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AN EXPLORATION OF ROSIE'S CONSCIOUSNESS IN R. K. NARAYAN'S THE GUIDE



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Abstract:-Indian English Literature refers to the body of works by writers in India who write in English language and whose native or co-native language could be one of the numerous languages in India. There has been an astonishing flowering in Indian writing in English during recent decades. Novel has proved to be the most important and popular form peculiarly suitable to Indian sensibility. Mulk Raj Anand, Rao and R.K. Narayan are the building boulders of Indian English Literature. They have their hand in sketching the real conditions of Indian society. Their literature expresses the social issues. R. K. Narayan being the prominent writer of the era expresses Indian sensibility, customs, traditions and struggle for self settlement in his novels.

Keywords:Consciousness, Literature, Indian society, co-native language.

INTRODUCTION

R.K. Narayan is known for his beautiful creation of Malgudi town. It is an imaginary town having the landmarks of Malgudi railway station, the Bombay Anand Bhavan, Lawley Extension, Kabir Lane, the statue of Sir Frederick Lawley, The Banner Office, Sarayu river, Mempi Hills etc. All the novels of R.K.Narayan are set in Malgudi like Swami and Friends(1935), The English Teacher(1945), The Guide(1958), The Vendor of Sweets(1967), A Tiger of Malgudi(1983) etc. The Guide is the most popular novel by R.K. Narayan. The most prestigious "Sahitya Akadami Award" was awarded to him in 1960 for the novel The Guide.

Consciousness is one of the important themes in the novels of R.K.Narayan. Antonio Damasio defines conscious as, An organism's awareness of it's own self and it's surrounding. (Damasio,50).

It clearly indicates that a person is said to be conscious when he is known to his psychology and connection between his behaviour and the surrounding. John Lock explicitly defines consciousness as the perception of what passes in a man's own mind.

(Scienceand Technology:Consciousness Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieve August 20,2010).

Whatever is going on in the mind of character is it's consciousness. The present paper deals with the consciousness of Rosie, the female protagonist of the novel The Guide.

Rosie and her husband Marco come to Malgudi for their work. Raju is a famous guide in Malgudi so they want him as their guide. When Raju see Rosie for the first time, he falls in love with her at first sight. She is very beautiful, lovely and elegant lady. As Rosie enter the Malgudi station, she asks Raju,

Can you show me the cobra-a king cobra it must be which can dance to the music of a flute?
(Narayan,64)

It shows Rosie's interest in the dance but her husband scolds her for the question and she stand silent. Rosie comes from the family of temple dancers and Marco is the man of high rank and has standard social status. There was disharmony in their relation. Raju notices the things in no time and seduces Rosie. Marco hates dance and does not want Rosie to dance. The passion for dance is deeply rooted in the mind of Rosie and it comes out for many times. Raju takes Rosie to watch the snake show as she is watching the swaying of snake, her body is swaying like the snake. This indicates her passion for dance and her wish to dance. Her wish for dancing is suppressed by Marco, her stern husband who is always engrossed in his work. Rosie is a perfect Indian wife who can not disobey her husband.

They often quarrels on small issues. Once Raju asks her about their quarrels she first hesitates and then says, You are brother to me and I'll tell you what happens. (Narayan,84)

The statement of Rosie indicates that she has no feelings about Raju as a lover. It is the perfect identity of an Indian woman. She will not think about other person. She treats every person as her brother except Marco. Indian traditions and customs do not allow women to think about men other than their husband and Rosie is no exception. Indianness is deeply rooted in Rosie's mind. It shows her consciousness as a wife.

Raju takes over the charge of Rosie's mind and shows her dreams of dancing career. As dancing is the weak as well as the strong point of Rosie, she is attracted towards Raju and has physical and emotional involvement with him. But she shows care for her husband at sudden and says,

After all he is my husband. I have to respect him. I can not leave him there.
(Narayan,119)

It is her declaration that though she is physically present with Raju, her mind is engaged with her husband. It is her consciousness for her duty as a wife. She is aware of her

married life and doesn't want to leave Marco. She said to Raju ,

After allAfter all.....Is this right what I am doing? After all he has been so good to me, given me comfort and freedom. What husband in the world would let his wife go and live in a hotel room by herself, a hundred miles away?. (Narayan,120)

Rosie realises that she is betraying her husband. Her psychology was prepared that she has committed a sin. Her husband is a good person but she realises it very late and her consciousness wanted her to live with Marco. She comes as a sensible Indian wife in front of us.

When Marco comes to know about Rosie and Raju's relationship he leaves Rosie to do whatever she wants, she says to him,

I want to be with you. I want you to forget everything. I want you to forgive me- (Narayan,151)

It is her self realisation and awareness about her married life. She is conscious and she tries her level best to save her marriage. She says Marco , I'm your wife and I'm with you. (Narayan,152)

She is in deep grief of her sin and wants to repell but Marco don't forgive her and left. There is no option except going to Raju in front of Rosie. Rosie starts dance practice and becomes a famous dancer. Raju gives her new name "Nalini" and she happily accepts it. With her new name and identity, she becomes a great dancer as dance is her only conscious. When she sees Marco's photo in Illustrated Weekly of Bombay, she becomes very happy but Raju doesn't like her reaction and reminds her that Marco has left her alone . She says to him,

I do, and I deserved nothing less. Any other husband would have throttled me then and there. He tolerated my company for nearly a month, even after knowing what I had done. (Narayan,201)

It is her repellant that she has committed a sin and would get the punishment. She is conscious about her fault and she defends Marco's treatment to her as a typical Indian wife. It clearly indicates her consciousness as an Indian woman. She never forgets Marco and she knows Marco is a nice man. She says,

I don't know. I may be mistaken in my own judgement of him. After all, he had been kind to me. (Narayan,202)

It reflects her caring and love for Marco. Her deeper feelings of love for Marco come out and it shows her consciousness as a wife.

When Rosie comes to know about the forgery of Raju, she gets shocked and says to Raju,

I felt all along you were not doing right thing. This is karma. What can we do? (Narayan,216)

She is totally broken. She charges Raju that he has not rightly done the things with her and her life. There is grief and solitude in her mind due to which her consciousness is totally shaken. She arranges money for Raju's bail. No money is left and Raju insisted her to dance. She violently

replied,

Is money your only consideration? Don't you see how I can't face the public again.

The consciousness of Rosie as a dancer come out here and she thinks that she can't face the public as a dancer. Dance is her passion and for that she loses everything. Raju asks her about her future and she answers, Perhaps I'll go back to him. (Narayan,220)

Rosie wishes to return to her husband and it shows her consciousness about her marriage life. As Indian woman considers husband as the only companion in their sorrow; Rosie remembered Marco when she is in trouble. This proves her psychology as a wife.

Raju behaves rudely but Rosie tries her level best to save him from jail. She says to Raju,

If I have to pawn my last possession, I'll do it to save you from jail. But once it's over, leave me once and for all;that's all I ask. Forget me. Leave me to live or die, as I choose;that's all. (Narayan, 221-222)

For the first time Rosie cries out and talks in frustrated manner. She is fade up of everything and wants relief in her life.

Rosie realises the meaning of life. She wants to leave with Marco but she chooses neither Marco nor Raju for the rest of her life. She manages her events with the help of Mani who was P.A. to Raju. Her consciousness about her own living is created in her by all things that are happened to her. Both of them don't have any place in life of her which has it's own sustaining vitality and which she herself has underestimated all along. Again it reflects her consciousness as an independent woman.

Rosie, a complex character created by R.K. Narayan comes in front of us as a conscious Indian sensibility. She has love for dance as well as for Marco and her married life with him. She chooses dance and is left by Marco. Raju seduces her for his own purpose. She recognizes the things very late. She again chooses dance without the help of Raju and get succeeds in it. Her passion of dancing destroys her married life and leaded her life without companion. It means her life is full of solitude and grief which are the part of her psychology. R.K. Narayan successfully draws the picture of conscious, sensible, touching and lovely Indian girl i.e. Rosie.

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