vision: A Study of the Fiction of RK. Narayan New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1983.
17. Raizada, Harish RK. Narayan: A Critical Study of His Works New Delhi: Young India Publications, 1969.
18. Sundaram PS. Narayan RK. New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 1973.
19. Harrex SC, RK. Narayan's Grateful in Life and Death, The Literary Criterion, summer, 1961.
20. Malhotra, Tara, a Critical Study of RK. Narayan's Latest Fiction the Banasthali Patrika, 13.
21. Mehta, Ved. The Train Has Just Arrived at Malgudi Station, The New Yorker, 1962.
22. Narsimaiha CD, RK. Narayan's The Guide, with a Note on the Sahitya Akademi Award to the Novel, The Literary Criterion, 1965, 7-1.