



## R.K. Narayan as a Regional Novelist

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**Abstract :** RK Narayan was best story teller in Indian tradition of storytelling. His purpose always confined to entertaining his audience, by an interesting story. He never preaches or moralize anything in his works. He analysed human feelings, emotions, motives, but did not probed into the subconscious and the unconscious mind, as was the case with the modern novelists. RK Narayan took up Universal themes, with theme coinciding with its representation in specific region, immediately understandable and lived. This does not imply a deterritorialization or homogenization of local traditions. On the contrary, it suggests an immersion into known, local, native real space, thereby attaining the universal, only through local or regional. While focusing on one region, he stressed and created fictive regional spaces, preoccupied with the ordinary man and a system of life that belong to the local dimensions. In this way:

- A) We get the Portrait of a Freeman in a condition that is captive in an extremely specific regional space.
- B) The readers appreciate the literary value of his novels rather than focusing on collecting information about a certain culture.

Such a representation of reality, gave RK Narayan an opportunity to broaden the dimensions of realism and in fact, it highlighted his aesthetic way of regional dichotomy. This form of regionalism, as depicted in his works give him a Universal appeal and the readers easily penetrate into the region being described and accessed by the substances rituals culture it contained. It is through this regional approach that he attains the universal.

**Keywords:** Dichotomy, Regionalism, Accessed, Immersion, Homogenization, Conscious and Subconscious.

### Introduction

The regional novel is a Genre of fiction that is set in a recognisable region. It describe the features distinguishing the life, social relations, customs, language, dialect or other aspects of culture of that area and people. The writer gives a detailed description of the region that is usually a rural place. Characters are then taken up and shown as being well habited in such a region. The characterization in this way, bring its readers close to realism and readers connect with them. The author so colors the region, with specific regional aspects including: real characterization, easygoing dialects, its customs and its portrayal, with accuracy showing the historical and topological instances of the village, as if it reflects the authors close association to it.

Lakshmi Holmstrom provides an illustration of the concept of storytelling:

"The traditional story telling included commented recitation of classical texts and in the south, the dance drama and the harikatha exposition of myth with sermons and music. All the stories presented in the traditional idealized view of timeless Hindu society."...1

Narayan did not follow this narrative pattern slavishly; he had developed a unique narrative style with the cosmic mode.

RK Narayan was one of these regional novelists, who had high creative sense. In his regional stories, the functional locale is Malgudi and Narayan always use the brilliant realistic touches in the portrayal of this South Indian town, making his readers actually look for it in the India's map. Malgudi provides the setting for almost all of his novels and short stories.

"With this book, Narayan created Malgudi, A town that creatively produced the social sphere of the country; while it ignored the limits imposed by the colonial rule, it also grew with the various Socio political changes of British and post independent India". ..(2)

Various critics have attempted to identify the original of this mythical town, like for example, Iyengar who says, that it might be 'Lalgudi' on the river Cauvery and yadavagiri in Mysore and not 'Malgudi'. Other critics opine that Malgudi is a town in Coimbatore, having land mass a river on one side, forests on other, the Missionary School and College and all the extension mentioned in the novels. Whatever the critics say none arrived to a definite answer to its geographical location and the simple reason is that Narayan has not drawn any map of Framework for his Malgudi as writers like Faulkner and Thomas Hardy had in their Minds for the regions. Like Thomas Hardy and William Faulkner Narayan is able to achieve this localisation mastery of place and Malgudi Narayana imaginative town become a living presence searched all over India.

Malgudi is unrivalled as a setting in Indian English literature. Ratna Rao Shekar states that-

"It was Narayan who started it all, the applause and the appreciation for the India's world view."...3

Rao expanded what he meant, by 'the Indian worldview' indicating that Narayan's

