

**Characters and Characterization in the Select Short
Stories of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan:
A Comparative Study**

**A Dissertation Submitted for the Award of the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in English**

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PREFACE

Studying fellow humans as characters comes naturally, while we witness their presence in real life and through electronic media and print media. The study of characterization is directly linked to the characters. While growing up, I became aware of the art of characterization through the school curriculum and thus, my interest in study of characters grew stronger and stronger.

I have always been interested in the short stories more than any other literary genre. I find short stories to be delightful, crisp and to the point. They create a lasting impact on the minds of its readers. Through this study, I have tried to rekindle my love for short stories, characters and the art of characterization. The techniques used by the authors to represent and expose a character to its readers are discussed in this dissertation. The classification of this dissertation in the form of four chapters helps to study and analyze all the aspects of characters in the light of authors' perspective, readers' perspective and the techniques used.

The first chapter, *Introduction*, deals with the origin and development of short stories. Starting with the meaning and definition of story, the chapter analyses and compares different literary genres to understand the intricacies of the short stories. It talks about the beginning of short story in both the Indian and the world literature as well. It also discusses about prominent Indian English short story writers.

The second chapter, *The Making of Authors and Analysis of the Select Short Stories*, begins with the discussion of the life and experiences of the selected authors. The chapter continues with an analysis of the selected short stories and ends with the study of literature review, where the research papers written in the past ten years that are related to the short stories written by the selected authors are discussed.

The third chapter, *Characters and Characterization in the Select Short Stories*, starts with the meaning and definitions of character and continues with a study of art of characterization. Here, different types of characterization are discussed with examples. The chapter develops with the study of major and minor characters in the selected short stories. The chapter concluded with the study of types of characters and techniques of characterization used by Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan in their selected short stories.

The fourth chapter is *Conclusions*, in which, the original findings of the study are discussed in detail. It also includes an analysis of the aforementioned chapters. It highlights the relevance to the modern literature and analyzes the future scope of the present study.

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Chapter - 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Concept of Short Story

The understanding of story in general is the key to understand the intricacies of short story. A story is either chronological or jumbled retelling of events for the purpose of entertainment, awareness and/or information. It is a tale told in the style of its teller. A story is where reality and imagination are balanced to retell a situation where there is a speaker/author and an audience. A story is a narration, either written or spoken, that ignites the interest of its listener/reader. It may be a small one or two minute recollection of a past event, a short imaginative tale or a long descriptive novel. Either way, it aims at grabbing the attention and appreciation of its audience. It may be moral, with a lesson; or without an aim. Either way, it serves the purpose of an entertainer. A story is mainly told to be heard. Here, the listener is at power. If the listener doesn't want to hear the story, there is no point in either telling it or writing it. This is the key reason for which, the writing style is studied with great interest. It is very important to find the points that make a story interesting to its audience.

The study of short story begins with the study of a story. At many stages, the term 'story' has been defined in different ways. There are various definitions of a story. Dictionaries are a great way to understand a story as popularly accepted. Following are some of the definitions of a story:

Cambridge Dictionary (1995) states, a story is “a description, either true or imagined, of a connected series of events.”¹

The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (2001) describes the meaning of a story as, “story, in the everyday sense, any narrative or tale recounting a series of events. In modern narratology, however, the term refers more specifically to the sequence of imagined events that we reconstruct from the actual arrangement of a narrative (or dramatic) plot. In this modern distinction between story and plot, derived from Russian Formalism and its opposed terms *Fabula* and *Sjuzet*, the story is the full sequence of events as we assume them to have occurred in their likely order, duration, and frequency, while the plot is a particular selection and (re-)ordering of these. Thus, the story is the abstractly conceived 'raw material' of events which we reconstruct

from the finished arrangement of the plot: it includes events preceding and otherwise omitted from the perceived action, and its sequence will differ from that of the plot if the action begins *in medias res* or otherwise involves an anachrony.”²

According to **Collins Dictionary (1999)**, a story is “a description of imaginary people and events, which is written or told in order to entertain people.”³

A Glossary of Literary Terms (2013) defines a story as, “a mere sequence of events in time—into the organized and meaningful structure of a literary plot.”⁴

After studying the above definitions, collectively, we can conclude that a story is a series of events told to an audience for the purpose of entertainment; it may be either true or imagined or a mixture of both. Historically, enhancing knowledge, creating a sense of understanding for the fellow human being and developing morality are some other purposes of a story.

According to length, a story can be told in the form of a Novel, Novella or Short Story. The main basis of difference between the three is their length. Though, a tale can be told in all the three forms, its style changes. For example, *The Ramcharitmanas* is a saga told in eight books whereas *Ramayana* is an epic told in one book comprising of eight hundred couplets. There are many abridged versions available of the same story that covers the story in form of a novella. The noticeable factor here is that some incidents or events from the story are left behind to compress it in a shorter version. Novel and short story are further divided into many classifications. Short stories are divided into story of incidence, story of character and story of plot. Novels are classified as picaresque novel, epistolary novel, realistic novel, sociological novel, historical novel, nonfiction novel, regional novel, bildungsroman and so on and so forth.

A novella, just like a novel, is a long prose narrative, but smaller in size than that of a novel; though it is longer than a short story. The word ‘novel’ comes from the Italian word ‘novella’ which means ‘a little new thing.’ Initially, in Italy, it meant with a short tale in prose. Many collections of such tales were famous in Italy during the fourteenth century; Boccaccio’s *Decameron* is one such example. But the word ‘novella’, contemporarily, is used for a short length prose fiction of thirty-five to eighty pages. Like a novel or a short story, the novella also comprises the factors of a story – plot, character and setting. It is in every sense, a middle ground to novel and

short story. A novella is neither as constricted as a short story nor as elaborate as a novel.

Novella's appreciation can be proven by considering the number of famous novellas written in past centuries. Some of the novellas are mentioned here. *A Christmas Carol* (1843) by Charles Dickens, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde* (1886) by Robert Louis Stevenson, *The War of Worlds* (1898) by H. G. Wells, *Heart of Darkness* (1899) by Joseph Conrad, *Ethan Frome* (1911) by Edith Wharton, *The Metamorphosis* (1915) by Franz Kafka, *Billy Budd* (1924) by Herman Melville, *Of Mice And Men* (1937) by John Steinbeck, *The Stranger* (1942) by Albert Camus, *Animal Farm* (1945) by George Orwell, *The Old Man And The Sea* (1952) by Ernest Hemingway, *I Am Legend* (1954) by Richard Matheson, *Breakfast At Tiffany's* (1958) by Truman Capote, *Goodbye, Columbus* (1959) by Philip Roth, *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) by Anthony Burgess, and the like.

Short story is a work of short fiction, broader than an anecdote. Much shorter than a novel and comprising of all the elements of a novel like plot, structure, idea, development, characters and so forth. Short story can have a wide range of plots like comic, tragic, romantic, satiric, and the like; and just as a novel it can be written in any mode, be it fantasy, realism or naturalism.

A short story should be a story, a record of things, happenings full of incidents, and accidents, swift movements, unexpected development, leading through suspense, to a climax and a satisfying denouncement. The first necessity of the short story, at the outset, is its necessity. The short story, that is to say, must spring from an impression of perception pressing enough, acute enough, to make the writer to write. A short story should be concrete to a point, with snap and gay life, crisp and crackling and interesting. A story should be a finished product of art with a beginning, middle and an end. In the whole composition of a short story, there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect in not pre-established design.

A short story is a succinct tale excluding the details whereas a novel is an elaborate and extensive study with great detail and caution. The short story uses all the constituent factors of a novel – plot, character and setting – but it isn't merely a shortened version of a novel. Though, it is true that all the constituent factors of a novel have to be shortened and fit into a short story. As a short story is written with an

aim to create an impression in the mind of its readers, its focus is specific. the details are given only when it is impossible to leave them out and characters are described through their actions rather than explanation, which supports the development of the story as desired by the author. All this is possible with symbols and implications. A lot is left unsaid and the reader is free to imagine, but that imagination is usually guided by the impressions created by the author in the story. In short, everything takes the short route towards the preconceived outcome. Everything is a means towards the end.

Sometimes one element is given the utmost importance and the other two become subsidiary. As Robert Louis Stevenson once said,

“There are three ways, and three ways only, of writing a story. You may take a plot and fit characters to it, or you may take a character and choose incidents and situations to develop it or lastly you may take a certain atmosphere, and get actions and persons to realize it.”⁵

In each case the ‘idea’ or ‘impression’ that the author needs to communicate, should engage their attention throughout the text. For instance, three short stories by Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Bottle Imp* is a story of plot, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a story of character, and *The Merry Men* is a story of setting.

Along with plot, character and setting, language used in a short story is distinguishable from that of a novel. A novel sometimes has long passages without any concern towards plot or structure but a short story cannot spend even one extra paragraph for explanation or decoration. In a short story, these will only be and hindrance towards the ‘idea’ or ‘impression.’ It requires appropriate use of words with specific focus and no extra space. The descriptive passages are only appreciated if they contribute profusely towards the total effect.

Table 1
Differentiation of Novel, Novella and Short Story

Sr. No.	Basis	Novel	Novella	Short Story
1.	Word Count	A novel has a minimum of 40,000 words.	A novella can have a word count of anywhere between 17,500 to 40,000 words.	A short story may have a maximum word count of 7,500 words.
2.	Descriptions	A novel is full of descriptions and explanations.	Novellas entertain the descriptions but never get lost the track of plot and setting for the sake of descriptions.	No descriptions or explanations are usually found in a short story.
3.	Long Passages	It has both space and time to work with the long passages.	Very few extra long passages are found in a novella; the ones that are found are usually very critical to the development of the story.	No long passages are found in a short story.
4.	Time Taken	It takes a very long time to both read and write a novel.	It takes a moderate amount of time to read a novella as it is smaller in size then that of a novel.	The reading of a short story should ideally finish by two hours. It can even take less.
5.	Flourished	In sixteenth and seventeenth century.	In eighteenth and nineteenth century.	In nineteenth century.

Source: Based on Review of Literature

The study of Short Story should start with tracing its origin and development, both in world's literary context and Indian context. The world tradition of short stories include the *Aesop's Fables*, *Metamorphosis*, *Decameron*, *Canterbury Tales*, as the first ever works in history that can be studied as collection of short stories. These collections are discussed here in detail.

Aesopica, or commonly known as Aesop's Fables, is a collection of fables, created by a slave named Aesop who lived between 620 BCE and 564 BCE. Fables are usually short stories written for the purpose of instilling morals and ethics in its readers. As the purpose suggests, these tales have a message in them as a parable might have. Even though the fables interest the people of all age groups, it is focused on educating the young ones.

Through study of the text, it becomes clear that Aesop was a keen observer of both humans and animals. The characters in Aesop's fables are mostly animals, but they are personified in terms of speech and emotions, though they keep their basic animal instinct and behavior. Such as, tortoise is slow, hares are quick, tigers eat birds and so forth. The basic animal nature is used in the stories to focus on human traits and wisdom.

Each fable has a moral lesson that can be learned by understanding it. Some of the popular tales are *The Bear and the Bees*, *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*, *The Boys and the Frog*, *The Cat and the Rooster*, *The Council of Mice*, *The Dog and His Reflection*, *The Donkey and His Master*, *The Fox and the Lion*, *The Frog and the Ox*, *The Goose That Laid Golden Eggs*, *The Lion and the Mouse*, *The Man and His Two Wives*, *Sour Grapes*, *The Tortoise and the Hare*, *Two Men and the Bear*, *The Wind and the Sun*, etcetera.

Written in around eighth century AD, Ovid's long narrative poem named *Metamorphosis*, is another fine example of tales written in poetry format. It can be studied as an example of initial form of short story. The long narrative text of *Metamorphosis* is often called a mock-epic, as it is written in form of dactylic hexameter following the great ancient tradition of epic poetry like *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey* and *The Aeneid*. Such is not the case with Ovid's other works. Even the *Metamorphosis* does not completely follow the classics. Instead of telling the greatness of one hero in one long poem, as in the classics, Ovid leaps from one story to another; many-a-times without proper transition. Some of his stories have the mention of previous ones that gives continuity to the text. Though the stories are separate, they are all linked with the thread of time. No one event in history is individual. Each historical event has an impact on the next. Thus, the tales in *Metamorphosis* are all linked and yet can stand individually.

Another text to be considered here that affected the nature of short stories in world literature is Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Written in fourteenth century, it is considered a classic of early Italian prose. It is a collection of hundred tales told by seven women and three men sheltering in a secluded villa near Florence. The tales have varied themes that include love tales; both erotic and tragic, tales of wit, practical jokes, etc. It is regarded as a document of life. Its influence on the world literature is so powerful that Geoffrey Chaucer wrote *The Canterbury Tales* with *Decameron* as its ideal.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth century, many Italian romances were translated into English prose, but none of them can be classified as a short story as accepted in the contemporary times. The eighteenth century was marked by great literary developments, along with novel, drama and poetry, short story gained a lot in this century. The pair of Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, commonly referred as Addison and Steele, wrote essays in form of a tale-with-a-purpose. They improvised the essay to make an impact in the mind of its readers to create moral understanding with the help of characters, setting, plot etc and paved the way to the modern day short story.

In 1824, Walter Scott's *Wandering Willie's Tales*, was probably the first approach to the modern day short story. But the decisive steps in this direction were taken by Edgar Allen Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1830, when they formulated the modern theory of short story writing. They hold the thought that the lot alone was not enough and laid stress on the 'final impression' of the story. The principle is defined by Edgar Allen Poe as,

"A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidence; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out, he then invents such incidence, - he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tends not to the out bringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of

him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction.”⁶

In prevailing times, short story is one of the favorite forms of writing. Many authors like Arnold Bennett, Hugh Walpole, Elizabeth Bowen, and the like, treat it as a sideline. On the other hand, there are authors like Rudyard Kipling, Anton Chekhov, Ernest Hemingway, William Saroyan, H. G. Wells, Oscar Wilde, Arthur Canon Doyle, John Galsworthy, Joseph Conrad, D. H. Laurence, James Joyce and so forth are authors who are famous on the account of their representative skills in short story writing. From Stevenson’s time, the short story has had an international influence. It is highly appreciated all through England, France, Russia and America. It seems that the short story will continue to amuse both authors and readers and ever remain popular in this constantly changing contemporary world.

The length of a story is immaterial as long as it satisfies both the reader and the author. The definition of story suggested that it is told for the purpose of entertainment. The entertainment value of a story is as good as its power to surprise its audience. That can be done with any number of words. The connection that the reader feels for characters and its situations are similar, immaterial of the explanations given to them, time spent on the story or decorative passages in the story. If the character touched the reader’s heart, it leaves a mark.

1.2 Short Story in Indian Writing in English: A Background Study

The short story tradition of India is not very different than the world. To study the Indian tradition of short stories we must consider the world tradition of short stories as discussed in the earlier sub-chapter. They are the keys to understanding its origin. Similarly, in Indian context, the works to be studied are *Jataka Tales*, *Panchatantra*, *Hitopadesh*, *Kathasaritsagara*, *Betal Pachhisi*, *Simhasana Battisi*, and so forth. They embark the basic tradition of short stories in Indian context.

Jataka Tales

Considering Indian literature, the first text to be studied is *The Jataka Tales* of Buddhist origin. The teachings of Buddha are compiled / distinguished in three *pitaks* (tripitak) namely, *Sutta Pitak*, *Vinay Pitak* and *Abhidhamma Pitaka*. *Sutta Pitak* comprises of the Buddha’s discourse and preaching that is further divided into five

books. The Buddhist ‘code of conduct’ and ‘rules and regulations’ are discussed in *Vinay Pitaka*, which is further divided into five books. Lastly, *Abhidhamma Pitaka* comprises Buddha’s philosophy that is, in turn, divided into seven books. *Jataka Tales* are recorded under the *Sutta Pitaka*. The classification of *Sutta Pitaka* are *Digha Nikaya*, *Majjhima Nikaya*, *Samyutta Nikaya*, *Anguttara Nikaya* and *Khuddaka Nikaya*. *Khuddaka Nikaya* is further classified in fifteen divisions and the tenth division of this *Khuddaka Nikaya* is the collection of *Jataka Tales*.

Jataka Tales are tales of all the resurgences of Gautama Buddha in the mortal world. As all the stories are the memories of the previous lives of Buddha that he recalled during one stage of his long meditative process. The said stories are 547 in number (though some historian believe it to be 550) that are further classified in ten categories according to the *Paramita* that the story connects to. In Buddhism, it is believed that a conscience can reach up to the level of Buddha only when one accomplishes the ten *Paramitas*, easily translated into virtues or qualities. The ten *Paramitas* are *Daan*, *Sheel*, *Shanti*, *Veerya*, *Dhyan*, *Prajna*, *Upaaya*, *Pranidhan*, *Bal* and *Gyan*. During the period when the Buddha had attained all the ten *Paramitas*, before becoming the Buddha, He used to be known as *Bodhisattva*.

According to a general Buddhist belief, all the *Jataka* stories are representation of one or more virtue that Gautama Buddha achieved in his past lives. These lives are not just reincarnations, in human forms, but resurgences of Buddha in animal form as well. The *Jatak* stories include *The Story of the Hare*, *The Story of the Wonderful Fish*, *The Story of the Bird Which Could Not be Burnt*, *The Story of the Buffalo*, *The Story of the Woodpecker*, *The Story of the Kuru-Dee*, *The Story of the Great Ape*, *The Story of the Golden Swans*, *The Story of the Carabha Deer*, *The Story of the Great Monkey*, *The Story of the White Elephant*, *The Story of the Hungry Tigress*, *The Story of the Small Portion of Gruel*, *The Story of Ajastya*, *The Story of Ummādayanti*, *The Story of the Inhabitant of the Brahma-Loka*, *The Story of the Sacrifice*, *The Story of Sakra*, *The Story of the Brāhman*, *The Story of the Jar*, *The Story of Avishahya*, *The Story of Cuddabodhi*, *The Story of Sutasoma*, *The Story of Suppāraka*, *The Story of Mairtibala*, *The Story of the King of Cibis*, *The Story of Vessantara*, *Maya’s Dream*, *The Birth of the Prince*, *Lord Buddha’s First Sermon*, etc.

These stories include the memories of Buddha's birth as a stag. Not any normal stag, but that was fastest and most beautiful and yet was humble and polite. In this particular story, Gautama Buddha, i.e. the stag, sacrifices his life to feed the old and wary lion that is unable to hunt due to his old age. This is an example of extreme level of *Daan Paramita*. Another example of the *Daan Paramita* is the story of Gautama Buddha reincarnated as a king, who was so charitable that when asked, he even donated his wife and his son. All the 547 stories are examples of one or the other *Paramita* that Gautama Buddha accomplished in previous lives.

Panchtantra

Written in 300 BC by Sage Vishnu Sharma, the origin of *Panchtantra* is a great story in itself. Once there was a righteous and loved king named King Sudarshan in a state called Patliputra, near the river Bhagirathi. As the story goes, the king had four sons who were not at all interested in studying. Neither the scriptures nor the arts interested the princes. All they wanted to do was to play and have fun, but the king wanted them to gain knowledge that they all needed to become the future monarch. Thinking this, he announced in his estate that whoever teaches the princes will be rewarded handsomely. Many sages tried to teach the princes the importance of scriptures and arts but none could hold the princes' attention. Later, a sage named Vishnu Sharma told the king that he can teach the princes about the *nitishastra* – the science of ethics.

With the king's permission, the sage went on to teaching the princes for six months. The Sage ignored the traditional methods of teaching and started telling stories to the princes. Here what Vishnu Sharma did was to take something that fancied the princes and added the knowledge of ethics to it. He told them stories about forests and animals and the problems that they faced. This way, without even realizing it, the princes got the complete knowledge of the Nitishastras. They understood the science of ethics through animated characters that were usually animals. The interesting thing here is that all the animals held on to their natural instinctive traits, but were humanized through speech and emotions. Thus, creating juxtaposition, the Sage's stories intrigued the princes.

Literary meaning 'five treatises,' the text of *Panchtantra* is divided into five subheadings according to the kinds of morals and teachings they provide; namely,

Mitralabha, *Mitrasamprapti*, *Kakololyam*, *Laabhpranasham* and *Aparikshitkaranam*. *Mitralabha* a set of thirty stories and comprises almost half of the *Panchtantra*.

The thirty fables of *Mitralabha* includes, *The Loss of Friends*, *The Jackal and the War-Drum*, *The Ungrateful Man*, *The Blue Jackal*, *The Duel Between Elephant and Sparrow*, *The Monk Who Left His Body Behind*, *Right-Mind and Wrong-Mind*, *The Results of Education*, *The Foolish Friend* and the like.

Mitrasamprati, unlike *Mitralabha*, is all about keeping the friendships intact. It includes the adventures of four characters: a crow, a mouse, a turtle and a deer. There are ten stories in this part and all of them show the value and importance of good friends and ways to keep them close. The stories in this part include *The Winning of Friends*, *Gold's Gloom*, *Self-defeating Forethought*, *Mister Duly*, *Soft*, *The Weaver*, *The Mice That Set Elephant Free* and so forth.

Kakolokyam is the third treatise in *Panchtantra*; it discusses war and peace. Unlike other treatises, *Kakolokyam* not only talks about war and peace, but also about the battle of wits, being strategic, being wise, listening to good council, and the respective truth of different characters. It talks about different perspectives and the fact that everyone has their own sense of rightness and virtue. It consists of thirteen fables including, *How the Birds Picked a King*, *The Snake and the Ants*, *The Self-sacrificing Dove*, *The Old Man with the Young Wife*, *Mouse-Maid Made Mouse*, *The Bird with Golden Dung*, *The Frog That Rode Snakeback*, etcetera.

Labdhapraṇāśam is the fourth book of *Panchtantra*. It contains thirteen fables that talk about a person's behavior. Unlike the first three parts that talk about what should be done, this one gives all the examples of what should NOT be done. The tales are all filled with instances that should be avoided. Some of the fables in this collection are *Loss of Gains*, *The Monkey and the Crocodile*, *The Jackal Who Killed No Elephants*, *The Ungrateful Wife*, *King Joy and Secretary Splendor*, *The Ass in the Tiger-Skin*, *The Dog Who Went Abroad*, and so forth.

Last is the set of four twelve tales, titled *Aparīkṣitakāraṇam*. It is quite similar with the *Labdhapraṇāśam* in its essence. It also talks about what should not be done. This last book, unlike any of the initial four books, comprises more human characters, rather than animal characters. It includes fables titled *The Four Treasure-Seekers*, *The*

Lion-Makers, Hundred-Wit Thousand-Wit and Single-Wit, The Musical Donkey, Slow the Weaver, The Brahman's Dream, The Three-Breasted Princess, The Fiend Who Washed His Feet and the like.

Hitopadesh

Written in between 800 to 950 CE, *Hitopadesh*, literary meaning, ‘good council,’ is a widely read and appreciated piece of work written by Narayana. The oldest manuscript of *Hitopadesh* which was found in Nepal can be dated back to the fourteenth century. The text can easily be connected to the *Panchatantra* by Sage Vishnu Sharma. It is safe to say that *Panchatantra* could be the inspiration to write *Hitopadesh*.

It is somewhat similar to the *Panchatantra* as it also aims to teach the children with a sense of enjoyment. It too consists of short stories with both animals and humans as characters. It uses simple and elegant language to explain the complex worldly wisdom and political affairs. Originally written in Sanskrit, the text consists of many interesting and inspiring *shlokas* including:

*Udyamena hi sidhyanti, karyani na manoratheh,
Na hi suptasya singhasya, pravishyanti mukhe mraghah.⁷*
Hitopadesh (Verse 36)

It is only through hard-work that the projects complete. Nothing can be accomplished through the thought alone. Just like a deer never enters the lion’s mouth, the lion has to get up and work to earn his food.

The text of *Hitopadesh* is divided in four books comprising of different stories that suggests different types of morals. The first book is named *Mitralabha*, literally meaning ‘how to gain a friend,’ comprising of stories that explains the qualities of a true friend. It introduces us to proverbs like ‘a friend in need is a friend indeed.’ It comprises of many stories including *The Pigeons, the Crow, the Tortoise and the Deer, The Traveller and the Tiger, The Deer, the Jackal and the Crow, The Blind Jackal, the Cat and the Birds, The History of Hiranyaka, the Mouse, The Old Man and His Young Wife, The Rajah's Son and the Merchant's Wife, The Jackal and the Elephant*, and the like. *Suhrdbheda*, which means ‘how to lose a friend,’ is the title of

the second book. In Charles Wilkins books *Hitopadesa: Fables and Proverbs*, *Suhrdbheda* is introduced with the statement:

“Great friendships can be destroyed by the cruel and envious beings who envy such friendship. The book states that misinformation creates wedge between friends, as does a focus on disagreements, rash action without due investigation and a lack of communication.”⁸

Suhrdbheda includes stories such as *The Bull, the Two Jackals and the Lion, The Ape and the Wedge, The Thief, the Ass and the Dog, The Lion, the Mouse and the Cat, The Poor Woman and the Bell, The Lion and the Rabbit, The Adventures of Kanadarpaketu, The Farmer's Wife and Her Two Gallants*, etc.

The third book is called *Vigraha*. According to Friedrich Max Muller's book *The Second, Third and Fourth Books of the Hitopadesh*,

“War is described as a consequence of greed, criticism of others, wicked people and their ideologies, cruel and ungrateful leader, lack of restraint, lack of preparation, poor fortifications, weak military, weak diplomacy, and poor counsel.”⁹

Vigraha consists of tales including *The Geese and the Peacocks, The Birds and the Monkeys, The Ass Dressed in a Tiger's Skin, The Goose and the Crow, The Varttaka and the Crow, The Wheelwright and his Wife, The Blue Jackal, The Man Who Sacrificed His Own Son*, and so forth.

The fourth book is titled *Sandhi* meaning ‘peace.’ It is advised in the book to seek peace with at least seven types of people, namely, the truthful, the virtuous, the just, the strong, the victorious, those with many brothers and the self-destructing people. According to *Hitopadesha*, peace can be achieved by examining one's own behavior. The examples of such behaviors are depicted through the stories in this section including *The Geese and the Peacocks: part 2, The Tortoise and the Two Geese, The Three Fishes, The Mouse and the Hermit, The Booby and the Crab, The Brahmin Who Broke the Pots and Pans, The Two Giants, The Old Serpent and the Frogs, The Brahmin and His Weasel*, and the like.

Both *Panchtantra* and *Hitopadesh*, have stories that are still equally influential yet extremely simple. The stories are so beautifully told that they hold a special place in the school curriculum for the young ones. They are also translated in about 250 languages like Russian, German, Italian and English; including many Indian languages like Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, and the like. Even in the contemporary times, these stories are read and appreciated throughout the world. Many adaptations of the same are made, both in print and in visual media, including animated movies and television series. The kids still read the *Hitopadesh* to enjoy the stories all the while gaining moral and ethical knowledge.

Kathasaritsagar

Another commonly known collection of short stories in Indian tradition is the *Kathasaritsagar*. It is a famous eleventh century collection of Indian legends, fairy tales and folk tales originally written in Sanskrit by a *Shaiva* named Somadeva. Its English translation is published under the name *Ocean of the Streams of Stories*. The text is known to have been adapted from Guṇāḍhya's *Brihatkatha*, written in Paiśācī, a poorly understood language. The work is no longer in existence but its adaptations are. Its most important adaptations are the *Kathasaritsagara*, the *Brihatkathamajari* and the *Brhatkathāślokaṣaṁgraha*; out of which, two Sanskrit adaptations are available, namely, the *Brihatkathamajari* by Kshemendra and the *Kathasaritsagara* by Somadeva. *Kathasaritsagar* consists of eighteen books, further divided into one hundred and twenty four chapters that comprises of 22,000 *shlokas* in addition to its prose sections.

The text also includes early retelling of *Panchtantra* in book 10 and that of *Betal Pachhisi* in book 12. Though, the principal tale in this collection is the adventures of Naravahanadatta, son of the legendary king Udayana. Most of the stories revolve around the principal tale. Thus they are all connected and yet can be read separately as they are all retelling of different adventures. Some of the stories are *Story of Pushpadanta when living on the earth as Vararuchi*, *Story of the ancestors and parents of Udayana*, *king of Vatsa*, *Story of Sridatta and Mrigankavati*, *Story of king Chandamahāsena*, *Story of Rupinika*, *Story of the cunning Siddhikari*, *Story of Devasmita*, *Story of Saktimati*, *Story of the Clever Deformed Child*, *Story of Ruru*, *Story of Ahalya*, *Story of king Indradatta*, *Story of king Harisinha*, *Story of*

Anangarati and her Four Suitors, Story of the Brahman Viravara, Story of the Monkey and the Tortoise, Story of king Dharmadhvaja and his Three Very Sensitive Wives, Story of the Grateful Monkey, Story of the two princesses, etc.

Kathasaritsagar has been translated into many languages including Hindi, English, Kannada, etc. The first English translation of *Kathasaritsagar* was done by C. H. Tawney in 1880-1884 and published it under the name *The Kathá sarit ságara; or, Ocean of the streams of story*. This is the only complete translation of *Kathasaritsagar* in English. A. R. Krishnashasrty wrote the Kannada translation of the text by the name *Kathaamrita*. Sir James Mallinson attempted to translate the work in English but the work was never finished as the publisher pulled off the project though the first two volumes are published which reach up to 6.8 canto. In 1977 a book was published by Arshia Sattar titled *Tales from the Kathasaritsagara*, which is a collection of selected short stories from the *Kathasaritsagara*. A Hindi translation was attempted by Radhavallabh Tripathi entitled *Katha Sarit Sagar*.

Betal Pachhisi

Betal Pachhisi (written around 2500 years ago) is a collection of short stories threaded through the story of King Vikramaditya and Betal. The collection came into light with Mahakavi Somdeva Bhatta's *Kathasaritsagara*, written in eleventh century, the 12th book of the *Kathasaritsagara* is the stories of *Betal Pachhisi*. There have been many adaptations of the text but the major ones in Sanskrit are that of Sivadasa and Jambhaladatta. *Betal Pachhisi* has been later translated into a number of Indian language including Hindi, Tamil, Bengali, Marathi and so forth. There are several English translations available but the best known is that of Sir Richard Francis Burton.

The text is named *Betal Pachhisi* (*Vetal Panchavimshantis*) as it is a collection of twenty-four tales told by Betal and the twenty-fifth is the story of King Vikramaditya and Betal himself. King Vikramaditya was a pious and righteous king who was loved by all. The story begins with king being told about the blessing of the goddess kali if he catches the Betal, the Pishacha, who was a celestial spirit analogous to a vampire in western literature who hangs upside-down to a tree and inhabits and animates dead bodies.

The twenty-four stories told by Betal, end with a question to King Vikramaditya. Every time the King responded with right answer, Betal spared the king's life and went back to his tree. As the two had made a pact; every time the King took Betal on his shoulder, he must be quiet, and should not utter a word unless asked. If the King spoke unless asked, he would be killed; if answered incorrectly, he would be killed; the only condition where the King could survive was when he answered correctly to the riddles in the story. In such a case, Betal spared the king's life but went back to his tree. Thus the king had another chance at catching Betal. Thus the king made 24 rounds. Only on the 25th round, Betal, impressed by the king's intelligence and persistence, agreed to go with the king and told him his own story.

The text ends with King Vikramaditya killing the evil Tantric and as a boon from Devi Kali, being righteous and pious, asked Devi to revive the tantric and free him from his evil intention. Due to the King's goodness, kindness and righteousness, the text ends at a happy note; where the needs of the King, Betal and Tantric were fulfilled. The stories asked by Betal along with the questions he asked, are full of wit and intelligence. They provide the reader with a new insight into human mind and a better understanding of human behavior. The text has been in existence for a long time and yet is interesting, appealing and appropriate even to this day.

Simhasana Battissi

Simhasana Battissi, literally denotes 'thirty-two (tales) of the throne' and has connection to King Vikramaditya, as the throne is supposed to belong to him. The story revolves around the King Bhoja, who discovered the throne, and his attempts to sit on the throne. The throne had thirty-two statues of cursed *Apsaras* (the celestial beings). Every statue told the King Bhoja story of King Vikramaditya's life to see if he is worthy enough to sit on the throne.

Every story is a depiction of the qualities a king should have and after every story, the King Bhoja had to answer the *apsara* whether he is good enough to match King Vikramaditya. Every story is an eye opener to King Bhoja who becomes aware about the decorum he should follow. The story ended with the thirty-second *apsara*, who after getting a dissatisfactory answer from King Bhoja, took the throne with her. The legend says that the throne was never seen again.

The dates of this work are unknown and so is the author. But it is expected to be written in or after the eleventh century as the King Bhoja died in 1055 CE. The stories told by the *Apasaras* are all intriguing and informative. They give us an example of excellence of King Vikramaditya and inspire us to become better.

The text was first translated into Persian in 1591 for the Mughal Emperor Akbar as *Namakhirad afza* (Wisdom-enhancing book). Some other names given to the Persian translations were *Gul Afshan* and *Senguehassen Battisi*. The famous Hindi translation was made by LalluLal and Kazim Ali Javan. A Marathi translation was published by William Carey in 1814-1815, along entitled *Simhasana Battisi* along with translation of *Panchatantra* and *Hitopadesha*. These stories were also adapted by the poet Shamal Bhatt and retold as narrative poetry.

As discussed earlier, the history of short story in India is rich and powerful, its impact on Indian Literature can still be observed. But when it comes to short stories in Indian Writing in English, the genre was properly developed only after the independence. The pre-independence period is filled with literary works in English but they are mostly novels or plays. The short stories were only a small add-on to the large English literary world of India.

It is only in the post-independence period that the short story was given importance in Indian Writing in English. With an increase in English speaking population and decrease in availability of time, people moved to short story for literary pleasure. Instead of spending days on reading a novel, the fascination of getting the whole story in less than an hour seemed an appreciable option. Though, with the number of novels being written, it is evident that the love of novels and detailed story telling is still alive, but the short stories have also made their mark.

Authors like Manjeri S. Iswaran, Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Saratchandra Chatterjee, Romesh Chandra Dutt, and their contemporaries wrote short stories in English and ignited the torch of good and appreciable short stories which was later carried forward by the post-independence authors who filled the world of short stories in Indian Writing in English with a wide variety of themes, characters, plots, structure and length of short story. These authors are Manju Kapur, Kamala Markandaya, Shashi Deshpande,

Salman Rushdie, Bharati Mukharjee, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Ruth Pravar Jhabwala, Kiran Desai, Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh, Shashi Tharoor, Vikram Chandra, Arvind Adiga, Arundhati Roy, V. S. Naipaul, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Mahashweta Devi, Neel Mukharjee, Indra Sinha, Khushwant Singh, Girish Karnad, Badal Sirkar, Vijay Tendulkar, Mahesh Dattani, Nissim Ezekiel, Kamala Surayya, Jayant Mahapatra, Arun Koltkar, A. K. Ramanajun, Purushottam Lal, Dilip Chitre, Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, and their contemporaries.

1.3 Major Short Story Writers in Indian Writing in English and their Contribution

Indian Writing in English

Indian Writing in English is mainly divided into two parts; the pre independence period and the post independence period. The works written prior 1950 are put under the pre independence period, whereas the works written anytime after 1950 are considered to be the works of the post independence period.

Pre-Independence Period

During the pre-independence Period, the writings were mostly focused on the social issues. The writers tried to find a way to give voice to the oppressed. The focus was on the group of people that needed to be heard. Be it the freedom fighters, oppressed by the British; the women, oppressed by the male patriarchy; the lower cast, oppressed by the upper cast; the writers tried to reform the Indian mind by their writings. Either this or the authors were totally dependent on the British thinking for the style and content. In any case, the authors felt a duty towards the society to reform it and bring the development as close to their society as possible. The idea of writing was not only to express but also to affect.

Thus, representing their contemporary society, most of the characters during the pre independence era were the peasants, the village people, the saints, social reformers, British officials, housewives, etc. The authors were more interested in creating an impact rather than just making money. The important authors of the pre-independence period discussed here are viz.: Rabindranath Tagore, R. K. Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand.

Rabindranath Tagore (1891-1941) is an Indian author who has written plays, poems, novels, novellas and short stories. He gained worldwide recognition after he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. He wrote primarily in Bengali and translated his works in English on his own. He was an expert in English language, as we can understand from his works. Sometimes he wrote poetry in English directly, without writing it in Bengali first. His poem *The Child* is one such example. Some of his most famous works are *Gitanjali*, *Gora*, *Kabuliwala*, *Noukadubi*, *Chandalika*, *The Postmaster*, *Hungry Stones*, *The Conclusion*, *Jogajog*, *Nalini*, etc. Rabindranath Tagore was not only a poet and dramatist but also a painter, a musician and a mystic. His short stories and novels are highly appreciated in the whole world.

R. K. Narayan (1906-2001), full name, Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanswami, was an Indian writer chiefly known for his works set in the fictional South Indian town of Malgudi. He is one of the golden-trio of early Indian literature in English along with Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. He wrote a trilogy of semi-autobiographical works, namely, *Swami and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher*. As an author he connects emotion and fiction to reality through his writing. His other works fictional include *The Dark Room*, *Mr. Sampath*, *The Guide*, *The Financial Expert*, *Waiting for the Mahatma*, *The Painter of Signs*, *The Vender of Sweets*, *The World of Nagaraj*, *Grandmother's Tale*, *Talkative Man*, and some of his non-fiction works are *Next Sunday*, *My Dateless Diary*, *My Days*, *Reluctant Guru*, *The Emerald Route*, *A Writer's Nightmare*, *A Storyteller's World*, *The Writerly Life*, *Mysore*, *Gods, Demons and Others*, *The Ramayana*, *The Mahabharata*, etc.

Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004) is one of the pioneer authors of Indian Writing in English. He is known for his depiction of lives of the poorer casts in traditional Indian society. Leading the space of Indo-Anglican fiction, he, along with Raja Rao and R. K. Narayan, were one of the first India based writers in English to gain an international readership. Noted for their perspective and insight into the lives of oppressed, his works depict an analysis of impoverishment, exploitation and misfortune. He was among the first writers who incorporated Punjabi and Hindustani idioms into English. He was honored with the Padma Bhushan Award by the Government of India. His novels include *Untouchable*, *Coolie*, *Two Leaves and A Bud*, *The Village*, *The Big Heart*, *The Road* and his collection of short stories include

Lajwanti and Other Stories, Lost Child and Other Stories, The Power of Darkness and Other Stories, and the like.

Post-Independence Period

Along with the passage of time and gradual change in the society, the writing style and themes of the works also changed. Before the independence, the characters were entirely different than the post-independence characters. Now the characters seen in literature include the new women, the aristocrats, the middle class households, the nuclear family, professionals, corporate workers, independent young generation, and so forth. The authors discussed are viz: Manju Kapur, Kamala Markandaya, Shashi Deshpande, Bharati Mukharjee, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri and Kiran Desai.

Manju Kapur (Born-1948) won the 1999 Commonwealth Writer's Prize, best first book, Europe and South Asia for her first novel, *Difficult Daughters*. Her depiction of new women is exemplary. Her unmatched understanding of the psyche of women along with her literary excellence and writing style, created a masterpiece in her first novel. Her other works include *A Married Women, Home, The Immigrant*, and the like.

Kamala Markandaya (1924-2004) was a pseudonym used by Kamala Purnaiya Taylor, an Indian novelist and journalist. A native of Mysore, India, Markandaya published several short stories in Indian newspapers after graduating. After India declared its independence, Markandaya moved to Britain, though she still labelled herself an Indian expatriate long afterwards. She is known for writing about cultural clash between urban and rural societies of India. Markandaya's first published novel, *Nectar in a Sieve*, was a bestseller and cited as an American Library Association Notable Book in 1955. Other novels include *Some Inner Fury, A Silence of Desire, Possession, A Handful of Rice, The Nowhere Man, Two Virgins, The Golden Honeycomb, Pleasure City*, and so forth.

Shashi Deshpande (Born-1938) is an award-winning Indian novelist. She is the second daughter of famous Kannada dramatist and writer Sriranga. She was born in Karnataka and educated in Bombay (now Mumbai) and Bangalore. She published her first collection of short stories in 1978, and her first novel, *The Dark Holds No*

Terror, in 1980. She won the Sahitya Akademi Award for the novel *That Long Silence* in 1990 and the Padma Shri award in 2009. Her novel *Shadow Play* was shortlisted for The Hindu Literary Prize in 2014. Shashi Deshpande has written four children's books, a number of short stories, and nine novels, besides several perceptive essays, now available in a volume entitled *Writing from the Margin and Other Essays*. Her other works include *If I Die Today, Come Up and Be Dead, Roots and Shadows, That Long Silence, Small Remedies, The Only Witness, A Summer Adventure*, and so forth.

Bharati Mukharjee (1940-2017) was an American writer and professor in the department of English at the University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of a number of novels and short story collections, as well as works of nonfiction. The style of her writing is as good as her variety. She is highly appreciated for her books and admired for her ideas that collectively make her works loved by the readers. Her works include *The Tiger's Daughter, Wife, Jasmine, The Holder of the World, Leave It to Me, Desirable Daughters, The Tree Bride, Darkness, A Father, The Managament of Grief, Days and Night in Calcutta*, etc.

Nayantara Sahgal (Born-1927) is an Indian writer who writes in English. She is a member of the Nehru–Gandhi family, the second of the three daughters born to Jawaharlal Nehru's sister, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit. She was awarded the 1986 Sahitya Akademi Award for English, for her novel, *Rich Like Us* (1985), by the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters. Her other works include *Prison and Chocolate Cake, A Time to Be Happy, Storm in Chandigarh, A Voice for Freedom, The Day in Shadow, Plans for Departure, Rich Like Us, A Situation in New Delhi, Lesser Breeds, Mistaken Identity, Sunlight Surrounds You, From Fear Set Free*, etc.

Anita Desai (Born-1937) is an Indian novelist and the Professor of Humanities at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. As a writer she has been shortlisted for the Booker Prize three times. She received a Sahitya Akademi Award in 1978 for her novel *Fire on the Mountain*, from the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters. She won the British Guardian Prize for *The Village by the Sea*. Her other works include *Cry, the Peacock, The Zigzag Way, Diamond Dust and Other Stories*,

Fasting, Feasting, Journey to Ithaca, In Custody, The Village by the Sea, Games at Twilight, Fire on the Mountain, Bye-bye Blackbird, etc.

Jhumpa Lahiri (Born-1967) is an American author of Indian origin, known for her short stories, novels and essays in English, and more recently, in Italian. Her debut collection of short-stories *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999) won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, and her first novel, *The Namesake* (2003), was adapted into the popular film of the same name. Her second story collection *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008) won the Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award, while her second novel, *The Lowland* (2013), was a finalist for both the Man Booker Prize and the National Book Award for Fiction. In these works, Lahiri explored the immigrant experience in America. In 2011, Lahiri moved to Rome, Italy and has since then published two books of essays, and has a forthcoming novel, in Italian. She has also translated some of her own writings and those of other authors from Italian into English. In 2014, Lahiri was awarded the National Humanities Medal. She is currently a professor of creative writing at Princeton University.

Kiran Desai (Born-1971) is an Indian author. She won the 2006 Man Booker Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Fiction Award for her novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. She was listed as one of 20 "most influential" global Indian women in January 2015 by *The Economic Times*, India's leading business publication. Published in 1998, her first novel, *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* received worldwide acclamations. At the age of 35 this book won her the Betty Trask Award, a prize given by the Society of Authors for the best new novels by citizens of the Commonwealth of Nations. Though, her works are few in number, their importance in Indian Writing in English is immeasurable due to their quality content.

To conclude, it can be summed up with the statement that short story is a short and succinct expression of an event. It is focused and direct without much description. In the domain of Indian Writing in English it was introduced properly only in the twentieth century. At first, they were recognized as a tale, but in the twentieth century, with the arrival of short stories, the small yet meaningfully distinguished parts of the long narrative were recognized as short stories. Most of the authors of Indian English Writing were famous for their novels, some of them did find a fascination towards short stories their popularity is the reason that many contemporary authors focus their

work on short stories and the community of people both reading and writing the short stories is getting richer day by day.

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Chapter - 2

MAKING OF THE AUTHORS AND ANALYSIS OF THE SELECT SHORT STORIES

2.1 Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan: A Biographical Sketch

Mulk Raj Anand

Mulk Raj Anand's life and career can be divided into three stages; the early years in India until his departure for England, 1905-1925; the years abroad, 1925-1945 and; the later years in India, from 1946 to 2004. This division is not merely based on his principal periods of residence, but corresponds with the different stages of his literary career. A brief study of his biography will help in understanding the making of Anand, the artist.

Mulk Raj Anand was born on 12th December 1905, in Peshavar of the pre-partitioned India. He was born and brought up in and around the British Camps in India as his father was an administrator in the Indian Army, which was a transferable job. These experiences of his childhood, of moving around, of meeting new people, of adjusting, etc, gave him an introduction of the varied behavior of human and an insight in the human mind. His autobiographical novel entitled *Seven Summers* mention these in great detail with heartfelt emotions. He wrote four such semi-autobiographical novels namely, *Seven Summers* (1951), *Morning Face* (1968), *Conversations in Bloomsbury* (1981), *Pipli Sahab* (1985); he even started to write a fifth one but could never finish it.

During his childhood, because of his surroundings, he started to adapt the British mannerism in his behavior. Due to this, many people around him started calling him as 'Pipli Sahab' which was a common slang of the time that denotes a person's habit of copying the British in the day to day life. Reading is another important habit of Anand's life. He inculcated the habit of reading not only because of his keen interest in languages but also because of circumstances. While he was young, he twice got severely sick that required long periods of bed rest to recover. During his sickness, Anand read profoundly to utilize his time. It was given that he read English, his area of interest; which resulted in Anand reading a variety of other topics as compared to kids of his age that time.

Another interesting aspect of Anand's childhood is his faith in God. He was never much of a believer but he believed his parents when they told him about God. But the suffering, pain and doubts in life kept questioning the existence of God for Anand. His first encounter with pain was at the tender age of eleven when his nine year old cousin named Kaushalya died of a lung disease. He was very close to Kaushalya and mourned her death so much that he even wrote a letter to God asking 'Why had Kaushalya been taken away?' This unanswered letter to God made him to lose his faith in God altogether.

Till the age of fourteen, Anand admired the British and followed them. He was in Amritsar in April, 1919, during the time of Jalianwala Baagh massacre. He witnessed the pain and suffering of many and in one day, his love for the British turned into hatred. Then he joined the nationalist activities. During his college day (1921-1924), in Khalsa College, Amritsar, he joined Gandhiji in his Non-Violent movement, for which he was imprisoned for a short duration.

After his graduation, with the guidance of Annie Bassant, who visited the Khalsa College during Anand's graduation, he went to London for further studies. Under Prof. G. Dawes Hicks, he registered himself to pursue doctoral research in the field of Philosophy. The social and political situation of London was way different than India. Here, he learned about dignity of labor. He learned that the society of London does not look down upon others on the basis of either cast or profession. He noticed that even the sweeper, after doing his job, go about his life wearing a suit and no one questions him. Unlike in India, where both cast and profession are filled with a system of hierarchy, where the senior acts like the owner and the junior as a slave. He felt that London was different not only in terms of political situations, but the social structure and norms were different as well. He understood that India was a slave to its social structure. To be truly free, India has to break the bounds of cast that divide the common people in the upper casts and untouchables.

There have been experiences from his life that encouraged him to write about the plight of the *Harijans*. One such experience is when Anand was a young boy, he hurt himself while playing. A friend of Anand's, who was *Bhangi* by cast, helped him, treated his wounds and took him home only to be scolded by Anand's mother for touching her son and contaminating him. This memory resurfaced in his mind after

witnessing the dignity of labor in London. The impact of such experiences and the ones in London along with his philosophical studies are the reasons that help Anand to understand the intricacies of human nature in great detail.

During Anand's studies in London, his guide told him to go Wales to study. This is where he met Irene and fell in love with her. They talked about Anand's childhood, political situations of the time, freedom struggle and the like. As Irene took active part in the independence struggle of Ireland, she was an inspiration to Anand in many ways. She inspired Anand to write his first book entitled *Confessions of a Lover* that Irene typed for Anand. Looking back to the experience of writing this book, Anand says that he strongly felt that this book is the base of all his writings in one way or the other.

Most importantly, while writing *Confessions of a Lover*, Anand reconnected with his childhood memories, and rekindled his childhood love for writing. Though, the relationship with Irene didn't last for long, it helped Anand in every aspect of his life. Anand even took a tour of Europe with Irene. This resulted in a lot of confidence, knowledge and friendships for Anand. During this trip, Anand met D. H. Lawrence, E. M. Foster, F. R. Lewis, Middleton Murray, Malraux and Pablo Neruda. During his travels, Anand did some freelance writing and even contributed to Eliot's journal *Criterion*.

After this, he started to work on a novel based on life of the marginalized people in India who are discriminated on the basis of cast. This novel came to be known as *Untouchable*. While writing this novel, even before finishing his Ph.D., he came back to India to visit Mahatma Gandhi at his ashram. He asked Gandhiji to read his manuscript and comment. After reading the manuscript, Gandhiji said, "You have put such big words in the mouth of Harijans! They sigh! They Moan! They Groan! They never say very much!"¹ And saying this, Gandhiji cut one hundred and fifty pages of the two hundred that he had written. Once he understood Gandhiji's concerns, he decided to rewrite the novel.

This conversation with Gandhiji helped him to get back to the simplicity and truthfulness in his writing. Before Anand took to fulltime writing, Gandhiji advised him to go to people, to meet them, to live with them and to understand their simple joys and sadness; in turn, to learn simplicity and truthfulness. His experience with

Mahatma Gandhi inspired him to leave behind his copied London style and to make an honest delineation of him. This effort was so important and worthwhile that for the rest of his life, Anand remained truthful to himself and to the people around him. This is clearly visible in his writings. All his characters are alive and the situations are realistic. Be it his novels or his short stories, the text connects to common people because of his keen observation and deep understanding of human nature. Due to his exemplary writing style and topics of writing, he won a number of literary awards for his work in the field of Literature. Some of the awards are International Peace prize in 1953, Padma Bhushan in 1968, Sahitya Akademi Award in 1971, and the like. After a full and rewarding life of 98 years, he died on 28th September 2004. The list of all the works by Mulk Raj Anand including the posthumously published works is presented in the next page.

Table – 2
Mulk Raj Anand's Prominent Works

Title	Publication	Genre
<i>Persian Painting</i>	1930	Editor for <i>Marg</i>
<i>The Hindu View of Art</i>	1933	Critique
<i>Seven Summers</i>	1933	Autobiography
<i>The Lost Child and Two Lyrical Stories</i>	1934	Short Story Collection
<i>Untouchable</i>	1935	Novel
<i>Coolie</i>	1936	Novel
<i>Two Leaves and A Bud</i>	1937	Novel
<i>Across the Black Waters</i>	1939	Novel
<i>The Village</i>	1939	Novel
<i>The Sward and a Sickle</i>	1942	Novel
<i>Letters on India</i>	1942	Collection of Letters
<i>More Indian Fairy Tales</i>	1946	Collection of traditional Indian Tales
<i>The Indian Theatre</i>	1950	Critique
<i>The Private Life of an Indian Prince</i>	1953	Novel: Historic fiction
<i>Apology for Heroism: A Brief Autobiography of Ideas</i>	1957	Critique
<i>Kama Kala</i>	1958	Essay
<i>Gauri or The Old Woman and the Cow</i>	1960	Novel
<i>The Road</i>	1961	Novel
<i>Morning Face</i>	1968	Autobiography
<i>Album of Indian Painting</i>	1973	Critique
<i>Selected Short Stories</i>	1973	Short Story Collection
<i>Folk Tales of Punjab</i>	1974	Collection of traditional Indian Tales
<i>Confessions of a Lover: A Novel</i>	1976	Autobiography
<i>Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts and Other Stories</i>	1976	Short Story Collection
<i>Seven Little Known Birds of the Inner Eye</i>	1978	Critical Appreciation
<i>The Big Heart</i>	1980	Novel
<i>A Day in the Life of Maya of Mohenjo-Daro</i>	1980	Novella
<i>Conversations in Bloomsbury</i>	1981	Autobiography
<i>The Bubble: A Novel</i>	1984	Novel
<i>Homage to Jamnalal Bajaj: A Pictorial Biography</i>	1988	Biography
<i>Pipli Sahab: The Story of Big Ego in a Small Boy</i>	1990	Autobiography
<i>Little Plays of Mahatma Gandhi</i>	1990	Novel
<i>Old Myth and New Myth</i>	1991	Critique
<i>Kamasutra of Vatsyana</i>	1991	Translation
<i>An Anthology of Dalit Literature: Poems</i>	1992	Collection of Poems
<i>The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories</i>	1994	Short story collection
<i>Mulk Raj Anand's Critique of Religious Fundamentalism: A Critical Assessment of His Novels</i>	1996	Critique
<i>The Nine Modes of Bharat</i>	1998	Novel
<i>Things Have a Way of Working Out and Other Stories</i>	1998	Short Story Collection
<i>Greatest Short Stories</i>	1999	Short Story Collection
<i>Lajwanti and Other Stories</i>	1999	Short Story Collection
<i>Reflections on a White Elephant</i>	2002	Novel
<i>The Mulk Raj Anand Omnibus</i>	2004	Anthology
<i>Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census and Other Stories</i>	2006	Short Story Collection

Source: Based on Review of Literature

R. K. Narayan

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanswami, also known as, R. K. Narayan was born on 10th October 1906 in a Tamil-Hindu family. He is an Indian English writer known for his works set in Malgudi, the fictional South Indian town. In his writings, he highlights the everyday life of his characters in social context. He has been often compared to William Faulkner who created similar fictional town and explored the ordinary human life with humor and compassion. Because of his ability to compress a narrative, his short stories have been compared to those of Guy De Maupassant's.

R. K. Narayan, is one of the three most important pillars of Indian Writing in English; the other two being Raja Rao and Mulk Raj Anand. He was an active member of the Indian writing community for almost sixty years. During this time, he received many awards including Padma Bhushan, Padma Vibhushan, A. C. Benson Medal from Royal Society of Literature, Filmfare Award for best story, etcetera.

Narayan's father was a schoolmaster and due to his job he went through frequent transfers. Narayan did some of his studies in his father's school. After his father's transfer to Maharaja's College High School in Mysore, Narayan went to study there. His already blooming reading habit was deeply encouraged by the well stocked library in this school and also by that of his father's. Due to this extensive reading, he became interested in the art of writing.

His content is usually simple and relates to feelings and emotions. The roots and flavor of the simplicity of his text lies in his childhood experiences; mostly in the time when he went to stay with his maternal grandmother. At this place, he got his family nickname, Kunjappa, by his grandmother; along with a connection to nature. She taught him Arithmetic, Mythology, Classical Indian Music and Sanskrit. During his stay with his grandmother, his friends were a monkey and a peacock. His appreciation and fascination towards nature is clearly visible in many of his novels and short stories. While he stayed with his grandmother in Madras, Narayan studied in a number of schools including C. R. C. High School, Lutheran Mission School and Christian College High School. His early education helped him in his reading habits. His early readings included Charles Dickens, P. G. Wodehouse, Arthur Conan Doyle, and the like.

His life in Madras was loving and eventful. Yet an incident that occurred in Madras, which is so important that he talked about it in *Malgudi Days*, is when he went to participate in a pro-independence march. He was only twelve years old at the time, but he was scolded by his uncle for the same as Narayan's family were apolitical and considered all government forms as wicked. After this incident, Narayan did not participate in any of the political movements for a long while.

After finishing high school in Mysore, Narayan went to do further studies from Maharaja College of Mysore in 1926, after a gap of one year. In this year, he spent his time in reading and writing. He finished his graduation in the next four years. Then he decided to join a job instead of continuing his studies. He briefly worked as a school teacher but quit this job when his school headmaster asked him to work in place of the physical training master. He soon realized that he will only excel as a writer. Thus, he dropped any ideas of doing a job and stayed at home to fulfill his dream of writing. Writing did not pay off instantly. His income in the first year of being a professional writer was only a little more than nine rupees. His family and friends still supported his dreams and he survived as he had few needs and preferred to lead a simple life.

His first published work was a review of a book entitled *Development of Meritime Laws of 17th Century England*. He occasionally wrote some local interest stories for English newspapers and magazines. His first novel was *Swami and Friends* that he finished in 1930. The novel was rejected by a number of publishers before finally being published. The text was written as novel which is a collection of chronologically arranged events occurring in Swami's life. Thus, it is also considered as a short story collection by a number of critics. With *Swami and Friends*, Narayan introduced Malgudi, the fictional town in which many of his future works are placed. With Malgudi, Narayan created a miniature of the social sphere of our country. Malgudi is not particularly restricted in terms of being colonized but the town developed in Narayan's writings along with various socio-political changes of British and post-independence India.

Narayan's life is incomplete without the mention of Rajam. Narayan fell in love with Rajam in 1933 when she was only fifteen years old. Though the match was opposed by Rajam's family, Narayan managed to get her father's permission to marry her. In spite of astrological and financial obstacles, Narayan married her. After the wedding,

Narayan took the job of a reporter in a Madras based newspaper named *The Justice*. This job got him in contact with a variety of people and their issues. The experience opened his mind and made him aware of social situation in India.

After finishing the manuscript of *Swami and Friends*, he had sent it to his friend in Oxford who showed it to Graham Greene. Due to Greene's recommendation, the book was finally published in 1935. The book was semi-autobiographical and based on Narayan's experiences as a child. His next novel, *The Bachelor of Arts*, written in 1937, was inspired by his experiences in college. Again, the book was published on Greene's recommendation by another publisher. In the same year, Narayan's father died and thus, he was forced to accept commission by the Government of Mysore as he was not making any money. In 1938, his third work, novel *The Dark Room*, was published. The novels were all critically appreciated but Narayan had not made any profit out of its sales.

After Rajam's death in 1939, he felt lost and wrote a semi-autobiographical novel entitled *The English Teacher*. The book finished the unintentional trilogy of Narayan's semi-autobiographical works. The first two being *Swami and Friends* and *The Bachelor of Arts*. The short story collection entitled *Malgudi Days* was published in 1942 followed by *The English Teacher* in 1945. After that, he started his own publishing company by the name Indian Thought Publications which was an instant success and is still active; managed by Narayan's granddaughter. His life was a continued effort including emotional, physical and mental hard work. He continued to be an active member of the writing world in India till the end of the twentieth century.

He wrote a variety of books. His topics varied throughout his life along with the development of social, political and personal situations. His enthusiasm and love for writing knows no bounds. After living an eventful life, full of ups and downs for 94 years, he died on 13th May 2001. The prominent works he did throughout his life are listed as follows:

Table – 3
R. K. Narayan's Prominent Works

Title	Publication	Genre
<i>Swami and Friends</i>	1935	Short Story Collection
<i>The Bachelor of Arts</i>	1937	Novel
<i>The Dark Room</i>	1938	Novel
<i>Mysore</i>	1939	Travelogue
<i>Malgudi Days</i>	1943	Short Story Collection
<i>Dodu and Other Stories</i>	1943	Short Story Collection
<i>Cyclone and Other Stories</i>	1945	Short Story Collection
<i>The English Teacher</i>	1945	Novel
<i>An Astrologer's Day and Other Stories</i>	1947	Short Story Collection
<i>Mr. Sampath - The Printer of Malgudi</i>	1949	Novel
<i>The Financial Expert</i>	1952	Novel
<i>Waiting for the Mahatma</i>	1955	Novel
<i>Lawley Road and Other Stories</i>	1956	Short Story Collection
<i>Next Sunday: Sketches and Essays</i>	1956	Essays and Sketches
<i>The Guide</i>	1958	Novel
<i>The Man-Eater of Malgudi</i>	1962	Novel
<i>My Dateless Diary: An American Journey</i>	1964	Autobiography
<i>Gods, Demons and Others</i>	1964	Retelling of Folklore
<i>The vendor of Sweets</i>	1967	Novel
<i>A Horse and two Goats and Other Stories</i>	1970	Short Story Collection
<i>The Ramayana</i>	1972	Retelling of Epics
<i>My Days: A Memoir</i>	1974	Autobiography
<i>Reluctant Guru</i>	1974	Story
<i>The Painter of Signs</i>	1976	Novel
<i>The Emerald Route</i>	1977	Travelogue
<i>The Mahaharata</i>	1978	Retelling of Epics
<i>A Tiger for Malgudi</i>	1983	Novel
<i>Under the Banyan tree and Other Stories</i>	1985	Short Story Collection
<i>Talkative Man</i>	1986	Novel
<i>A Writer's Nightmare: Selected Essays, 1958-1988</i>	1988	Essays
<i>A Story-teller's World</i>	1989	Story
<i>The World of Nagraj</i>	1990	Novel
<i>The Grandmother's Tale: Three Novellas</i>	1993	Novel
<i>Salt and Sawdust: Stories and Table Talk</i>	1993	Stories and Essays
<i>The Indian Epics Retold</i>	1995	Collection of retold epics

Source: Based on Review of Literature

2.2 The Select Short Stories of M. R. Anand and R. K. Narayan: A Thematic Analysis

Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan both have written a considerable number of short stories in different short story collections. In this research study, the short stories of these two selected authors are discussed. Stories from the representative short story collections of Mulk Raj Anand, namely *Things Have A Way of Working Out* and

Other Stories (1998), *Lajwanti and Other Stories* (1999), *Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census and Other Stories* (2006) and *Lament on the Death of a Masters of Arts and Other Stories* (2007) are taken up to study characters and art of characterization. Similarly, different short story collections are taken up from R. K. Narayan, namely, *Swami and Friends* (1935), *Malgudi Days (Short Story Collection)* (1943), *Gods, Demons and Others* (1964) and *Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories* (1985). The thematic analysis of these selected stories is briefly discussed here.

The Selected Short Stories of Mulk Raj Anand

Things Have a Way of Working Out and Other Stories

Things Have a Way of Working Out is a story of two young boys in a rainy night in Bombay (Mumbai). All the characters in this story are flat and show no considerable development, but the story develops with situations and chance encounters. This is a different style of writing, and in Anand's stories, it is found in abundance. Though the characters are mostly flat, they act as a subordinate to their fate. Their sorrows, worries and happiness are not created through their effort rather it is a gift of God that is given to them through different situations.

In this particular story, the characters are drifting, they hope to reach home to their loved ones and be happy, but usually they are just living on a day-to-day basis. The characters include sixteen year old Krishan and fourteen year old Gopal as the lead characters and the new watchman named Duggu, the old watchman whose name is not mentioned, the policeman and a thug named Ali. The rain represents the nature in this story and is the biggest trouble that the boys have to face.

The story depicts the problems that arise with urbanization through Krishan and Gopal. Some other themes of the story are friendship, respect, survival, conflict and the like. They are depicted as fun loving and focused boys who dream of going back to their village. Through these lines, the author portrays them as friends who take care of each other, “. . . Krishan felt protective towards him, and also a trifle-guilty, because he took advantage of his seniority and bullied him or pretended to do so. For actually, no one could say much to Gopal or take advantage of him. He was that smart!”²

The short story entitled *Five Short Fables*, as the name suggests, is a collection of five fables, namely, *The Dove and the Crow*, *Butterfly*, *The Golden Cockerel*, *The Peacock* and *A Leaf in the Storm*. These are not originally written by Anand, rather these stories are adapted from folk tales and rewritten in Anand's style to evoke different emotions in human beings with the help of plants and animals. He beautifully creates a symbolism in animal life to represent a particular human emotion and intensifies it with his subjects.

The Dove and the Crow is an ideal love versus hate story that keenly studies the love of a mother Dove for her newly laid eggs and how the strong love of a meek and timid dove can be powerful enough to beat the hatred of the strong and vicious crow. The story stands for love, righteousness and team work of the small but righteous beings. It shows that the power and deceit are strong but the sound of true love and affection is always stronger.

Dove symbolizes a mother's love, the crow is the danger and the He-Dove and the friends are the support in life. The defense that She-Dove held against the crow is beautifully depicted by the author in the lines, "She felt helpless. But the eggs were safe near the belly and she spread her wings wide and, looking this side and that, she sat, on the defensive, alert, equal to the fight, should he attack before the He-Dove came."³

Butterfly seems to be more of an experience rather than an adaptive tale. But it is equally important. The story traces the efforts made by a young boy to grab a colorful butterfly. The disappointment felt by the kid shows the man's attitude towards happiness. How a man longs to be happy by material things and ignores the amazing journey one takes in search of happiness. The kid's search for the butterfly symbolizes the man's search for happiness. Its momentary nature is depicted in the lines, "They say, that, after a brief moment of rest, where they sip honey in the hearts of flowers, the butterflies go from luxuriant gardens to die in barren fields...."⁴

The Cockerel is a simple and direct telling of a conversation between an old lady and a cockerel. The story starts with the morning shriek of the cockerel that woke up the lady and ends within an hour. The continuous boredom that the lady feels and her concerns for her family are visible in the story. It shows the selfless life of a lady in a small village of India.

The Peacock is a simple tale of affection, love and separation. The longing of the peahen is depicted with sadness and anticipation whereas the pride and sorrow of the peacock is a beauty to witness. The author describes the strain of emotions felt by the two as,

“And once feared, then adored and longed for, he unfolds for her the vision of his body, in the uplifted outspread tail. Is it a ray of humility that turns his eyes now to his ugly feet? Or is it the self-torment, as they say in our village, in appeasement of his colossal male vanity?”⁵

A Leaf in the Storm is a story of a meek leaf that was separated from its tree and yet the leaf wished to be planted and grow again. It travelled far and wide in search of a place where it could grow again but dies in vain. In the beginning, it wanted to be free from the bounds of the tree and by the end it longed for the tree again. It is a beautiful tale that suggestively shows that the family and relationships, friends and foes, society and culture, everything that seems to be binding us, is actually keeping us alive. It is a great way to understand the issues related to brain drain. The social pressure that the youth feels can still be seen and symbolized through this story.

Lajwani and Other Stories

Lajwanti and Other Stories is a very famous collection of short stories by Mulk Raj Anand. *Lajwanti* is a character that represents the stress, troubles and day to day life of a lower middle class woman in India. In this story, Lajwanti is a young, newly-married girl filled with dreams, aspirations and uncertainty. *Lajwanti* literally means a sensitive plant. Sensitivity is a character trait that is often associated with the female and in Lajwanti, Anand dissects the troubles a small and sensitive young girl had to go through. Instead of words, the author represented her troubles through situations and her inner voice like the lines, “And she wanted to kneel down before the almighty for all the sins for which she was being punished.”⁶

The story starts with Lajwanti trying to escape her husband’s house. The inner conflict to make this decision and physical struggle that she had to go through to make it happen are both clearly portrayed by the author and are a crucial part of analyzing the story and character of Lajwanti. Its themes are the plight of women in India, societal pressure, patriarchal dominance, retaliation, suicide, struggle, love,

friendship, and so on. It is not clear if it is a pre-independence India or the post-independence one but this confusion is important as it raises the question of development in the minds of the readers. Whether India, as a nation, has developed or not? Whether we as free people, know the importance of being free? In this story, it is depicted how one half of the whole population is dominated by the other half. The struggles Lajwanti had to face against her family, society and its ideologies are as appropriate today as they were in those days.

Another story from the same collection that stands out is *Lady Bountiful*. This is a story that is quite opposite to *Lajwanti* but still manages to touch the hearts of its readers as it shows the other side of the coin where a woman of high stature is depicted. The story clearly depicts the enigmatic personality and power of a woman. It makes an attack at the kind of freedom that we have achieved. Shrimati Sarojini Sharma, also known as Lady Bountiful, is similar to the Mrs. Dayal in *Lajwanti*, as they both take action to do some good in the world. Though Shrimati Sarojini Sharma's good intentions are questioned because of her actions and behavior towards her subordinates in her house.

It is a story that analyzes how the personal development of one person can affect the society and the social development. Also, it raises questions at the hypocrisy of the leaders of India. The theme of feminism flows throughout the story as Mr. and Mrs. Sharma both are feminists. The themes like importance of literacy, social awareness, social reforms, power and dominance are present in this story. The following dialogue depicts the strong, independent nature of Shrimati Sarojini Sharma along with her sense of false pride that stops her from helping a lady in need.

“Don’t you understand that I have many things to do! . . . What has she done to herself . . . This is not what we teach them . . . Crude Woman! She should have come to us before! Now ask her to go to Irwin hospital immediately and they will look after her there, but ask her not to mention my name or to say that I sent her.”⁷

Story reveals the bitter-harsh reality of the Indian aristocratic society. To a member of parliament, how is it possible that winning the votes become more important than saving a life? Also, the hard decisions that one has to make to reach a certain height

are depicted in this story. The story depicts the effects of women empowerment and the idea of a New Woman through Shrimati Sarojini Sharma.

Man Whose Name did not Appear in the Census and Other Stories

The Bridegroom is a delightfully fun story to read from Mulk Raj Anand's collection of short stories titled *Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census and other Stories*. There are very few stories by Anand that touch the fun side of the Indian Society; rather, sees the fun in ordinary day-to-day life. This story is a fresh respite from the psychological and societal pain that he depicts in his stories. The story deals with the themes of indecisiveness, youth, marriage, love, friendship, mischief and problems of drinking alcohol.

In this story, the text starts with a commentary on the arrange marriages in India. Their rituals and manners are explained in a satiric manner that evokes the feelings of trust, love and recognition in the reader; as in the lines, "Somewhere in the course of all this intricate ritual the bridegroom actually sees the face of the bride for the first time, and then they live happily ever afterwards – or so they say, for divorce is unknown in the laws of the Hindus."⁸

The story revolves around a bridegroom and his decision making. This story is the retelling of an imaginary incident that happened before a wedding. During the journey, at one point the family and friends are convinced of the bridegroom's death. The story ended when the groom entered the scene on a lorry. This is a simple yet important tale drawing attention towards the marriage rituals of Indian society. The tale also seems to comment on the indecisiveness of the youth of the modern India. The inner struggle faced by Mela Ram makes him a young hero of the upper middle class society.

Another story that stands out in the collection entitled *Man Whose Name did not Appear in the Census and Other Stories* is *The Prodigal Son*. This is a story about the plight of a woman whose son has gone to the war. The story begins with a morning in the woman's life when she receives a letter. She usually received letters from her son, Sher Khan, and thus she assumed that the letter is from him. The neighbors and community does not speak highly of her son and thus is reluctant to help her.

In her struggle to convince the people to read the letter she talks about the goodness of her son. The people made fun of her as she used to scold her son when he was around and is praising her in his absence. The story shows different sides of a mother's love. In the true fashion of a short story, it ends with the mother's reaction when she gets to know the contents of the letter. Illiteracy used to be a common problem at that time in India. There were numerous troubles that the old lady had to go through just to know the contents of her son's letters.

The story clearly depicts the problem of illiteracy, social hierarchy and dominance of the rich but the main theme of the story lies in a mother's great love for her son. The emotional trauma that the reader identifies as motherly emotion is when she hears about her son's death. The statement, "Whether he was an 'angle' or not, he has become one now."⁹ said by Trilok Chand is the last thing that hurts her. After hearing the news, she went mad. The story ends with the lady throwing a fit in the middle of the street and grieving over her son. The sad truth of life is expressed in this story through the mother and her troubles.

Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts... and Other Stories

Anand published a short story collection entitled *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts... and Other Stories*. The story *Appearance and Reality* is important while studying the characters and characterization by Mulk Raj Anand as its lead characters Sir Hassan Ali and Samuel Vijayaragavacharia are both complex and mysterious. The story is about Sir Hassan Ali and his ideas of appearance. It deals with themes like deceit, false appearance, presumed reality, friendship, power, materialism, spirituality, and so on.

The pull of the money against the cultural values is a common trait of the modern literature. The society faces the trouble of urbanization as the common man travelled to the city in the hopes of a better future and more money. The personal conflict that Sir Hassan Ali faces between his beliefs and financial gain is clearly visible in his psyche. During his first meeting with Samuel Vijayaragavacharia, he feels a discomfort in talking to a man dressed in simple Indian, attire in front of all the British. Sir Hassan Ali's response to Samuel's greeting was natural, spontaneous and habitual; something that is built in his behavior by constant practice since childhood.

But because of his surroundings, appearance and impression on people, he regretted it instantly.

The irony in the story lies in the fact that Sir Hassan Ali wants to be a part of the British and trusts the Indian by heart, but in the end he is cheated by the Indian imposter. By the end, Sir Hassan Ali's ideas of creating and trusting appearances are shattered and he gets a glimpse of the reality of life. The themes of this story are materialistic thinking, false pretences or appearances, personal conflict, and the like. His fascination of pretences is so much so that he started copying the British in every menial task. For example, ". . . he saw to first class English passengers get into a similar car with a lady and he felt that he had necessary sanction for courage in the casual way they conducted themselves." ¹⁰

Boots is another short story from the same collection which depicts the lower middle class of the society. In this story, Gobindi's emotional connection to her late husband's boots is put in contrast with the greed of others. In the story, Gobindi is a young widow of soldier Jai Singh. Her in-laws had died earlier and after Jai Singh's death, she had no one to look up to.

The theme of the story revolves around the female centric social issues, patriarchal dominance, love, devotion, freedom and respect. The suppression of a weak woman is shown not only by the men but by other women of the society as well. The patriarchal society is depicted oppressing a young widow. The elderly lady of the colony took her under her wing but only with the hopes of getting some money from her. Gobindi's fear of Phuphi-Ma is seen in the lines, "The concentration in the detailed dark eyes of Phuphi had always frightened Gobindi." ¹¹

Though, the truth is that Gobindi is penniless. All she wishes is to go to her parents' house. The moneylender Seth Milip Chand decides to sell the house to reimburse the money. While she is giving up the house, Gobindi doesn't want to give up on the boots that her husband mistakenly left in the house before leaving for war. The pair of boots is her husband's only personal belongings that Gobindi is left with. She wants to hold on to it. The story is aptly named as every character in the story has a motive related to the boots. The 'boots' for Gobindi is a way to stay connected to her late husband, for Phuphi-Ma, it is the satisfaction of her son's comfort, for Seth Milip Chand, it is the pride of his son in the village, for Doctor Sain Das, it is the comfort of

walking in those boots. Tugging on the emotions of all the characters, the boots are the most sought after thing in the story.

The Selected Short Stories of R. K. Narayan

Swami and Friends

Swami and Friends by R. K. Narayan is a very interesting semi-autobiographical work. It was essentially written as a novel but due to its writing style, it is also accepted as a short story collection by critics. *Swami and Friends* consists of a series of chronologically arranged episodes from Swami's life. Here, the interesting part is that each one of these episodes can be read on its own and which is a complete story in itself. The themes of these stories are all similar and deal with the innocence of the young minds along with friendships, fights, games, attempted professionalism, desires, doubt, and so on. Swami, Rajam and Mani are all representative characters for the boys of their age. Their thoughts and actions depicted in these stories seems real and thus they create a lasting impact.

The Coachman's Son is a representative story in the short story collection *Swami and Friends* as it helps us understand the characters of Swami, Rajam and Mani in great detail. The story starts with Swami's wish to own a hoop, an ex-cycle wheel without spokes or tire, to play with. With the heart of a young boy, Swami believed that he had to get the hoop or he would not survive. He believed that his life is depended on playing with a hoop. Swami decided to get the hoop by hook or by crook. As clear from the lines,

“He dreamt one night that he crossed the Sarayu near Nallappa's Grove ‘on’ his wheel. . . . The steel wheel crunched on the sandy bed of the river as it struggled and heaved across. . . . It went back home in one leap . . . It nearly maddened him to wake up to a hoopless morning.”¹²

After being rejected by all his family members, he went out to ask his acquaintances for a hoop. A coachman, whom Swami had seen many times, agreed to give him a hoop for six rupees; to be paid in installments. After Swami had given him eighteen *paisa* in three installments, the coachman refused to recognize Swami or ever having a trade of sort.

The story takes a drastic turn when Swami's friends, Rajam and Mani, decide to take revenge on the coachman through his son. The plan of troubling the coachman and his son ends with Swami and his friends fleeing the scene from fear of a bad beating. The story is an example of the thought processes of the young minds. Swami and his friends attempt to regain their losses with a simple plan whose consequences they have to face.

Another story from the same collection that shows innocence of the young hearts is *The M. C. C.* It is the story in which Swami, along with his friends, start a cricket club entitled The Malgudi Cricket Club after a long and tedious discussion. The heavy brainstorming done by the kids for the name is depicted in the lines, "He had struggled hard on the previous night to get a few names. But only 'Friends Union' and 'Excelsiors' kept coming till he felt fatigued. But what a lot of names Swaminathan was able to reel off."¹³ The club is a way for Rajam, Mani and Swami to continue their friendship as they have to go to different schools. Here, their friendship becomes an important theme.

In their effort to get the supplies required to play cricket, they write a letter to Messrs Binns, a cricket supplier, asking for supplies. The attempted professionalism of these young kids resulted in a positive response from the Binns but in their innocence, they do not understand it and return the letter asking for a proper response. Ultimately, the captain, Rajam, after handpicking the team, gathered them one fine evening to play with whatever they could arrange on their own by the time fresh supplies come from Messrs Binns.

The kids' aim was to get together and play cricket and for that, they did whatever they could. The story is simply written and depicts the innocent struggles of the pure hearted kids. The young minds of Swami, Rajam and Mani are curious and determined. They are all focused and strong willed. The text is easy enough to be read by kids as well. The story is such that it is interesting for the kids and nostalgic for the adults. Thus the stories in *Swami and Friends* are adored by a wide readership including the young, the adults and the old people.

Malgudi Days

Malgudi Days is the one of the most famous short story collections by R. K. Narayan. The popularity of this text can be understood by the fact that it has been adapted in a famous television series with the same name. Still, while studying characters by Narayan, some stories stand out; *The Doctor's Word* is one such story. As the name suggests, the lead in the story is Doctor Raman; who is a highly regarded surgeon of Malgudi. So much so, that his opinion is considered the final verdict on a patient's life. The confident and knowledgeable doctor finds himself at loss when he has to take care of his dying friend Gopal.

Gopal and Doctor Raman had been friends for over forty years and their friendship had survived the toll of time and still was as strong as when they were kids. Doctor Raman never knew the power of positive words before. The episode opens his mind and heart to the importance of words and power of hope. The story ends within a twenty-four hour time period. In this day, he sees his best friend at his death bed and as opposed to his belief; he lies to Gopal as he trusted his friend implicitly and believed his knowledge.

The lie said by Doctor Raman gives such hope to Gopal that he beats the disease. The Doctor is amazed in the end and says, "How he survived this attack will be a puzzle to me all my life."¹⁴ It is a well-written and gripping tale depicting the power of positivity, trust and belief through the friendship of Doctor Raman and Gopal. The themes of the story are friendship, trust, fear, letting go, compassion and conflict.

Another powerful and gripping tale from the *Malgudi Days* is *The Missing Mail*. The story is about a postman whose name is Thanappa. The other important characters are Ramanujam and his daughter Kamakshi. The postman worked in Malgudi for years. He has been seeing Kamakshi since she was a little girl. The story starts with Ramanujam being worried about his daughter's marriage.

Thanappa who has become part of family by now, takes full interest and motivates and supports Ramanujam in the matter of Kamakshi's marriage. A great effort by a lot of family members, Kamakshi's marriage is arranged. Thanappa, having deep filial love for the bride hides a telegram from Ramanujam. As per customs of a Hindu family tradition, if there is a death in the family then any auspicious ceremony cannot

be arranged within a year of death. Fearing the cancellation of Kamakshi's wedding, Thanappa risking his job, hides the telegram that contains the information of the death of Ramanujam's uncle.

Two weeks after the wedding, Thanappa gave the telegram to Ramanujam seeking forgiveness for his actions. In the end, Ramanujam, very sadly declares that he would not file complain against Thanappa but calls him 'Postman' signifying his dismissal from being a family member.

The themes of this story are unorthodox friendships, humanity, compassion, connection and the freedom to choose. The fact that Ramanajum lost his chance to attend the final rituals on his uncle's death due to Thannappa changed the friendship but by the end if feels as if the mutual respect is still intact and has survived the episode.

Gods, Demons and Others

Gods, Demons and Others is a collection of short and succinct tales that are taken by from Veda, Purana, Upanishad, Folk tales, Myths and the like. Narayan took up tales of different Gods, Demons, powerful kings and blessed Sages. All the stories have been told before especially in front of Indian audience; be it from a storyteller, from an elder family member, in form of a play, or read in a book. But what is most important is that Narayan have written these short stories with self-awareness. The stories are precise, short and yet justifying. In Narayan's words,

"My method has been to allow the original episodes to have an impact on my mind, as a writer, and rewriting them in my own terms, from recollection, just as would write any of my other stories normally out of the inspect of life and persons around me."¹⁵

The Story *Draupadi* is very interestingly written in this book, which is originally an aspect of the great epic, Mahabharata. The story has many aspects to it. Narayan's writing style seems flawless and smooth, comprising all the key points of the story and yet manages to restrict the text in the confines of a short story. Placing all the important events, one after the other, Narayan kept the text short, interesting, informative and yet complete. The story has a proper beginning, middle and end. The

main themes of the story Draupadi are honesty, truthfulness, security, trust, revenge, war, reality, family, power, politics, challenging social taboos, and the like.

The story of Draupadi in this text starts with the scene where she has to marry five husbands. The absurdity of this idea of marrying five husbands is explained in the text along with righteousness of the situation with mythological reasons. The short, succinct and complete development of the story is another example of Narayan's expertise in short story writing.

The story goes through many shifts and changes and the growth of plot and character is clearly visible. The conflict between Kauravas and Pandavas that leads to the battle of Mahabharata has been depicted beautifully. There are a number of characters in this text that did not get enough attention due to the need for brevity. Nonetheless, the story got its proper ending with Draupadi along with her five husbands trying to climb the road to heaven. Though, Yudhisthir is the only one who reached the gates of heaven, the story comes to a full closure with the end of lead character's life.

Mythical stories are known to have ulterior meanings and symbols. Similarly, the stories selected by Narayan in the said short story collection are motivating, entertaining and filled with worldly wisdom. *Nala* is a story about the King Nala of Nishadha and his queen Damyanti. This story of unwavering love and devotion is an exemplary tale told in the form of a short story with Narayan's literary excellence. The text is filled with themes like love, compassion, challenges, struggle, undeniably, dedication, devotion, appreciation, friendships, hatred, family and support.

The intervention of Gods in the story presents both challenges and support for Nala and Damyanti. This is the story of love winning over challenges presented by Gods, situations, hardships and distance. The myth starts with Nala and a description of his qualities along with his love interest Damayanti. A sage-poet, in the court of King Nala, referring the king and Damyanti, says, "You are made for each other and yet you have let cruel distance separate you."¹⁶ Damayanti, introduced right after Nala, is shown to have equally powerful love interest in Nala. The duo gets married even after some of the Gods wished against it. The story continues with the other Gods creating troubles for Nala and Damyanti.

The separation of the two was most difficult part for the characters. Though by the end of the story, the lovers reunite and the readers witness a plan for the two lovers and the intervention of the fate in their story. The Indian mythology has fate in the centre of most of the stories along with celestial intervention. The story, *Nala*, being an adaptation of a myth, has these qualities. Since, it also serves the qualities of a short story; it is an abridged version of the original tale.

Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories

A Horse and Two Goats is a story published in the short story collection entitled *Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories* by R. K. Narayan. It is an intriguing story that does not directly talk about issues but taunts the misconceptions of the society in the undertone. The text seems simple enough to be passed on as a day in an old shepherd's life but it goes way deep and touches the ideologies of the Indian society. The themes of this story are illiteracy, poverty, fate, cultural difference, language barrier, materialism, and the like.

The story revolves around a poor shepherd named Muni. Muni, who was once a rich shepherd and owned about forty goats, ends up having two by the time story begins. The story represents an unusual day in Muni's life. Muni, following his daily routine, went out to graze his cattle and sat at the pedestal of a horse statue where he usually sat while his cattle grazed. On this particular day, an American traveler from Connecticut, stopped near Muni and expecting him to be the owner of the statue, tried to buy the statue from Muni. Muni, on the other hand, thought that the American traveler wants his goats, agreed.

The strength of the story lies in the confusion of the American and Muni, misconception regarding the trade, and the funny yet intriguing dialogues between them. Muni, throughout the story, signifies patience whereas the American is throughout concerned with all that he can materially acquire. Thus, a contrast between patience and materialism is reflected in this story.

Another story that stands out from the same collection is *The Evening Gift*. It is a story about a simple village boy named Shankar who had come to the city in hopes of getting a decent job and paying back his mother's loans. He ended up with an unorthodox job. A wealthy man with a drinking problem had hired him to get him

back home on time after his drinks in the bar. Through Shankar was allowed to use force on his master to get the job done, he always managed to persuade him with patience and devotion. He never failed in his task. He also earned a rupee or two by writing letter for random people near the post office.

The story is set on a particular day when Shankar had got a Telegram telling him his family's trouble along with a demand of hundred rupees. With the burden of being the eldest son of a troubled family, he went to his regular and unorthodox job. His discomfort in living in the city with this job is depicted in the lines, "I don't care what happens, I will get back home and do something else to earn this money."¹⁷ This particular day, the rich man asks Shankar to leave his job and dismisses him with a compensation of four month salary for relieving him on such a short notice. Shankar sees all his troubles going away. He accepted the money and left.

The story that started with Shankar's troubles, developed towards Shankar's hopes. But the next morning when Shankar was leaving the city, his misfortune hit him. The wealthy man, having forgotten the conversation last night, thought that Shankar has looted him and had run away. Shankar becomes a victim of his fate. The story is direct and clear in which fate plays the most important role.

2.3 Literature Review

It is striking to note that only a few remarkable papers have been written on the selected topic. The ones that have been written do not present a comprehensive view of various characters and hence, their contribution can be regarded as marginal. However, some research papers have been written on different themes present in the short stories of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan and they give emphasis to the characters and the art of characterization. In this research, the papers written in past ten years are studied. Some of the papers are as follows:

Das, Vijay Kumar (2009) in the paper entitled, *Remembering the Founding Fathers of Indian English Fiction*, traced the beginning of Indian English Writing starting with Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's *Rajmohan's Wife* written in 1964. The paper discussed the qualities of these three writers individually and collectively. The characters, the themes, the issues, the settings and the plots of novels and short stories written by the trio are considered while shedding light on the important role they have played both in

literary and social situations in India. They are the authors who have lived both in India and abroad. Thus, their understanding of social situations and the language are supported by their experiences which can be seen in their writings.

Koperundevi E. and Krisnamurthy B. (2010) in their paper entitled, *Socio-cultural Aspects in select novels of R. K. Narayan*, examined select novels of Narayan with reference to the different aspects of Narratology, with a special emphasis on their socio-cultural matrix. Different characters and points of view are also discussed. The paper is a detailed discussion of different novels by Narayan in terms of its themes, setting, characters, point of view and socio-cultural matrix. The author has taken up five novels by Narayan for this study, namely, *The Dark Room*, *The Guide*, *The Vendor of Sweets*, *The Painter of Signs* and *The World of Nagaraj*.

Dash, Rajendra Kumar and Panda, Namita (2012) in the research paper entitled *Hiding in the light: R. K. Narayan as a Feminist Novelist* discussed the key themes in the novels by Narayan and analyzed the feminist perspective in them. The paper claimed that in spite of Narayan dealing both the genders equally, he portrayed true to life images with precision and thus portrays feminist views accurately as well. His characters are daring and expressive and thus the cry for equality in his female characters is clearly visible. The paper remarked that Narayan favors freedom for his female characters and described them as educated, active and independent.

Mehta, Naveen K. (2012) in the research paper entitled *Exploring Spiritual Consciousness in R. K. Narayan's Guide and Bhabani Bhattacharya's He Who Rides a Tiger*, discussed the spiritual aspects of the said novels. The paper explained spirituality and compared the character Raju in *The Guide* to Kalo in *He Who Tides a Tiger*. Spiritual development of these characters in reference to their treatment of others gives us an insight into the art of characterization of the authors.

Indu (2013) in her paper entitled, *Indian Veracity in the Tales of R. K. Narayan*, focused on the Indian sensibility as depicted in R. K. Narayan's selected works. The paper discussed the Indian sensibilities in Narayan's works. Narayan's stories are fundamentally stories of Indian life. "Indian actuality in his books is reflected in the interminable crash between custom and innovation."¹⁸ The paper depicted the Indian

life presented in Narayan's works and the artistic and aesthetic representation of the Indian Veracity.

Trimurthy, E. S. S. Narayana (2014) in the paper entitled *R. K. Narayan's Writing Style*, critically analyzed R. K. Narayan's works in terms of language, syntax, and its artistic devices. The paper explained different linguistic expressions and the ways to analyze them with reference to an author. It included the choice of words, syntax, sentence structure, figurative language, the rhythmic pattern and rhetorical devices. The paper measured Narayan's artistic writing style in the light of these linguistic expressions. The tone, diction and imagery in different works are scrutinized with a keen eye. The author says, "It is the stylistic features of his art of fiction that are analyzed by numerous critics."¹⁹

Trimurthy, E. S. S. N. and Karmarkar, Rajendra (2014) in the paper entitled *Characters and Characterisation in the works of R. K. Narayan*, the authors discussed the qualities of characters and art of characterization as presented by R. K. Narayan in his major works. According to the authors, the zest for life in the characters of Narayan's fictional world is remarkable; the people are all hale and hearty, irrespective of their social status. The authors complimented Narayan's art of characterization by saying, "His characters, as a matter of fact, are individuals, rather than types."²⁰ The paper discussed devices used by Narayan to depict his characters. Narayan's objectivity in his art of characterization makes his characters vivid, alive and relatable.

Dash, Durga Prasad (2015) in the paper entitled, *Social Vision in the Short Stories of Mulk Raj Anand and Manoj Das*, discussed the social aspects of the short stories of Mulk Raj Anand in comparison to Manoj Das along with their writing style. The paper analyzed the psychological and social importance of their work. Their short stories were focused on bringing about a social change for the betterment of the society. As the author says, "They try to show a large picture of the society through the small canvas of their short stories."²¹ The paper is an attempt to study their vision of the society through the short stories by the said authors. They discuss the social stigmas like caste system, untouchability, unequal hierarchal social division and economic exploitation.

Gupta, Lalita (2016) in her paper *A Socio-Psychological Spectrum of Child-Life in The Lost Child and Other Stories by Mulk Raj Anand*, explained the impact of children characters in understanding the changing social spectrum. She also studied social-evils through the consciousness of their child protagonists. The paper mentioned previously written important short stories that had a socio-psychological insight. The paper is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the origin and importance of Indian Short Story as a genre. The second part has its focus on *The Lost Child and Other Stories*, its socio-psychological study and the characters presented in the short stories of the collection.

Mor, Anoop (2016) in his paper entitled *Mulk Raj Anand's Short Stories: A thematic perspective*, discussed the variety of themes available in the short stories by Mulk Raj Anand. He studied themes like religious hypocrisy, exploitation of the have-nots, social injustice, tradition versus modernity, and the position of women in the traditional Indian society. The paper discussed Anand's works in light of the things that influenced him and his motive to write the stories. The societal unjust depicted in Anand's works is realistic which helps us sympathize with the suffering of the people. In this paper, Anand's short stories that represent the problems of Indian society like casteism, feudalism, suppressions of women, modernization, religion, etc were discussed.

Naz, Farah and Namrata (2017) in their paper entitled, *The Short Stories of R. K. Narayan: A Study Character*, discussed the different themes in the short stories of R. K. Narayan. The paper discussed the qualities of Narayan's short stories. The study highlighted the realism and romanticism in the said short stories. The paper studies the themes of the short stories by Narayan including road side events, the family atmosphere, the innocent mischief of children, their innocent talk and tricks remind an adult of his childhood and their social relevance. The paper also reviewed the techniques of his writing along with the plot and structure of the short stories.

Goel, Ruchita (2017) in the paper entitled *R. K. Narayan's Malgudi An Imaginative Locale* talked about the town Malgudi. The paper suggested that Malgudi, the fictional town created by Narayan as a plot for his works; is impeccable. Its historical records given by Narayan are specific and yet the geographical and physical conditions of the town grow gradually. With every story, the town develops just like a

living being. The social developments and changes affect the town of Malgudi like any real one. The paper concluded with the qualities of Malgudi as a town, both in the text and as a fictional one.

Sophy, Margret (2018) in the paper entitled *Art of characterization: A comparative study in the selected novels of Mulk Raj Anand & Raja Rao*, as the name suggests, compared the art of characterization of Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao in their respective novels. The paper discussed the transition of Indian fiction initiated by the golden trio and their impact on the Indian English Writing. The author mentioned that the novels by Raja Rao and Mulk Raj Anand are still prominent because of their unassuming characters of the real life. In the said paper, Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* and *Serpent and the Rope* are compared to Anand's *Collie* and *untouchable* in the light of the art of characterization.

Singh, Nidhi, (2018) in the paper entitled "*The Lost Child*" *Mulk Raj Anand's Magnum Opus* attempted a study on the importance of the story *The Lost Child* in Anand's literary works. The author says, "...it is a gem of lyrical writing which has been translated into other languages more extensively than any other story of his."²² The author studied the development of the story in great detail while complimenting Anand's literary excellence. The components of a story, as seen in *The Lost Child*, are inspected. The paper concluded with the appreciation of Anand's explanation of child's psychological situation.

Godwin, A. and Suthanthiradevi, K. B. Jasmine (2018) in the research paper entitled *Humor in the Select Short Stories of R. K. Narayan – A Study*, considered two short stories by Narayan, namely, *Lawey Road* and *Under the Banyan Tree*. The authors analyzed these two stories in terms of their humor. The paper scrutinized Narayan's comic side as represented in the said stories. Narayan's style of writing that binds the reader to his works includes the realistic depiction of the common man, regular men and women in their natural habitat and situations that he draws from the vast spectrum of life.

The present literature review highlighted that the short stories of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan have their focus on family issues relationship matters, professional

problems, social issues etc. Moreover, the literature review found that the characters of both the writers are live, vivid and simple and yet effective and quite impressive.

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CHARACTERS AND CHARACTERIZATION IN THE SELECT SHORT STORIES

3.1 The Concept of Characters and Characterization

Character

The word ‘character’ has reached its current meaning after many developments. Originally, the Greek word ‘Kharaktēr’ meaning ‘a strong stamping tool’ inspired the word ‘caractere’ meaning ‘distinctive mark’ or ‘token, feature or trade.’ Middle English adapted the word ‘caractere’ as ‘character’ with the meaning ‘a description, especially of a person’s qualities’ or ‘distinguishing qualities.’

According to **The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms (2006)**, a character is “The fictional representation of a person, which is likely to change, both as a presence in literature and as an object of critical attention, much as it changes in society. Ideas of the place of the human in the social order, of human individuality and self-determination, clearly shift historically; and this is often mimed in literature by the relation of characters to actions or webs of story.”¹

According to **Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (2008)**, the term character is described as “A personage in a narrative or dramatic work; also a kind of prose sketch briefly describing a recognizable type of person.”²

A Glossary of Literary Terms (2012) gives the definition, “Characters are persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual and emotional qualities by inferences from what the person say and their distinctive ways of saying it – the dialogue, and from what they do – the action.”³

A character is an integral part of a story; the key to all the developments; the reason for all the happenings, the doer of all the actions. In short, a character helps a story to begin, develop and leads to its culmination part. Also, a character is the reason, we can relate to a story. Aristotle, in his *Poetics*, discusses the four virtues of an ideal character; the characters should be good; characters must be appropriate or true to

type; characters must be true to life; and characters must be consistent. There are many types of characters: protagonist, antagonist, major, minor and the like.

A **protagonist** is the lead character around whom the story revolves, be it a play, short story, novella, novel or a poem, the lead or the **central** character is known as the protagonist. The story is completely focused on the life and development of the chief character. All the other characters are shown as the support while developing the character of the protagonist. The character Tom Jones from the novel *Tom Jones* by Henry Fielding, Henry Fleming from *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane, Santiago from *The Old Man and The Sea* by Earnest Hemingway, Christian from *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan are some leading examples.

The **Major** characters are those who play an important role in the story and are crucial in the change of events for the protagonist. They are almost as important as the protagonist, the only difference being the number of characters. While a protagonist is one character, the only one that has the world of the text revolves around him/her; major characters are often more than one in number.

The play *Macbeth* by Shakespeare is an ideal example to understand this. Macbeth is the protagonist, the main character; one text has only one protagonist. But there are a number of major characters in the play like Lady Macbeth, the Three Witches, Banquo, Macduff, Malcolm, etc. They all have extremely important roles to play. But the story always has Macbeth in the focus. All the other characters help and support the development of Macbeth's character.

Antagonist is the adversary of the protagonist. An antagonist is often the exact opposite of the protagonist; mostly, antagonist serves the purpose of showing conflict between two ideas, creating contrast in characters. The protagonist and the antagonist stand with opposing ideologies and create a sense of comparison. An antagonist represents the opposite of all that the protagonist stands for. Iago from *Othello* is one fine example of an antagonist. Some more examples are Satan from *Paradise Lost*, Alec d'Urberville from *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Napoleon from *Animal Farm* and the like.

The **Minor** characters are supporting characters that have small roles in a story, be it influential or insignificant. They mostly serve the purpose of giving information about

the major characters or supporting them in their cause. They are also known as **secondary** characters. Again, taking *Macbeth* as an example, there are a number of minor characters in the play including Donalbain, King Duncan, Lennox, Rosse, Menteth, Angus, Fleance, Seyton, Son of Macduff, Sergeant, Porter, attendants, servants, and so on and so forth.

The above classification of characters was made on the basis of their importance in the development of the story. Other ways of classifying the characters are their behavior, attitude and development during the course of the story, for example, dynamic characters, flat (or two-dimensional) characters, stock characters and humorous characters.

The **Dynamic** characters are complex and usually undergo a drastic change during the story in many ways. The personality, behavior and attitude of the character depict the change along with their thoughts and inner psyche. The change can be gradual or striking. Sometimes, the character develops the change slowly, over a period of time and sometimes an event could trigger the change in the character making it a sudden change. In both the cases, the change is a developing part of the character's journey that amazes and/or surprises the reader. Balram Halwai from *The White Tiger* is a dynamic character whose change surprises the reader. Hamlet from Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*, Sidney Carton from *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens, Jack from *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding are a few examples of dynamic characters.

The **Flat** characters are straight-forward, two-dimensional and they remain unchanged during the course of the story. "E. M. Foster says that a flat character is built around 'a single idea or quality' and is presented without a single identity or detail."⁴ Most of the minor characters fall in this category as they are not given enough time or importance to develop during the course of the text. Though, there have been examples of flat characters that play major part in the story; sometimes, even the protagonist can be a flat character. Prospero from *The Tempest* by Shakespeare, Micawber in *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens, Gertrude from *Hamlet* by Shakespeare, are some examples of flat characters.

The exact opposites of flat characters are **round** characters. The Round characters are similar to the dynamic characters as they both undergo drastic change with the development of the story. The difference between the two is in the perspective of the

readers. The Round characters are difficult to decipher. This type of character keeps the story interesting and the reader remains confused about the person's real nature. There are different, and at times contrasting, views about the characters. Hamlet's dilemma makes him a round character as there are debates on his intentions of killing King Claudius. Similarly, the character of Cleopatra from the play *Antony and Cleopatra* by Shakespeare is a round character. Elizabeth Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen, Gatsby from *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald are some examples of round characters.

The characters that represent specific stereotypes and have frequent occurrences in a literary tradition are known as **Stock** characters. They represent a specific trait and stand by it throughout the text. So much so, that the character trait becomes the dominating factor in the identity of the character. These characters are based on clichés and social prejudice. These types of character are found in abundance in literary works. Some examples of stock characters are the Hero, the Villain, the Fool, the Sidekick, the Love Interest, the Traitor, loyal servant, the girl next door, mean step-mother, evil dictator, and the like.

The **Humorous** characters are the ones that bring joy and happiness in the life of other characters. Humor is a highly appreciated trait in a character. Many literary characters are famous because of their humor and wit. Some examples of such characters are Bertram Wooster in *Right Ho, Jeeves* by P. G. Wodehouse, Sir John Falstaff in *Henry IV* Part I and Part II) by Shakespeare, Don Quixote from the novel *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes, and so forth.

In Indian tradition, the folk tale form seemed to be the most perfect form of short story. The folk tales of India interpret the joys and sorrows of peasant people of the long eras of Indian feudal life. And in spite of the wit, wisdom and morality which they represent, they are not typical of the modern sensibility. Considering the Indian Tradition, character has also been described in Bharatmuni's *Natyashastra*. Bharatmuni categorizes characters in three types: *uttama*, *madhyama* and *adhama*.

The *uttama* or the exalted and noble are well versed in various branches of knowledge and in a variety of arts and skills; they have a full control over their body, mind and senses; they are courteous and high minded with firmness is their virtue; they are

ready to make any sacrifices and are a protection to the frightened or the poor; seriousness, profundity and magnanimity characterize their disposition. Men and women of the middling class (*madhyama prakrti*) are equally proficient in sciences and arts, and are clever in judging the pulse of social attitudes and behavior; practical knowledge of the ways of the world bestows sweetness on their speech and actions. The low (*adhama*)` are characterized by rough and rugged speech, bad character and spirit, limited intelligence, and the like; they are prone to anger and assault, wicked and vengeful, ungrateful, insolent in talk, quarrelsome, addicted to sensual pleasures, covetous of wealth and beyond any scruples.

Characterization

Characterization is the through which way a writer reveals the personality of a character. It plays a very important role in a short story. Characterization refers to the author's manner of presenting their characters.

According to **The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (2001)**, characterization is “The representation of persons in narrative and dramatic works. This may include direct methods like the attribution of qualities in description or commentary, and indirect (or 'dramatic') methods inviting readers to infer qualities from characters' actions, speech, or appearance. Since E. M. Forster's *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) a distinction has often been made between 'flat' and 'two-dimensional' characters, which are simple and unchanging, and 'round' characters, which are complex, 'dynamic' (i.e. subject to development), and less predictable.”⁵

The **Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (2008)** defines characterization as “The representation of persons in narrative and dramatic works. This may include direct methods like the attribution of qualities in description or commentary, and indirect (or ‘dramatic’) methods inviting readers to infer qualities from characters’ action, speech or appearance.”⁶

Considering the above mentioned discussion, it can be said that characterization is a literary device that can be considered as an art. It supports the form of the story. Thus, character can be described as the traits that individualize a person and give the specifications of his/her personality. There are two types of characterization; namely, **direct characterization** and **indirect characterization**.

As the name suggests, **direct characterization** means with introducing a character directly, that is, the narrator tells the reader about the character through words. Direct characterization consists of the statements made by the author to express the qualities of the character. These statements are focused and straight-forward. ‘Ana is an introvert by nature.’ Here, the characteristic trait of Ana is being told; as opposed to that in indirect characterization.

Indirect characterization means with exposing the character to the audience through actions, thoughts, looks, speech and relationship; instead of telling the audience, it shows the traits of a character and let the audience infer them. Mentioned above are the methods that author uses to make the character and writing style interesting to the reader. This way, the reader is more involved in the story.

Indirect characterization through **action** is a commonly used tool by the authors. How a character chooses to do an action shows the temperament of the character. Any sudden activity or subtle moves gives different implications of the character’s nature. The character traits are clearly visible through the character’s actions. ‘Instead of mingling with the crowd, Ana preferred to read a book during the gathering.’ Here, the author shows that Ana is an introvert through her act of ignoring the people in the gathering. This is an example of indirect characterization through action.

Thoughts are a powerful device that help the reader to understand the psyche of a character and gives an idea of its characteristic traits. The stream of consciousness technique is the best example of characterization through **thought**. In this type of characterization, the author might write, ‘I wish I could be alone in my room reading the book I love. I don’t mingle with people anyway. I hate social gatherings; and I even had to dress up for this. Let me just go.’ This way, Ana’s introvert nature is revealed to the reader through her thoughts.

Looks or **appearance** are also a way of characterization. The dresses, jewelry, makeup, shoes, hairdo, and the like, are the appearance that the character chooses to show their interest or disinterest in the situation. This method also includes the expressions. The happy, sad, exhilarated, tensed, peaceful, agitated, and so forth, are expressions used by the author to express the mood and nature of a character. ‘For the gathering, Ana choose a simple dress and subtle makeup.’ With a simple and subtle

appearance the reader infers that Ana does not want to be the centre of attention; and so, her appearance depicts her introvert nature.

Another method of indirect characterization is **speech**. Through speech, a reader gets to know a lot about the character. Speech is a part of character's reaction to a situation which exposes a character's strengths and weaknesses to the reader. Continuing Ana's example, the author can make her have a conversation with an unknown person to show her discomfort. Her speech in this case, will show her introvert nature.

Relationship is also a method of indirect characterization. In this method, the author uses the character's relationships as a key to decipher the character's nature. This way, the author introduces the reader with two things at the same time; the character and its relationships. 'Ana's relationship with her parents must be close but she still keeps her problems to herself.' 'Instead of talking to her friends, she prefers to play with her pets.' These could be the examples of showing her introvert nature through her relationships.

The art of characterization includes two aspects of a character. The presentation, which includes the looks, the sound, the dress, the style, etcetera, of a character and the other, is the psyche of the character. The above study was mostly focused on the character's external world and the author's interpretation of that world. To explain the psyche of a character, the author uses the style of characterization that links the reader to the character.

In this aspect, the **Archetypal Characters** are the basis of understanding for the author. Archetypal characters are a classification of characters made by a psychologist named Carl Gustav Jung. He studied the human psyche and wrote about twelve basic archetypes that motivate humans to take actions. Though the study is a psychological one, it is an accurate classification of characters to be studied in literature. The word archetypes means, 'original.' Thus, the archetypes characters mean with original type model or pattern of characters. Gustav classified these archetype characters in three sub headings, namely, The Ego, The Soul and The Self.

The characters in **The Ego** are further divided into the Hero, the Innocent, the Regular Gay and The Caregiver. The **Hero** is the good man in the story, the positive force that drives the villains away. He fights against all odds and wins with truthful intentions.

The **Innocent**, is the type of person that tries to be happy with himself and others. They try to connect to others. This type of character has solid virtue that keeps them down to earth. They have a common and familiar touch to their personality. The **Regular Guy** is quite similar to the innocent but this sort of character also fears to be left alone and thus, is prone to keep fake or superficial relationships. The **Caregiver** is a type of character that is both caring and helping. The compassion and generosity of their heart is usually their strength but the selflessness and martyrdom they feel tends to be their weakness.

The Soul is divided in four types, namely, the Rebel, the Creator, the lover and the Explorer. The **Rebel** is the type of character that tends to live their life according to their rules and fight to change their world. These characters are radical, outrageous and bring revolution in the system. The **Creator** try to contribute to the world and make the life of others easier while developing useful things with their imagination talents and beliefs in creativity. The **Lover** is a character that loves the people, situations and work around them. Their life revolves around the quality of love in their life. These characters are good friend, spouse and team member. The **Explorer** is a character that always seeks to go beyond the limits to explore. They might end up wandering around without any gain; but they live on the thrill of exploring the nature, life and the world.

The third classification, **The Self**, is divided into the Magician, the Ruler, the Jester and the sage. The **Magician** tries to study and understand the fundamental laws of nature. They are experts in finding the win-win situation for any problem. The **Ruler** on the other hand is a character that likes control over everything around him or her. They try to adjust the society, family and community according to their set of rules. The **Jester** is the kind of character that believes in enjoying the life to its fullest. They believe that with jokes and happiness, the life can be fully enjoyed and they try to make it happen for the people around them they are usually a static character that fills the room with laughter and happiness. The last kind is the **Sage**, who tries to look for the truth. Their knowledge and intelligence enable them to look at the world analytically and find the truth to be free.

3.2 Major Characters

As discussed above, there is a long list of classification under the characters. Their impact in the story sets them apart and classifies them as Major and Minor characters. Given here is the study of major characters in the selected short stories of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan.

Major Characters in the Selected Short Stories of Mulk Raj Anand

Things have a Way of Working Out and Other Stories

Krishan and Gopal are the lead characters in *Things have a Way of Working Out*. They are young boys of the age sixteen and fourteen respectively. **Krishan**, being the older, bosses around Gopal and Gopal being younger, doesn't question him. Though, they both know that it happens only because of their mutual love and understanding that they have. Otherwise, **Gopal** is a smart boy and is usually faster in recognizing a potential costumer and handling them with wit and humor as opposed to Krishan who is strong physically but lacks the wit of a salesman.

Even their names are similar as both represent the Lord Krishna. Collectively, they make a great team, where Gopal is the brain and Krishan is the protector. They live in Bombay but dream of collecting enough money to be able to go home someday. They work different menial jobs like cleaning the car one day or selling newspaper on the other day. Usually they work outside the railway station and try to help some travelers find a cab in return of some tip. They do not have a place of their own.

Given their living conditions, every night they wish to find a dry place to sleep as the Bombay rains are ghastly. The dream of a big city is depicted clearly in this story along with the disappointment of shattered dreams. This story shows the dark side of a big city. It is shown how the nature and situations become more important than the human being.

The major characters in the fable *The Dove and the Crow* are the She-Dove and the Crow. The **She-Dove** is dedicated and focused on her children. Her painful experience of losing her eggs to the Crow had given her strength to fight him this time. She is the depiction of the motherly love. It doesn't matter if she is merely a small dove; love and courage are the qualities that this little She-Dove lived by. The **Crow** on the other

hand, is notorious, deceitful and hateful prankster. He aims at hurting the egg of the little She-Dove. The Crow is powerful and he abuses his power over the smaller birds. The Crow represents the hateful bully who enjoys the troubles of others. The She-Dove and the Crow, both are a part of same community who fight because of the Crow's mischievous nature. The author writes the aftermath of the fight as, "The crow fled away at the sound of the love song, cawing bitter hatred in his mouth."⁷

In the fable, *Butterfly*, the **Butterfly** is the major character and the protagonist. The text revolves around the Butterfly, its beauty, attraction, elegant movements, her swift flight and her colors. The text describes the Butterfly in all its glory and ends with the saying about its death. It is said that that the butterflies live a happening life filled with beauty and colors but they go to barren fields to die; signifying the development of a beautiful thing from a caterpillar to a butterfly that goes back to its roots to die.

The Golden Cockerel is the third fable in the short story entitled *Five short Fables*. There are only two characters in this fable; the Old Lady and the Cockerel. It is difficult to say which of these two is a major character or a minor character. They both have equal importance in the text. It is a story of one morning in life of an **Old Lady**. She has a conversation with a cockerel. All of her dialogues are with this Cockerel who had crossed the border line of its owner's house and entered her garden.

In the fable entitled, *The Peacock*, the lead character, as the name suggests is the **Peacock**. The story covers a day in the mating season for the peacocks. This is the episode where the Peacock and Peahen are willing to mate. The willingness is depicted as, "He turns again to look at his spouse, as if to lure her on in pursuit. And he sees that look in her eyes which seems to say, 'I have sought you all day in vain.'"⁸ The Peacock, seeing his feet, backs off. The awareness of his flaws hinders him to celebrate the good things in life.

The fifth and the last fable in the short story *Five Short Fables* is *A Leaf in the Storm*. The major character in this fable is the **Leaf**. Her circumstances and wishes are at the centre of the story. The storm is a minor adversary. The storm is the one who detaches the leaf from her tree and makes her travel far and wide, away from her homeland of the five rivers, Punjab. The torment of the Leaf is depicted in the lines, "If you see it now, the lines on its palm are formed, as though its destiny was always clear."⁹

Lajwanti and Other Stories

Lajwanti is a short story that comprises of a number of characters. In this story, the major characters are Lajwanti, Jaswant and Hari. Each character is equally important but being the protagonist, **Lajwanti** is of utmost importance. Other major characters play a key part in the development of the story. Lajwanti is a typical Indian village girl. Living in a small village, being the daughter-in-law of a respected *Thakur*, Lajwanti is a timid, docile and obedient young girl, like Roopa, in the short story *The Tamarind Tree* from the same collection. But faced with an adversity, she decides to break all the norms and go back to her father's house without taking permission from her in-laws. Lajwanti's fear is shown by the author as, "The grip of frightfulness lingered in the cervices of light before Lajwanti's hooded eyes."¹⁰

Jaswant is a young man, filled with false pretences of the Indian patriarchal society. He is brother-in-law to Lajwanti and yet, he tries to sexually assault her when her husband was out of town studying for his bachelor's degree. Here, in this particular situation, the author attacks the high moral standards of the Indian society that bounds women in every way it can and leaves the oppressor free and even respects him. Anand tries to shed light on the reality of the set standards in our society.

Hari, unlike Jaswant, is a suppressed character. He wants the society to accept his daughter at any cost. His love for his daughter Lajwanti is clearly visible in his behavior in front of the *Thakur*, when he begs them to take her in again. Hari's fear of social boycott is way more powerful than his love for Lajwant's happiness.

In the story *Lady Bountiful*, **Shrimati Sarojini Sharma** is a member of parliament, a social worker and a feminist. The story begins at seven in the morning when Lady Bountiful wakes up and ends only a couple of hours later. But in these two hours, glimpses of her life are exposed to the readers. Her behavior towards her husband and her servants show a very different side of her personality as opposed to what is written in the news papers. The cantankerous nature is depicted by the author in the lines where she rebukes her servant, "Go and make me a hot cup of tea! The first pot was cold and insipid. Warm the milk – I have told you often. Tell Munshi in the kitchen that I have important work to do all day and want to be fresh at least for the morning!"¹¹

The duality in the character of Shrimati Sarojini Sharma is an interesting twist. She is portrayed as bountiful, but bickers over some *annas* with her servant, she is portrayed as loving, but ignores her husband, she is portrayed as caring, but rebukes the caller who informs her of a woman in need. The hypocrisy of leaders in India is displayed in this story through Lady Bountiful.

Alternatively, people in India live by the ideology that one should save every penny they can. Thus, trying to save some *annas*, while shopping for groceries, makes her a good homemaker. She didn't really ignore her husband, she was just busy. And lastly, for the call, she couldn't do anything about the situation. Clearly, the lady needed a medical doctor and that's what she asked them to do. Thus all the things can be said in both ways, making Shrimati Sarojini Sharma a round character that cannot be deciphered easily. Though it is clear that she is a strong and independent leader, she can also be sweet and loving at the same time.

Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census and Other Stories

In the story *The Bridegroom* from the short story collection entitled *Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census and Other Stories*, the major character is **Mela Ram**. The story revolves around Mela Ram's wedding and his decisions. The rest of the story, be it a commentary on the weddings in India, Mela Ram's friends or his family; they all serve a purpose in the episode of Mela Ram's life. Thus, Mela Ram is the protagonist of the story; the most important character.

Mela Ram is a young boy who is about to get married in an arranged marriage set up. He neither retaliates and nor does he questions the decision made by his elders. But he does have his doubts. The doubts in Mela Ram's mind are intensified in his intoxicated state. He doubts his luck, his judgment and even his future and decides to walk for miles from Shah-Dara to Lahore so that he could clear his head off the doubts and reach to a final decision.

Mela Ram's character is not essentially funny or witty, but the situations in his life become as such in the course of only one night. Though, he wish to thoroughly enjoy his last night as a bachelor, his doubts and wish to contemplate got better of him. His wish to enjoy with his friends is depicted by the author in the lines, “. . . but the Bridegroom seemed to be bursting with happiness and seemed to desire our company

anyhow.”¹² He spent half the night thinking and contemplating his decision. This shows a responsible and aware side of Mela Ram’s character. The satiric and funny tone taken up by Anand continues to make the readers smile through the life of Mela Ram.

Another story from the same short story collection taken up in this study is *The Prodigal Son*. The story revolves around an old lady named **Gobindi**. She is the protagonist in the story. Other than Gobindi, the major character in this story is Trilok Chand.

Gobindi is a widow living in a small village. The old and wary Gobindi is tenacious and dedicated. She is focused on the task at hand and works hard to get it done. Her appearance is never disclosed in the story but her thoughts and words are. Gobindi has the heart of a mother and filled with love, admiration, care and worry for her son named Sher Singh.

Throughout the text, the love Gobindi feels is depicted through her mannerism, her rashness to know the contents of the letters and most of all, through her prayers. “May I be his sacrifice.”¹³ In her prayers, she kept wishing that she could die in place of her son but in the end, she has to face the ground-breaking reality of her son’s death.

The other major character, Trilok Chand, is a friend of Sher Singh, Gobindi’s son. He is a major character because of the friendship between Sher Singh and himself. The story begins with a conversation between Gobindi and Seth Ganesh Das, Trilok Chand’s father. The conversation continues and develops with the topic of Trilok Chand and Sher Singh’s friendship.

Also, Trilok Chand is an important character as he is the one who ultimately reads the letter and disclosed the news of Sher Singh’s death. Trilok Chand’s demeanour with Gobindi is respectful and loving. He even calls her ‘Mother’ in the lines, “‘Give me the letters mother,’ Trilok Chand said . . . as he bent over the old woman.”¹⁴ The news of Sher Singh’s death is a shock for both Gobindi and Trilok Chand.

Lament on the Death of the Master of Arts... and Other Stories

The story *Appearance and Reality* from the short story collection *Lament on the Death of the Master of Arts and Other Stories* is a tale that deals with the concept of

fake appearances and the reality of emotions. The lead character, **Sir Hassan Ali**, is depicted as a reputed man of the Indian society, who had always followed the path of devotion and restriction. Through his spotless character and good deeds, he had attained a respected position in the society. He was awarded with the title, Sir Hassan Ali, by the government for his contribution in the business world. He is depicted as the perfect human being who leads a simple life with love and respect.

The story begins with Sir Hassan Ali travelling to abroad in a ship, where, as opposed to his comfort, he is dressed in a three-piece suit, a hat, a cane and boots. As a Knight Commander of Star of India, Sir Hassan Ali believed that he had to maintain a certain decorum and behavior, mostly, a behavior that the British would find acceptable. The author comments on Sir Hassan Ali's confidence and says, "...in spite of his doubts, he carried himself with dignity and precision expected from India's ambassador at large to the western world."¹⁵ In Sir Hassan Ali's own words, "...it was all a question of *izzat*, and propriety and his mission required that he put up a good show..."¹⁶ The desire to be accepted by the people around him seems to be the driving force in the life of Sir Hassan Ali. It also seems to be the reason for his kindness and clean character. His character is put to test when a conman, who identifies himself as Samuel Vijayaragavacharia, offers him a day full of beautiful sceneries and physical pleasures. In spite of a nagging feeling about Samuel, Sir Hassan Ali accepted his offer as he felt that he could leave his fake persona of a controlled man and for once, fully appreciate the physical pleasures of the world, which ultimately becomes the reason for his embarrassment and realization of truth.

Another important story from the same short story collection is *Boots*. The protagonist of the story *Boots* is **Gobindi**. She is a young widow, married to late Solider Jai Singh. Gobindi is a loving girl and her devotion to her husband and her family is clearly visible throughout the text. Gobindi is a typical lower middle class woman, who represents the condition of women in the early twentieth century. She is suppressed, illiterate, downtrodden, weak, docile and lives in the shadow of others. Her shy nature is expressed by the author in the lines, "Like a shy gazelle she darted across the courtyard and stood behind the tattered length of jute cloth which curtained her off from the world."¹⁷ She lived under her father's protection before marriage, under her husband's and mother-in-law's wishes after marriage and under the rules of Phuphi-ma after their death. Her life became a constant struggle after the death of her

mother-in-law and her husband. The people in her life try to squeeze out all her money.

Being the lead character, the story revolves around Gobindi's feelings. Her emotions are at the centre of the story. Gobindi is a tamed and quite person, afraid to the core, and thus, she speaks only a few words in the whole text. Even when she speaks, her voice quivers in the low tone she uses.

Two main aspects of Gobindi's emotions depicted in this story are fear and love. Her love for her late husband and his boots become the motive for Gobindi's life and her fear of losing them is the reason for which she finally snaps at her oppressors. The only words Gobindi speaks clearly are the ones she shouts after the moneylender snatches the boots from her. "I'll go mad! I'll go mad!"¹⁸ Gobindi shouts at the end of the story.

Major Characters in the Selected Short Stories of R. K. Narayan

Swami and Friends

In almost all the stories in the short story collection *Swami and Friends*, Swaminathan, also known as **Swami**, is the protagonist. Same is the case with the story *The Coachman's Son*. Along with the protagonist Swami, the other major characters are his friends, **Rajam** and **Mani**. Swami and his friends are young, eleven year old boys, studying in the second standard of a private school in Malgudi.

Swami's acts and antics are filled with innocence that makes him a likeable boy. Also, the readers connect with him as he represents the childhood of a common man in India in the early nineteen-forties. Swami is smart and sweet, simple and witty, quite and outdoorsy; his qualities are contrasting and yet endearing to witness. His wish to own a hoop becomes the dominant emotion in this story. The beauty of Swami's character lies in his truthfulness, earnestness, innocence and reality. His earnestness and innocence are depicted beautifully by the author in the lines, "He sometimes believes that he could perform magic, if only he set about it with sufficient earnestness. He also remembered Ebenezer's saying in the class that God help those that prayed to him."¹⁹

Mani and Rajam are Swami's fast friends. Swami's unwavering trust in them is shown by the fact that they are the first ones that Swami shares his problem with. Mani is sensible for an eleven year old and Rajam is usually tricked by his emotions and feelings. In the rush of feelings, he even goes on to say, "Then why not rush into his house and kick him."²⁰ Rajam's plan to blackmail the coachman by threatening his son is questioned by Mani who realizes the risks attached to it. Though, Rajam's wish to help Swami is evident and appreciated, Mani is the one who foresees the problems and acts upon it in time. Thus, the temperaments of the three major characters are explored in this story.

The major characters in the story *The M. C. C.* are same as those in the story *The Coachman's Son*; namely, **Swami**, **Rajam** and **Mani**. The same characters are shown in a different light in this particular story. For the protagonist, Swami, a responsible side of his character is portrayed as he becomes the captain of the Malgudi Cricket Club, *The M. C. C.* founded by the same trio. Rajam and Mani, in this episode, are shown as forgiving and helpful characters.

The boys try a pinch of professionalism as they try to write formal letters to a Cricket equipment company owned by Messrs Binns. Rajam, being the highest scorer out of the three in school, took the responsibility of writing the letter. Mani chooses the company and the equipments to order. The meager minds of the young boys hinder them in understanding the response from the company. The author says, "The trouble was that they could not understand whether Binns were going to send the goods or not."²¹ Swami, who was not very keen on cricket in the beginning, decided the meaning of the response sent by Messrs Binns.

Malgudi Days

There are two major characters in the short story entitled *The Doctor's Word* published in the short story collection *Malgudi Days*, namely, **Doctor Raman** and his friend **Gopal**. Doctor Raman and Gopal were born and brought up in the fictional town of Malgudi. In spite of differences in profession and lifestyle, the friendship of the two gentlemen had survived for more than four decades. This shows their dedication and goodness of heart. Both show a sense of mutual understanding and respect.

Doctor Raman is a famous surgeon who had attained a godly stature in the minds and hearts of the people of Malgudi with his straight-forward, true and mostly accurate words of judgment. He did not believe in sugar-coating the in telling the physical condition of his patients. After years of treating difficult cases, Doctor Raman had become mechanical in telling the truth to his patients in a clam and certain voice. His diagnosis had hardly ever been wrong in his long career as a doctor. Being the only character in the story that grows and learns, his initial thoughts are depicted as,

“He never believed that agreeable words saved lives. He did not think it was any of his business to provide comforting lies when as a matter of course nature would tell them the truth in a few hours. . . . Today, standing over a bed, the doctor felt that he himself needed someone to tell him soothing lies.”²²

As opposed to the grand and eventful life of Doctor Raman, Gopal had a simple and easygoing life. Gopal is a simple peasant who is a true friend to Doctor Raman. He trusts his friend with his life and it is this trust that saves his life. The comforting words said by the Doctor become the ray of hope for Gopal that ends up saving his life. Gopal’s trust is depicted through the lines, “Do you say so? If it comes from your lips it must be true....”²³ In the light of the difficult situations, Gopal’s character comes out as strong-minded, big hearted and sweet, all at the same time.

Another important story published in the short story collection *Malgudi Days* considered here is *The Missing Mail*. The protagonist of this story is a Postman named Thanappa. The other major character is Ramanujam, the senior clerk in a government office in Malgudi. **Thanappa**, as told in the story, had worked as a postman in Malgudi for more than ten years. His presence had become a part of life for everyone in Malgudi. As expressed in the following lines, “He was a part and parcel of their existence, their hopes, aspirations and activities.”²⁴

Thanappa depicts the traits of *Vasudev Kutumbhakam*.* He is a talkative, down to earth, happy-go-lucky person, who establishes a connection with everyone in town. After delivering letters to families in Malgudi for years, talking about their happiness, sorrows, achievements, failures and life in general; Thanappa became a part of their lives.

* Lord Krishna in the *Bhagwad Gita* talks about this concept which literally means ‘the world is one family.’

Every news, be it good or bad, was transmitted to Malgudi by the trustworthy Thanappa. It is clear that Thanappa had a personal connection to everyone in the small town of Malgudi. This connection is even stronger with the senior clerk, Ramanujam.

The other major character, **Ramanujan**, is a decent, good-hearted, reputed man of the town. He has known Thanappa for nearly two long decades. Ramanujam got the news of his daughter being born from Thanappa and Thanappa is the bearer of the news of a marriage proposal for Ramanujam's daughter, Kamakshi. Thus, the official and occasional meetings of Thanappa and Ramanujam turned into a bond of trust and understanding; one can even regard it as a friendship of sorts; a friendship which is clearly visible through Thanappa's involvement in Kamakshi's marriage.

The devotion that Ramanujam and Thanappa feel for Kamakshi's marriage is similar. Ramanujam spends a fortune, Thanappa risks his job and both invest lots of love, admiration and time on Kamakshi's life and her wedding. Both the characters are different from background, job status and lifestyle and still manage to create a respectable friendship which results in a strong bond of filial love between Kamakshi and Thanappa.

Gods, Demons and Others

In the retelling of the story of the epic *Mahabharata*, Narayan wrote a short version on the life of Draupadi entitled *Draupadi*. This short story comprises of the journey of Draupadi since her marriage to the Pandava brothers till her death.

Since the story is focused on **Draupadi**, she is the protagonist of the story. The other major characters are **Yudhistira**, **Bhima**, **Arjun**, **Nakul** and **Sehdeva**; the five Pandava brothers. The story behind Draupadi's miraculous birth along with the story of her previous life (when she was born as Nalayani) is discussed in short as is the story of the birth of the Pandava brothers.

Mahabharata, the epic, is too big and important to be able to summarize in the form of a short story, but Narayan does the job very well. He took up the most important moments of Draupadi's life and rewrote them in a precise and compact format.

The author shows Draupadi as a smart, decisive, strong, focused and true to her word. Being born out of a sacrificial fire, Draupadi is a special child. Her marriage could not have been a normal event. She was married to the Pandavas who were born to Kunti and Madri (wives of Pandu) through an invocation to different Gods. Yudhistira was the son of Yama, the God of death and justice, Bhima, was the son of Vayu, the God of wind and Arjun was the son of Indra, chief of Gods, were Kunti's sons. Nakul and Sehdeva were the sons of Madri who were born out of the invocation to the Aswinis, the elves of paradise.

All these major characters are born miraculously with the blessings of Gods. They depict larger than life scenarios in which they are tested by fate. The epic is set in *Dwapar Yuga*^{*} which upholds the morals and values of its time. The characters display the tricks and traits of their time and show the practical aspects of life.

In the story *Nala*, published in the short story collection entitled *Gods, Demons and Others*, by R. K. Narayan, the major characters are Nala and Damyanti. Nala was a young, brave and good ruler of Nishada, whose subjects reflected the qualities of their king and made Nishadha a peaceful and beautiful place filled with contentment and prosperity.

Through a poet who once attended his court, King Nala came to know about a young and beautiful princess named Damyanti, Daughter of Bhima,^{**} the King of Vidarbha. The poet depicted her beauty with such ardor and appreciative words that the king fell in love with her even without seeing her.

King Nala is a responsible character who stays true to his word even after being tricked by the Gods, Nala stood up to his duties and followed the righteous way. In face of troubles, Nala never deviated from the path of righteousness. Similarly, Damyanti proved to be an ideal wife and an equal to Nala by following him in all his endeavors. Even after being separated from her husband, Damyanti faced all her troubles with determination. She was strong minded and dedicated enough to be able to find her husband.

* The third out of the four *yugas*, or ages of mankind, as believed in Hinduism. It follows the chronology: *Satya Yuga*, *Treta Yuga*, *Dvapara Yuga*, *Kali Yuga*.

**A different Bhima from the one in the *Mahabharata*.

Throughout the text, different qualities of Nala and Damyanti are portrayed while facing adversities. Nala is an adjusting character as shown when he was reduced to a beggar from a revered king.

He adopted his mind to situations presented before him by fate and the Gods. The intervention of the Gods only helped them by intensifying their love for each other.

Damyanti, by the end of the story, is depicted by the author as strong, dedicated, determined and tenacious young woman, who follows whatever means are required to attain the desired end. Her beauty was her chief characteristic in the beginning of the story and it became an attribute to her intelligence by the end of it.

Under the Bunyan Tree and Other Stories

There are two major characters in the story *A Horse and two Goats* from the short story collection *Under the Bunyan Tree and Other Stories*, namely, **Muni**, an old Shepherd, and **an American**, travelling through India. Though, Muni is the protagonist, the American also plays an important role in the story. Muni is a simple old villager with small desires and an even smaller ego. His simplicity is clear with his wish on his birthday, which is a simple curry with drumsticks. He says, “Oh, I am tired of eating those leaves. I have a craving to chew the drumstick out of sauce, I tell you.”²⁵ Muni, who was once a rich shepherd with about forty goats in his possession, ends up with two goats, a hut for a home, and an old wife to feed without any employment. He is ridiculed by almost all the villagers as he owes them all some amount of money.

The American, on the other hand, was a rich and curious fellow. After being trapped in a skyscraper, for four hours without electricity or any way out, he wished to visit other civilizations and thus, decided to visit India in hopes of understanding how the rest of the people survived in the world. His curious nature makes him open to possibilities and makes him open hearted even to the strangers. He goes on to buy the horse statue from Muni who had an entirely different idea of the trade. Though he tries and says, “I really wonder what you are saying because your answer is crucial. We have come to the point when we should be ready to talk business.”²⁶

Muni and American are from different backgrounds, representing different cultures. Muni represents the devoted and adjusting nature, whereas, the American is from a

culture of entitlement. Muni believes in society and belonging at a place, whereas the American believes in individual and in acquiring things. The two contrasting personalities cross path one day and the interesting conversation that takes place between the two helps the reader to understand their behavior in face of adversities. Their similar taste in smoke binds them but the more time they spend together and the more they try to talk, the more the reader witness the contrast between the two major characters of the story.

Another story from the same collection is entitled *The Evening Gift*. The important characters in this short story are Shankar and his employer, a wealthy man with a drinking problem. **Shankar** is the protagonist in this story. Shankar is a tough, solid built, educated, dedicated, devoted, reliable, responsible and simple young man, and having tried every other option, he took a weird job that helped him repay the loan that his mother had to take.

At times, he resented being the first born, in the financially troubled family. The author describes Shankar's feelings as, "He cursed his lot for being the eldest son of a troubled family."²⁷ But still, he devoted himself in resolving those problems. At his job, he has to deal with a drunken rich employer who taunts and insults him in his intoxicated state without any realization or memory of it later on. Shankar took the entire rebuke with patience and focused his mind on the day his debt would be paid and he could go back to his home.

The employer is rich and self-contradictory personality fluctuating between sober and drunk. When sober, he is responsible and sensible and while he is drunk, he becomes irresponsible, untrustworthy and forgetful. The employer is the key with which fate plays with fortunes and misfortunes in Shankar's life. Shankar's job, a fortune, and his arrest in the end, a misfortune, both happened by the hands of his employer.

3.3 Minor Characters

Minor Characters in the Selected Short Stories of Mulk Raj Anand

Things Have a Way of Working Out and Other Stories

The minor characters of the story *Things Have A Way of Working Out* are a new watchman named **Duggu**, an **old watchman** whose name is not mentioned, a

policeman and a thug named **Ali**. These characters play a part in the fate's game, and become both, a boon and a curse, to Krishan and Gopal. The old and the new watchmen represent a contrast in their nature. The old one was helping and supportive whereas the new one is strict and hard. Though the helping nature of the old watchman is not directly inherited by the new one, by the hands of fate, he ends up letting the boys sleep in peace. Duggu, in spite of being irrational, strict and short-sighted, seems to have an insight in life's philosophy; still he ended up in jail due to his anger and rigidity. Duggu is the one who makes the statement, "Things have a way of working out..."²⁸ on the boys' situation.

Ali is the character that is introduced to us only as a means to an end. Because of his fight with Duggu, Duggu is arrested by the policeman and the boys get to sleep on the stairs of the building in a dry place as opposed to the damp and rainy footpath. Ali, Duggu, Krishan and Gopal, all seems to be puppets in the hands of fate. In this tale, fate makes sure that things work out. Even though all the characters are rigid, gloomy and depressed, fate is the only alive and omnipresent character that finds a way for things to work out. The name *Things Have a Way of Working Out* also signals towards the presence of fate in the lives of human beings.

The minor character in the fable *The Dove and The Crow* are the He-Dove and the Sparrows. The **He-Dove** is a loving and responsible character, he proves to be a strong supportive figure in the life of the She-Dove. As soon as he realizes the danger, he took charge and called his friends for support. The **Sparrows** and the Dove collectively become powerful enough to ward off the evil Crow.

In the fable *Butterfly*, the **young boy** is a minor character. Though the text starts with the thoughts and actions of the boy, they are all focused on the butterfly. The boy seems to be mere observer and the life of the Butterfly is the central theme. His disappointment at loosing the butterfly is depicted by the author in the lines, "... with quivering wings, she darts out of my hands before they have closed upon her. The hurt of the frustrated love possesses me."²⁹

The Golden Cockerel is the third fable in the short story Five Short Fables. Its characters, the **Cockerel** and the **Old Lady** are both equally important. The conversation is one sided and focused. The Old Lady talks to the Cockerel as if he can

understand everything she says. The crooning of the Cockerel is enough for the lady to continue the conversation.

In the fable *The Peacock*, the two characters the **Peacock** and the **Peahen**. The Peahen is a minor character. She is a young Peahen waiting for her mate. Her portrayal is given as the love interest of the Peacock. Her longing is the dominant emotion in the text. Her longing is described by the author in the lines, “Afraid that she may lose him if he flies off again, the female bird treads the earth meditatively like the *Nayika*, vigilant with longing in her eyes.”³⁰

The **Storm** in the story *The Leaf and the Storm* plays a minor role. As the story revolves around the thoughts of the Leaf, the Storm becomes the means in the hands of fate to execute the destiny of the Leaf.

Lajwanti and Other Stories

Lajwanti is a simple story with many characters. Its minor characters include Balwant, Maina, Mr and Mrs Dayal, the Confectioner, Lajwanti’s in-laws and the Gurkha. Surprisingly, Lajwanti’s husband, **Balwant**, is a minor character, who doesn’t even make one appearance in the story. He is described as studious and meek; so much so that Lajwanti does not even expect him to stand up to Jaswant for her. At first glance, Lajwanti’s pet bird **Maina** seems more important to her. But after studying further, we can say that the *Maina* is important as it is the only companion Lajwanti has, only one that listen to her.

Other minor characters include **Mr. and Mrs. Dayal**, the engineer and his wife, who take Lajwanti and Jaswant home, hoping to resolve the matter. **Shrimati Sushmita Dayal** is a social do-gooder who is bold, likes to take charge and can’t stand it when a lady is oppressed. It was Mrs. Dayal that slapped Jaswant right in the face for trying to hit Lajwanti. Mr. Dayal does not take much interest in the matter though he adjusts beautifully with his do-gooder wife; he is usually focused on himself and is depicted only as a passing character.

The **Confectioner** isn’t a dominating character but stands out only because he seems to be the omnipresent voice of righteousness. He is outspoken, and commands Jaswant in an authoritative voice, “Ohe, do not hit her. Persuade her to go back with you.”³¹ He seems to represents the author’s voice in the story.

Lajwanti's **mother-in-law** is a simple domestic village lady. As per the social norms, she makes Lajwanti do all the heavy chores, scolds her whenever she feels like it and supports her son in every situation. She doesn't have much dialogues but it is evident with Lajwanti's feelings towards her that she is both strict and caring.

Her **father-in-law** seems to be a soft spoken person who has a lot of power. He waits and tries to understand the situation before making any judgment. Being the *Serpanch* (head) of the village, he is a figure of authority. **Gurkha** in the Dayal house is a minor character that comes from the same background as Lajwanti, the lower working class, and is socially skilled in understanding the situation. The fact that he understood the situation in first glance means that Shrimati Dayal often make such endeavors which proves her goodness of heart.

In the story *Lady Bountiful*, with a character like Shrimati Sarojini Sharma in the story, everyone else becomes a minor character. Lady Bountiful outshines all the other characters including her husband Shree Mohanlal Sharma. Other characters are Mr. Balan, part time assistant cum typist to Shrimati Sharma, Gyan, her bearer cum driver, and Munshi, the cook.

Shree Mohanlal Sharma is a timid person who keeps to himself and his business. Though, he is ahead of his times and decided to marry a feminist by choice, his goodness is sidelined by his wife. **Mr. Balan** is a learned fellow, has a Master of Arts degree, and is competent and devoted. He is a part time assistant to Mrs. Sharma and has a full time job after that. His industrious nature is given away by the fact that in spite of being busy, he agrees to work for Mr. Sharma as well.

Gyan, the bearer cum driver, is a young Hillman from Kangra. He is easily rebuked by Mrs. Sharma and still stays silent for the sake of his job as he comes from a poor family. The **Cook** is not discussed anywhere other than the conversations with Mrs. Sharma and thus his character remains in the background. The minor characters in this story play an important role in giving away some traits of Mrs. Sharma's character.

Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census and Other Stories

In the story *The Bridegroom* from the short story collection *Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census and Other Stories*, the minor characters are present in abundance, as the story is set in a wedding. But there are only a few minor characters

that are important for the development of the story. Mela Ram's friends, named, **Teja Singh, Mukund Lal, Jai Ram,** and **the narrator**; Mela Ram's father **Lalla Kahan Chand**, and the families of both bride and groom.

The father of the groom, Lalla Kahan Chand, is a strict and stock character. He is the ideal nineteenth century father with stoic armor of anger around him. Mela Ram and his friends are deathly afraid of Lalla Kahan Chand's anger. Mela Ram and all his friends are educated boys well to do families. They have similar interests and yet they have different temperaments. Though, being in an intoxicated state, their temperaments are hard to judge. The only common trait in all the minor characters is the fear of losing Mela Ram. The love, affection and worry they feel for Mela Ram binds them all and in spite having differences in ideas, age and situations, they appear as one unit.

The minor characters from the short story *The Prodigal Son* from the short story collection entitled *Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census and Other Stories* are Ganesh Das and Arur Singh. **Ganesh Das** is a *Zamindar* in the village. He is rich and seems to be rude to Gobindi. He goes on to scold Gobindi and says, "You yourself used to complain that he was thieving you of your savings, and now you talk of him as though he were an angel."³² He is angry at Sher Singh as he believes that Sher Singh is the reason behind all the misdemeanors of his son, Trilok Chand. Ganesh Das is direct in expressing his dislike for Sher Singh. He even goes on to insult Gobindi and the birth of Sher Singh.

His presence in the story is important that as the conversation between Ganesh Das and Gobindi exposes the past situations to the readers. He despises Sher Singh and yet agrees to read the letters for Gobindi's sake as he understood the love of a parent for their child. An understanding of parenthood can be seen in the action of Ganesh Das.

Arur Singh is a cloth dealer in the same village. He is a simple character that did not have any space to grow during the course of the story. Arur Singh enters the scene by the end of the story. He only has three dialogues. After Trilok Chand reads the letters and becomes aware of Sher Singh's death, Arur Singh is the first person to realize what has happened. He is aware and sensitive. He cared for Gobindi and advised her. Arur Singh is a humane character. As opposed to Ganesh Das, Arur Singh is not afraid to show it.

Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts and Other Stories

The character of Samuel Vijayaragavacharia is a con-artist in the story *Appearance and Realty* from the short story collection *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts and Other Stories*. Some other minor characters in the story are The Sergeant, The Englishman and some bystanders. **Samuel Vijayaragavacharia** plays a key role in the development of the lead character, Sir Hassan Ali, and thus is an important character. But his role is dependent on the actions and reactions of the lead and is focussed on revealing Sir Hassan Ali's character. Thus, even after being important to the story, Samuel is a minor character. He lures Sir Hassan Ali to his downfall through deceptive imagination of pleasure. After being asked as to what he will show to Sir Hassan Ali, he says, "All the houris promised to the faithful in heaven."³³ He is the key that unmask the appearance of Sir Hassan Ali and reveals his reality to the readers.

In spite of being a minor character, Samuel Vijayaragavacharia has a personality of his own. He is friendly, helpful, supportive and deceitful. His art of lying stands him out and his conman skills are impeccable. Sir Hassan Ali's doubts and his inner conflict in trusting Samuel is an example of how fake and trusting Samuel could be at the same time. The story basically puts together two fake personalities where one deceives the other with better skills and talent. The other minor characters; the **Sergeant**, the **Englishman**, the **bystanders**; all are a part of Sir Hassan Ali's Story and support his development. They do not have their separate identity in the story.

The story *Boots* from the same short story collection has a number of minor characters including, Seth Milap Chand, Phuphi-Ma, Doctor Sen Das and Gobindi's Husband, Late Jai Singh. Though, Jai Singh and his mother had died by the time the story starts but because of Gobindi's strong memories of them, we can consider them as minor characters in the story.

Seth Milap Chand is a typical, ruthless and greedy moneylender who wants to squeeze out as much money as he can from the widow. **Phuphi-ma**, on the other hand does not have much of a monetary gain but she seems to enjoy her power over the young girl. Though, she also wishes to own the boots for her son, her real pleasure lies in her command over Gobindi. **Doctor Sen Das** does not directly hurt Gobindi, but he seems to accept the torture over Gobindi as a natural process. He represents the

double standards of the society. On one hand, he is a doctor who saves lives for a profession and has respect in society; on the other hand, he only sees the profit that he can make through Gobindi's place. The boots seem to be only an added bonus to the doctor. The emotional and physical assaults faced by Gobindi are expressed by the author in the lines,

“Gobindi struggled with all the grim strength of her young body for a while, her headcloth falling away and revealing a face convulsed with suppressed sobs. But old Phuphi scratched with her claws and Seth Milap Chand thrust her aside with both hands while the doctor kicked her as though she was a dog.”³⁴

Gobindi's husband **Late Solider Jai Singh** and her **mother-in-law** are simple characters mostly because of their limited mentions through Gobindi's memories. Even then, the two depict decent characters with good hearts. They seem to represent the goodness of the society that has gone and innocent people like Gobindi has to suffer for that.

Minor Characters in the Selected Short Stories of R. K. Narayan

Swami and Friends

The minor characters of the story *The Coachman's Son* published in the short story collection entitled *Swami and Friends* include the Coachman, his Son, Swami's Father, his Mother, Mani's Uncle, other family members and some onlookers.

The coachman is a shrewd and cunning person who tricked Swami into giving him one and a half *anna* in exchange of promise of a hoop. He tricked Swami into thinking that he can make the metal for the hoop by a sacred ritual. He lied to Swami, time and again. **The coachman's son**, ironically, made a minor appearance in the story. He is mostly been talked about as the means to torment the coachman and pressurize him to return Swami's money.

Swami's father and **mother** are both stock characters who stay the way they are. In this particular story, they are seen ignoring Swami's demand of a hoop. Though, a sensible thing to do as an adult, it creates an image of inattentive parents in Swami's mind. **Mani's uncle** has a cameo in this story. His only purpose is show the

atmospheric difference in Mani's house as compared to that in Swami's house and to invoke doubt and confusion in Swami's mind.

In the short story *The 'M. C. C.'* published in the short story collection *Swami and Friends*, the minor characters are Messrs Binns and Pea. The club entitled the M.C.C. (the Malgudi Cricket Club), which acts as an entity whose identity is in question according to Swami, Rajam and Mani.

Messrs Binns is name of a shop that sells cricket goods. According to Rajam and Mani they make the finest cricket bats by the name of Junior Willard Bats, the ones that the trio decides to buy. The company is an important aspect as Rajam's head-on approach to problems is depicted when he writes them a letter asking for cricket supplies. While writing the letter, the knowledge and skill of the kids is tested.

Pea is another important character who is a part of Swami's group of friend and plays a minor role in many of the stories in the collection *Swami and Friends*. He is given the responsibility of bringing the stumps to play a game of cricket but he couldn't find them. Pea is a simple young boy who is criticized by his peers for not being able to find the stumps.

Though, by the end of the story, all is forgotten about Messrs Binns, stumps and even the M. C. C. All that mattered for the boys was the joy of playing the game. Their desire to play the game overpowered any other preposition.

Malgudi Days

The Doctor's Word is a story with a number of minor characters. Though, none of them have been named and yet they seem to be the thread that binds the story together. The characters are Gopal's family and Doctor Raman's assistants; Gopal's wife, his eldest son, other children, Doctor Raman's compounder and the nurse. These characters weren't given enough attention to develop through the story but they play a key part in the story's development.

Gopal's wife is a character that embodies concern, care and love. Her devotion towards her family shows in more than one ways. Her presence is felt throughout the text. **The eldest son** of Gopal's family is a young, uncertain and yet strong-minded

boy. His silent approval to his father's treatment and his concern mixed with his responsible behavior, for his family is that the reader witness in the sidelines.

Doctor Raman's assistants an important role of delivering information to the readers. At times, they ask a question, and at times, make a suggestion through which, readers come to know about Gopal's health. **The nurse** who stays with Gopal throughout the night is the one who informs Doctor Raman about Gopal's good health. The dialogues said by these minor characters are the force that moves the story forward.

Feelings and emotions and are the tools through which the minor characters of this story express themselves. The physical depiction of anything is immaterial as the thoughts, feelings and emotions of the characters are put forward.

In the story *The Missing Mail*, the only minor character is Kamakshi. Kamakshi is a young daughter of the senior clerk Ramanujam. She is depicted as a sweet, simple and shy girl. Away from the troubles of life, Kamakshi is a pure and innocent soul. She is the only child and is raised with lots of love and affection.

She is the one of the binding agents in the friendship between Ramanujam and Thanappa. Thanappa's act of risking his job and keeping the mail to himself is a result of his love for Kamakshi. Kamakshi is also the reason for Ramanujam's act of forgiving Thanappa. Although, she is not the one who acts in any of these situations, she is the reason behind the acts.

Though, in the text, the first two paragraphs are dedicated to incidents in Thanappa's life that connects him to most of the people in the small village of Malgudi, they are mentioned only to provide the readers with an idea of Thanappa's personal involvement with the townsmen. The people mentioned are not important enough to be qualified as minor characters. They are used by the author as a method of indirect characterization.

Gods, Demons and Others

The minor characters in the story *Draupadi* include Kunti, King Drupad, Duryodhana, Dussassana and Sage Vyasa. Kunti is the mother of the Pandavas and wife of Pandu. All these characters are important as they play an important role in Draupadi's life.

Fate also plays a key role in Draupadi's life. It is very interesting to witness the intervention of the celestial beings in the story.

As the only other woman in the family, **Kunti** was a support to Draupadi. **King Drupad** was the king of Panchal and Draupadi's father. His courageous decision to marry off his daughter with five men shows a brave heart and a strong mind. **Duryodhana** was the eldest of the hundred Kaurava brothers born to the King Dhritrashtra and the Queen Gandhari. He is the antagonist of the story. **Dussassana** is Duryodhana's younger brother. Dussassana is the one who drags Draupadi in the courtroom after Yudhistira lost her in the gamble. Though he is the helper of the antagonist in the story, his devotion and love for his elder brother is unwavering and respectful.

Sage Vyasa is a character who helps the situations to move forward. He is the one who convinced King Drupad to let the Pandavas marry his daughter, by telling him the story of Draupadi's past life as Nalayani. He is the all knowing, enlightened soul that guides Draupadi in many difficult situations.

Nala is another story published in the short story collection entitled *Gods, Demons and Others*. There are a number of minor characters in this story; the Gods, Indra, Varuna, Agni, Yama, Kali and Dwapara, Nala's brother Pushkara, a serpent who blessed Nala, King Rituparna and so on and so forth. A small brood of swans also play a part in Nala and Damyanti's love story. They are the ones who took Nala's message to Damyanti that made her fall in love with Nala.

The Gods play the role of both the helper and the adversaries. The Gods, **Indra**, **Varuna**, **Agni** and **Yama** are introduced in the story as suitors for Damyanti's *Swamwara* (betrothal) and competition to Nala, but later, realizing their love; bless the couple with matrimonial bliss. They become a helper of fate that tested the couple and bless them after they have won.

Gods **Kali** and **Dwapara** try to disrupt the matrimonial bliss between Nala and Damyanti after their wedding. They are the ones who influenced Nala's brother **Pushkara** in inviting Nala for a game of tricked gambling. They even tricked the dice used to play the game between Nala and Pushkar to make sure that Nala loses every bet he made. Kali and Dwapara help Pushkar win Nala's Property.

Even after diminishing Nala to rags, they continued to torment Nala and Damyanti and separated them. Damyanti faced lots of hardships and ended up at her father's house. Whereas, Nala met a serpent who blessed him with means that helped him reach his long lost love. The serpent became a helper to the couple.

King Rituparna is another character whose support is the key that helps Nala to bring back his wife and his kingdom. Even after losing his chance to win Damyanti, King Rituparna realizes the strong bond of love between Nala and Damyanti and helps them. His goodness and righteousness is as appreciable as that of Nala's.

After being tested by fate and by Gods, Damyanti finally reached her home with Nala and the story ended on a happy note. All these minor characters are important for the ups and downs in the life of Nala and Damyanti.

Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories

There are a number of minor characters in the story *A Horse and Two Goats* from the short story collection *Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories*, including, Muni's Wife, the Shopkeeper, the Postman, his wife and Ruth (the American traveler's Wife). Most of these characters are minor enough to be called negligible in the story, only **Muni's Wife** has a substantial role and that is, introducing Muni to the readers.

Muni's conversation with his wife gives away crucial details of his life. Muni's conversation with **the shopkeeper** is not as important but still, it shows Muni's talent of pleasing others and his ability to laugh at himself even if it is only as a means to an end. The story ends with another conversation between Muni and his wife. This time, the confusion of the trade occurred between Muni and the American deepens and Muni becomes clueless.

The Postman, his Wife and **Ruth** are mentioned in the conversations and thus are partially present in the story. These characters become the topic of conversation for Muni and the American. The Postman, his Wife and their personal life is a topic for common gossip in the village. They are either mentioned with contempt and disgust, or to make fun of. Whereas Ruth is mentioned by the American with love and appreciation and according to the American she is a decent wife and a respectable citizen.

All the minor characters in the story have a reason to be mentioned here. The minor characters mentioned in this story help us to get a better understanding of the characters of Muni and the American.

The police inspector is the only character other than the major ones who have a physical presence in the short story *The Evening Gift* from the short story collection *Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories*. Though there are mentions of Shankar's mother, his siblings, two younger brothers and a younger sister, but other than a letter from his mother, and the gifts brought for them, there is no other mention of them.

The policeman does the job of arresting Shankar and support the employer in dismissing Shankar's retelling of events. This is a succinct tale of around six pages and following the pattern of a short story, this story didn't let a lot of minor characters to evolve. They are present to intensify Shankar's emotional turmoil and explain his materialistic problems.

3.4 Style and Techniques

The study of characters and characterization in the previous chapters lead to the realization of the techniques used to create characters and the art of characterization. In this sub-chapter, the selected short stories are discussed in the light of these techniques.

The Writing Style

Writing style is the way an author expresses his idea in a text. Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan, both have their own peculiar style. Anand deals with themes related to social problems. In his works, Anand specializes in the art of depicting the plight and sorrows of the poor. In his attempt to show the reality of the marginalized people, he shows the ways in which the society pushes them down. Many of his stories are written with the focus of highlighting social problems like gender inequality, casteism, poverty, hypocrisy, urbanization, illiteracy, women empowerment, injustice, capitalism, oppression of women, loss, love, friendship, realism, appearances, chaos, death, suicide, desire to escape, manipulation, honor, power, corruption, silence, survival, struggle, quest for discovery, tradition, fear, weakness, vice, and so on so forth.

Anand's themes and style in his works can be easily understood with the statement by Vijay Mohan Sethi, "Anand's Philosophy of life is akin to the great Hindu doctrine that the key to man's evolution lies within man himself and not in the world outside; in microcosm, not in macrocosm."³⁵ His works depict a similar ideology where the character is the only one who can help himself. Many a times his characters have to face the world alone, without any support. Like Gobindi in *Boots*, Lajwanti in *Lajwanti*, Sir Hassan Ali in *Appearance and Reality*, Mr. and Mrs. Sharma in *Lady Bountiful*, Mela Ram in *The Bridegroom*, and so on.

Narayan, on the other hand, deals with themes like, love, friendship, childhood, desires, grace, forgiveness, simplicity, change, communication, coming of age, empowerment, relationships, motherhood, faith, failure, growing up, heroism, identity crises, hope, honour, nature, will, wisdom, youth, work, self-reliance, wealth, tradition, optimism, realism, ignorance, innocence, and the like.

Narayan writes in traditional style, he has taken up the foreign language and Indianised it. He writes about India in the ways of Indian storytellers. Amandeep Rana, in the preface of his book *A Critical Study of the Fictional World of R. K. Narayan*, writes,

"Narayan is a great storyteller and the critics regard him neither a modernist, nor a postmodernist, but rather, a traditional storyteller. . . . He is a meticulous recorder of the ironies of life. Much of his fiction relates the unexpected disruptions and subsequent crises in the life of his protagonist."³⁶

There are four common types of writing styles; namely, expository, descriptive, persuasive and narrative. Descriptive and narrative styles are most commonly used in fictional writing. Expository and persuasive styles are not usually applied in the creative fictional writings.

In descriptive writing style, while trying to impart information, the author paints a picture in words. Here, the author tries to give the all around description of the plot, structure, setting, character and their characteristics. As in many of the works discussed in this study, for example, *Five Short Fables*, *Lady Bountiful*, *The Bridegroom*, *Things Have a Way of Working Out*, *A Horse and Two Goats*, *The M. C.*, and so on.

The Narrative style of writing the author tries to not only impart information, but rather, communicate a story complete with plot, structure, characters, conflict and setting. Here the narration of the story is done in such a way that the description and explanations given by the author creates a story that develops and evolves with its characters. As in many of the short stories taken up in this study, for example, *Draupadi*, *Nala*, *The Evening Gift*, *The Missing Mail*, *The Prodigal Son*, *Appearance and Reality*, *The Coachman's Son*, and the like.

Both Anand and Narayan have used Indian or local words or slangs whenever necessary. Anand is accredited with being one of the first authors to use the Hindustani words in English text. At times he even translates the Hindustani idioms and words to English and uses them tactfully. He has used words and phrases like *Badmash* of number ten, *Shaukars*, *Kaun*, *git mit git mit*, *tehsildar*, and expressions like *Ohe*, *Bus! Bus! Achha* and *Hai*.

Narayan have even used his mother tongue, Tamil words, along with Hindi, in his works whenever necessary. He mostly uses the English language, and translates the local slangs in English as much as he can, but sometimes there is a concept that does not have its English counterpart. He uses Tamil and Hindi only when there is no other option. Thus there are few examples of the sort; like, *Vinayaka*, *Muhurtam*, *Pandal*, *Pyol*, and so on.

The type of language used in the short stories of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan is simple and direct. Instead of trying to complicate the language, Anand studies the complicated situations in his works. Anand's language in his short stories is simple enough to be understood by all and his themes and plots are complex enough to intrigue the reader. Talking about the simplicity of language in Narayan's works, Sarbani Putatunda writes,

“His stories are incredibly easy to read because of their simplicity. . . . Narayan's writings have been extremely popular among the masses. . . . His simple language an stories of village life have, however, caused elites to term them *pedestrian writings*.”³⁷

It is already established that both of these authors are highly regarded and appreciated in the field of Indian English Writing. Their contribution to the Indian English

Writing is unmatched till date. Their writing styles are contrasting at some points and similar at times.

Characterization is the art of the author where the personality and traits of the character are exposed to the reader in direct or indirect manner. Here the art of characterization of the selected authors are discussed. This discussion is classified as direct characterization and indirect characterization.

Direct Characterization

As discussed in the previous chapters, direct characterization is the type where the author directly describes the qualities and attributes of the character. He tells the reader about the character rather than letting the reader study and infer.

We find abundant use of direct characterization in the works of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan. The authors have used the direct characterization for both the major and the minor characters; where the expressions are not as necessary. This way, the short story's limitation of being concise and crisp is met. Due to direct characterization, the information about the character is provided to the reader without any delay. Some examples of direct characterization in the works of Mulk Raj Anand are:

"The servile Gurkha, more taciturn than the Engineer. . ."³⁸ Here, the traits of a minor character, Gurkha, in the story *Lajwanti* are given through direct characterization.

"Gentle as he was, he did not ask any questions."³⁹ Again, the minor character Hari, Lajwanti's father is described through direct characterization.

An example where the protagonist Shrimati Sarojini Sharma is described through direct characterization is in the story *Lady Bountiful*, ". . . it was the only time when her aggressive, practical, Punjabi mind loosened the control on her heavy body. . ."⁴⁰

Another example of where the protagonist's character is described directly is in the story *Appearance and Reality* is, "The warmhearted Punjabi in Sir Hassan Ali. . ."⁴¹

In the works of R. K. Narayan, the direct characterization can be found a number of times. Some examples of the same are:

In the short story *A Horse and Two Goats*, talking about the protagonist Mani, Narayan writes, “She was old, but he was older . . .”⁴² This is an example of the use of direct characterization for a major character.

The minor character Pea, from the short story *the M. C. C.* is described directly by the author in the lines, “He was a man of hundred worries now . . .”⁴³

The short story entitled *Nala*, consists of the direct characterization of the protagonist Nala in the lines, “Nala was the ruler of Nishadha . . . who was young, brave and good. He was a bachelor.”⁴⁴

Sometimes, both the direct and indirect characterizations are both used in the same line. For example in the short story *The Doctor’s Word*, the character of Doctor Raman is introduced with the lines, “Long years of practice of this kind had bred in the doctor a certain curt truthfulness; for that very reason his opinion was valued; he was not a mere doctor expressing an opinion but a judge pronouncing a verdict.”⁴⁵ Here the trait of ‘curt truthfulness’ is an example of direct characterization whereas, the rest of the statement is indirect which indicates that Doctor Raman is famous, responsible and somewhat feared by the common people.

Indirect Characterization

Indirect characterization is when the author gives away the information about a character’s traits in an indirect manner. The methods of indirect characterization are characterization through actions, thoughts, looks, speech and relationship. The detailed description including meaning and definitions is given in the sub-chapter 3.1; here some examples of indirect characterization from the selected short stories are discussed.

In the story *Lady Bountiful*, the character of Mr. Sharma is described indirectly through his emotions and actions in the following lines. The lines let the reader infer that Mr. Sharma is a smart, down-to-earth and modern man, but under the shine of his famous wife, he became meek, subtle and careless with low self-esteem.

“Shri Sharma hung his head down and contemplated his crumpled kurta-pyjama and thought himself quite unworthy to be sitting before his august wife by the breakfast table. But he had genuinely believed in his youth, that women in

India were addicted to 'husband-worship' and had deliberately chosen a Feminist.”⁴⁶

In the short story, *The Prodigal Son*, Ganesh Das, a minor character is described by the author through indirect characterization in the lines, “But the old woman remained unperturbed by all this sound and fury, regarding it as the part of the moneylender’s familiar temperament . . .”⁴⁷ Here the rude, cantankerous and ungrateful nature of Ganesh Das is shown through his actions and Gobindi’s thoughts.

In the short story *The Bridegroom*, the lines, “. . . that I could decide on the way weather I should go in for this marriage at all.”⁴⁸ are a fine example of indirect characterization through words and action. The lines said by the protagonist Mela Ram depict his confused thought process.

In the short story, *Appearance and Reality*, the mannerisms of Sir Hassan Ali are an example of indirect characterization through action. “He even lost all the inhibitions which generally kept him from doing the wrong thing in the presence of English passengers.”⁴⁹ Sir Hassan Ali’s fascination of keeping up appearances is expressed in these lines. How his behavior changes while he is around the Englishmen is shown in the lines above.

In the short story *Lajwanti*, the character of Lajwanti can be deciphered through her relationships. It is told that she never followed the social norms of sitting in house and sticking to household chores even when she was a young girl. Thus, she would go out and play with the boys in the neighborhood. This shows her brave and outgoing nature. Whereas, in the house of her in-laws, she had only one friend, the Maina, a small bird in the cage. This shows the drastic change in the life and behavior of Lajwanti. She was a happy and outgoing girl who became a sad and suppressed person after her marriage.

In the short story, *The Doctor’s Word*, the character of Doctor Raman can be deciphered through his actions. The lines, “He shot the drug, sat back in his chair, and gazed at the patient’s face for over an hour. . . . The doctor’s face gleamed with perspiration and his eyelids dropped with fatigue.”⁵⁰ depict that Doctor Raman is a caring, concerned and responsible person who takes charge when required. The action

also depicts his immense love and affection towards the patient who is his childhood friend.

An example through words can be found in the short story *Nala*, where the leading lady, Damyanti, phrases a question that she knew only her husband could answer correctly. “What is the measure of manliness of one who steals away from his wife, at dead of night, with half her clothes?”⁵¹ The question shows that Damyanti is a smart, intelligent and courageous, who resorted to find her husband at any cost.

After the detailed discussion on the characters and the art of characterization by Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan, it is reflected that the two authors have created a vast variety of characters that are both dynamic and interesting. They are well versed in the art of characterization as well. After understanding the intricacies of characters, the study finds abundance of characters in their short stories that are not only socially aware, but also inspire the readers. The themes taken up these authors are appreciated by the readers around the globe. Their works are truly Indian and are written for the Indian readers, but they have created the characters and plots in such a way that they have gained a mass appeal across the globe.

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CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Original Findings

The present study found that the major focus of the characters created by Mulk Raj Anand is on social problems. Mulk Raj Anand's characters are representatives of the troubles faced by the downtrodden and marginalized people of our society. He presents his characters through direct and indirect characterization.

In the present study, it is revealed that Anand wrote with an aim of enlightening the world about the negative impacts of orthodox thinking and cultural stagnation of the Indian Society. Also, Anand's characters never seem to act out on impulses; rather they are victims of fate and societal norms; so their behavior shows suppression and submission.

While analyzing R. K. Narayan, the research points out that he created simple characters that have simple aims and aspirations in their lives. His strength lies in the truth with which his characters become alive and are immortalized in the literary world. The characters portrayed by R. K. Narayan represent the normal, day-to-day life of middle class people living and working in the Indian Society.

Narayan's aim of fictional writing is an expression of his impressions of the society; the social awareness and betterment of others are secondary to his fictional works. Thus, his characters ignore the signs of social problems; rather focus their life on their family, friends and self. The personal motive of a character is given the utmost importance, but he writes it in such a way that the personal achievement and progress of a character symbolizes the social development.

The characters in Narayan's works are depicted in the light of struggles on a personal level. His representation of characters mostly, comprises of indirect characterization. He uses real life situations and conversations to show the latent qualities of his characters.

The two selected authors, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan, portray similar circles of the Indian society and yet their portrayal and expressions are entirely different

because of the objectives of their writing. One focuses on the painful reality of life and the other on the personal development of the character.

Narayan dresses up his characters in environment and nature whereas Anand reveals his characters through their thoughts and ideas. One focuses on the outside and connects it to the inner psyche of his character and the other analyses the inner psyche of his characters and represents it through their actions and environment. Narayan moves from material world to psyche of his character whereas Anand focuses on the psyche and relatively develops the character's outer world.

The outcomes also provide ground for the hypothesis of this study. The hypothesis taken up at the initial stages of the study is 'Character and characterization play a significant role in development of the plot and story in the select short stories of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan.' After completing the research, the outcome proves that the characters and characterization truly play a significant role. Be it any of the short stories by Mulk Raj Anand or by R. K. Narayan, the hypothesis stands true and positive.

4.2 Critical Analysis of the Core Chapters

This dissertation is broadly classified in three chapters. The first chapter is entitled *Introduction*. It is further divided into three sub-chapters namely, *The Concept of Short Story*, *Short Story in Indian Writing in English: A Background Study* and *Major Short Story Writers in Indian Writing in English and their Contribution*.

The Concept of Short Story begins with the meaning and definition of a story along with its classification. A story is broadly divided into three forms, namely, novel, novella and short story. This classification is further explained and all three forms are compared to reach an analytical outcome. A table of comparison between the three is drawn on the basis of this discussion. This sub-chapter helps in understanding the nature and element of a story which in turn helps in studying the art of short story writing. The table and the explanations are all ways of analysing the innate salient qualities of a short story.

In the second sub-chapter, entitled, *Short Story in Indian Writing in English: A Background Study*, the origin and development of short story in India is discussed. The short story collections that were written centuries ago are still popular among

readers and are as prevalent as they were in those times. These collections include *Jataka Tales*, *Panchtantra*, *Hitopadesha*, *Kathasaritsagar*, *Betal Pachisi* and *Simhasana Battisi*. With the history of short story in India, the impression of India taken up by modern writers is also dealt with. The discussion develops from history and continues till the contemporary times. This sub-chapter is enlightening in many aspects. The connectivity developed between the history and present is portrayed in the world of short stories in India. Also it includes many popular authors of short stories in both pre-independence and post-independence.

The third sub-chapter entitled *Major Short Story Writers in Indian Writing in English and their Contribution* is a detailed discussion about authors who have written short stories in Indian Writing in English. The authors are classified into pre-independence and post-independence periods. Only the authors who have been monumental in the field of short story in Indian Writing in English are discussed. Their importance in the literary world is unquestionable. The pre-independence authors discussed are Rabindranath Tagore, R. K. Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand. The short story writers from post-independence period discussed in the sub-chapter include Manju Kapoor, Kamla Maskandaya, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai, etc. The names of their renowned works are given along with their important contribution towards Indian Writing in English. This sub-chapter is important as it gives us detailed information of short story along with the kind of works done in the related field.

The second chapter in this dissertation entitled *Making of the Authors and Analysis of select Short Stories*. The chapter is further divided into three sub-chapters, viz: *Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan: A Biographical Sketch*, *The Select Short Stories of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan: A Thematic Analysis* and *Literature Review*. As the title suggests, this chapter deals with the lives of selected authors, their works, analysis of the works and the research papers that were written related to these authors and their works.

The first sub-chapter is *Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan: A Biographical Sketch*. In this sub-chapter, lives and works of the select authors are discussed in detail. Starting with Mulk Raj Anand's life and his works, this chapter discusses R. K. Narayan's life in similar manner; focusing on the events that greatly affects the writing of the author. This sub-chapter helps to understand the motive and inspiration

of these authors. Sarbani Putatunda writes, “Narayan is primarily concerned with the gradual erosion of the middle class.”¹

The second sub-chapter of this chapter is *The Select Short Stories of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan: A Thematic Analysis*. After studying their technical aspects like plot, theme, structure, character, etc, the short stories are analysed on the basis of importance, at social, personal and intellectual levels. All the sixteen short stories; from eight short story collections; four collections from each author; are discussed in detail. This chapter helps us to understand role and importance of the characters in the select stories. Discussing the themes and characters in Anand’s works, K. D. Verma writes,

“ . . . Anand has a steadfastly stuck to his artistic belief in portraying the human condition as it is, so that it can generate cathartic pity and compassion. But more importantly, it also demonstrates the truth of the human condition, showing the perversion and grossness of social process that produces dirt, filth human misery and wretchedness. Philosophically, the problem has a fundamental reference to the nature of man, its very truth, but historically and aesthetically, it is centrally located in the heart of the social process.”²

In the third and last part of this chapter, entitled, *Literature Review*, the research papers written related to these authors, their characters and the art of characterization are discussed. This chapter gives us information and knowledge about the works that has been done before. It sets a background to this study and gives the perspective of different researchers related to the present research.

The third chapter entitled, *Character and Characterization in the Select Short Stories* is the core of this study and the most important chapter of the present research as it consists of all the critical observations made during the research. This chapter is divided into four sub-chapters, namely, *The Concept of Characters and Characterization*, *Major Characters*, *Minor Characters* and *Style and Techniques*.

The first part of this chapter, *The Concept of Characters and Characterization*, begins with the meaning and definition of character. It studies the types of characters in detail. The protagonist, antagonist, major, minor, dynamic, flat, round, stock and humorous characters are explained with appropriate examples. The types of characters

as given by Bharatmuni in *Natyashastra* are also dealt with. The *Uttama*, *Madhyama* and *Adhama* characters are described with examples. This sub-chapter later deals with the art of characterization. After the study of meaning and definitions of characterization, the chapter discusses its types. The two types of characterization, direct characterization and indirect characterization; are studied with explanation and examples. This sub-chapter helps in understanding the style techniques that the authors used to describe their characters and the art involved in the work of writing. It also creates a background to the upcoming sub-chapters.

The second part of this chapter is *Major Character*. In this chapter, the major characters of the selected short stories are studied and analyzed. Following the work in the second part of the second chapter, this sub-chapter talks about all the sixteen short stories from the eight short story collections of the two selected authors. Talking about a character's inner growth, Vijay Mohan Sethi commented on Anand's characters, ". . . when he turns the search-light inward – where the Anand reader finds the cause of man's sufferings in his own greed, selfishness and hypocrisy."³

The third part of this chapter entitled, *Minor and Other Characters*, all the minor characters from the same works are analysed. Just as the previous sub-chapter, this part also analyzes the minor characters in the light of the concepts discussed in the first sub-chapter. This sub-chapter highlights the importance of minor characters in a story. It helps the reader to understand how the character affects the storyline as well as its role in the development of the plot. Discussing and comparing the characters, Ruby Roy writes, "In Raja Rao and M. R. Anand, the characters are charged with the love for country and inspired by Gandhian philosophy do appear and play a vital role; however, in Narayan the trait is rather suggestive and does not deal in detail."⁴

The fourth part of this chapter, entitled *Style and Techniques*, discusses the writing style of the selected authors along with the techniques of characterization used by them in the selected short stories.

4.3 Relevance to the Modern Literature

With the social and economic development in the modern age, the literary world also witnessed growth and flourished with an increase in writing and publishing opportunities. In case of short stories, the proper development started only after the

independence. This study is important as it deals with the authors who wrote in both the time periods; the pre-independence and the post-independence. Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan, were born before independence, started writing before independence, and continued to write till the end of the twentieth century. Thus, these authors are the representatives of both the pre-independence and the post-independence periods.

The modern literature incorporate themes like inner conflict, realism, naturalism, urbanization, globalization, psychological awareness, social reformation, and the like. These themes are prominent in the works of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan. The study of these themes helps in better understanding of the Modern Literature.

Like the themes, the characters of these works are relevant in the study of the Modern Literature. Characters depicted in the present study are a blend of modern Indian ideologies and the traditional Indian culture. Some characters are old who provide an insight into the past; some are young who help in creating a premonition of the future; and the rest are youth who give away the reality of their time. The true sense of their time can easily be deciphered through the characters written during the time.

Along with themes, this study is helpful in understanding the social ideologies of the representative times. The study provides an idea of the society of the time through its characters and situations. The actions and reactions of a character explain the psychological and social aspects of its time.

Some of the characters portrayed in the selected texts depict the characteristic traits of the modern literary world; for example, the New Women and the middle class hero are the types of characters that are commonly found in the works of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan.

At first glance, its relevance seems to be limited. But once the text is scrutinized, it is reflected that the present study has its importance in the present literary world and in the future as well. After the above discussion, it is clear that this study helps the readers to create a better understanding of the contemporary literature.

4.4 Future Scope for the Study

This study can be taken further in multiple ways. There are still a number of areas which are unexplored and require attention. There are many aspects of a story and all of them are worthy of exploration. This research offers many areas where similar research may be conducted in future.

This research is limited with only two authors, namely, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan. The same study could be done with other authors and study the techniques of characterization used by them while creating the characters. Also, this study is limited to the short stories. The other forms of literature are left behind. All the other forms of writing – be it novel, novella, drama, and the like – could be further studied in the light of characters and characterization.

The study of short story in itself has a lot of potential for future scope. All the elements of a story could be studied in the same set of stories, namely, plot, setting, writing style, humor, themes, etc. The fact that these stories are still being read even after being written decades ago, ignites a curiosity in the minds of its readers. The authors wrote with such good fervor that they still manage to gain new readers in the contemporary times.

The study of characters and characterization can be undertaken in the texts of contemporary times and the previous times as well. These authors are representative of their age, but this study excludes the ideas of the authors of any other age. Thus, there is ample scope of the study in future.

This research is useful for the students of literature who are interested either in characters and the art of characterization or in the authors taken up in this study. The study provides a fine example of study of the Indian Writing in English, so the study is helpful for the scholars interested in studying the intricacies of the same.

The present research can be helpful for the students of comparative literature who would like to undertake a comparison of Indian Writing in English with literature of other languages or places.

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Art of Characterization in Indian English Short Stories: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT: *Short story is a very popular form of fiction. A story is a series of events told for the purpose of entertainment; it may be either true or imagined or a mixture of both. It is a succinct tale excluding the details. Short story is a work of short fiction, broader than an anecdote, much shorter than a novel and comprising of all the elements of a novel like plot, structure, idea, development, characters and so forth. Characterization is the way a writer reveals the personality of a character. It refers to the author's manner of presenting characters. Many authors like Rabindranath Tagore, Manju Kapur, Kamala Markandaya, Shashi Deshpande, Bharati Mukharjee, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kiran Desai are prominent literary figures who have written a number of short stories. The present study has its focus on two Indian English short story authors namely, Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan. In this backdrop, the present paper is an attempt to study of art of characterization of these writers with the help of literature review.*

Key Words: *Short Stories, Characters, Characterization, Protagonist, Behaviour.*

INTRODUCTION

The history of short story in India is rich and powerful, its impact on Indian Literature can still be observed. But when it comes to short stories in Indian Writing in English, the genre was properly developed only after the independence. The pre-independence period is filled with literary works in English but they are mostly novels or plays. The short stories were only a small add-on to the large English literary world of India. It is only in the post-independence period that the short story was given importance in Indian Writing in English. With an increase in English speaking population and decrease in availability of time, people moved to short story for literary pleasure. Instead of spending days on reading a novel, the fascination of getting the whole story in less than an hour seemed an appreciable option. Though, with the number of novels being written, it is evident that the love of novels and detailed story telling is still alive, but the short stories have also made their mark.

Mulk Raj Anand is one of the most prominent authors of Indian English Writing. All his characters are alive and the situations are realistic. Be it his novels or his short stories, the text connects to common people because of his keen observation and deep understanding of human nature. His stories are full of varied human behavior and an insight in the human mind. Some of his important short story collections are *The Lost Child and Two Lyrical Stories* (1934), *Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts and Other Stories* (1976), *The Barber's Trade Union and Other Stories* (1994), *Things Have a Way of Working Out and Other Stories* (1998), *Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census and Other Stories* (2006), and so on.

R. K. Narayan, is one of the three most important pillars of Indian Writing in English; the other two being Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. They are also known as the golden-trio of Indian English Writing. R. K. Narayan was an active member of the Indian writing community for almost sixty years. He is an Indian English writer known for his works set in Malgudi, the fictional South Indian town. In his writings, he highlights the everyday life of his characters in social context. He explored the ordinary human life with humor and compassion. He has written a number of short story collections including *Swami and Friends* (1935), *Malgudi Days* (1943), *Dodu and Other Stories* (1943), *Cyclone and Other Stories* (1945), *An Astrologer's Day and Other Stories* (1947), *A Horse and two Goats and Other Stories* (1970), *Under the Banyan tree and Other Stories* (1985), and so forth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this study, the papers written in past five years are studied. The papers are as follows:

Trimurthy. E. S. S. Narayana (2014) in the paper entitled *R. K. Narayan's Writing Style*, critically analysed R. K. Narayan's works in terms of language, syntax, and its artistic devices. The explained different linguistic expressions and analyzed them with reference to an author. It included the choice of words, syntax, sentence structure, figurative language, the rhythmic pattern and rhetorical devices. The paper measured Narayan's artistic writing style in the light of these linguistic expressions. The tone, diction and imagery in different works are scrutinized with a keen eye. The author says, "It is the stylistic features of his art of fiction that are analyzed by numerous critics."¹ and concluded the paper by saying that Narayan is a professional writer who maintains a great combination of art and acumen.

Trimurthy, E. S. S. N. and Karmarkar, Rajendra (2014) in the paper entitled *Characters and Characterisation in the works of R. K. Narayan*, the authors discussed the qualities of characters and art of characterization as presented by R. K. Narayan in his major works. According to the authors, the zest for life in the characters of Narayan's fictional world is remarkable; the people are all hale and hearty, irrespective of their social status. The authors complimented Narayan's art of characterization by saying, "His characters, as a matter of fact, are individuals, rather than types."² The paper discussed on the devices used by Narayan to depict his characters.

Dash, Durga Prasad (2015) in the paper entitled, *Social Vision in the Short Stories of Mulk Raj Anand and Manoj Das*, discussed the social aspects of the short stories of Mulk Raj Anand in comparison to Manoj Das along with their writing style. The paper analyzed the psychological and social importance of their work. Their short stories were focused on bringing about a social change for the betterment of the society. As the author says, "They try to show a large picture of the society through the small canvas of their short stories."³ The paper studied the vision of the society through the short stories. It discussed the social stigmas like caste system, untouchability, unequal hierarchal social division and economic exploitation.

Gupta, Lalita (2016) in her paper *A Socio-Psychological Spectrum of Child-Life in The Lost Child and Other Stories by Mulk Raj Anand*, explained the impact of children characters in understanding the changing social spectrum. She also studied social-evils through the consciousness of their child protagonists. The paper is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the origin and importance of Indian Short Story as a genre. The second part has its focus on *The Lost Child and Other Stories*, its socio-psychological study and the characters present in the short stories of the collection.

Mor, Anoop (2016) in his paper entitled *Mulk Raj Anand's Short Stories: A thematic perspective*, discussed the variety of themes available in the short stories by Mulk Raj Anand. He studied themes like religious hypocrisy, exploitation of the have-nots, social injustice, tradition versus modernity, and the position of women in the traditional Indian society. The paper discussed Anand's works in light of the things that influenced him and his motive to write the stories. Anand have presented the issues that are appealing to mind and affect everyone. The societal unjust depicted in Anand's works is realistic which helps us sympathize with the suffering of the people. In this paper, Anand's short stories that represent the problems of Indian society like casteism, feudalism, suppressions of women, modernization, religion, etc were discussed.

Naz, Farah and Namrata (2017) in their paper entitled, *The Short Stories of R. K. Narayan: A Study Character*, discussed the different themes in the short stories of R. K. Narayan. The paper discusses the qualities of Narayan's short stories. The study discussed about the realism and romanticism in the said short stories. The paper studied the themes of the short stories by Narayan including road side events, the family atmosphere, the innocent mischief of children, their innocent talk and tricks remind an adult of his childhood and their social relevance. The paper also reviewed the techniques of his writing along with the plot and structure of the short stories.

Goel, Ruchita (2017) in the paper entitled *R. K. Narayan's Malgudi An Imaginative Locale* talked about the town Malgudi. The paper suggested that Malgudi, the fictional town created by Narayan as a plot for his works; is impeccable. Its historical records given by Narayan are specific and yet the geographical and physical conditions of the town grow gradually. With every story, the town develops just like a living being. The social developments and changes affect the town of Malgudi like any real one. The paper concluded with the qualities of Malgudi as a town, both in the text and as a fictional one.

Sophy, Margret (2018) in the paper entitled *Art of characterization: A comparative study in the selected novels of Mulk Raj Anand & Raja Rao*, as the name suggests, compares the art of characterization of Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao in their respective novels. The paper highlighted the transition of Indian fiction initiated by the golden trio and their impact on the Indian English Writing. In the said paper, Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* and *Serpent and the Rope* are compared to Anand's *Collie* and *untouchable* in the light of the art of characterization.

Singh, Nidhi, (2018) in the paper entitled "*The Lost Child*" Mulk Raj Anand's *Magnum Opus* attempted a study on the importance of the story *The Lost Child* in Anand's literary works. The author says, "...it is a gem of lyrical writing which has been translated into other languages more extensively than any other story of his."⁴ The author studied the development of the story in great detail while complimenting Anand's literary excellence. The components of a story, as seen in *The Lost Child*, are inspected. The paper concluded with the appreciation of Anand's explanation of child's psychological situation.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Research papers have been written on different themes, plots and ideas present in the short stories of Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan. They give emphasis to the characters, the art of characterization, the writing style, or social perspective, imagination, humor, and so on. After studying the papers mentioned before, we can say that Narayan never challenged the trend, but found a way to write for pleasure while being aware of the society and its norms. Narayan focuses his works on the people and creates characters that are realistic and true to life. "R. K. Narayan is realistic writer as he does not portray the qualities of his characters rather he observes how his characters react to their social world, the world in which they perform their daily routine."⁵ Anand, on the other hand, draws a true but pitiful picture of the lower classes of Indian society. "...Anand has drawn man's attention to his miserable plight but has also infused in him enough courage to lash at the inhumane pattern of relationships that allow one to prey upon the weaker members of the flock."⁶ All these papers discussed different aspects of short stories written by Mulk Raj Anand and R. K. Narayan. The stories are studied and scrutinized in the light of their art of characterization. Anand's works are completely dedicated to the cause of social development whereas, Narayan, at times, writes simply for the pleasure of writing and reading.

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त्रिवेणी कला एवं पुरातत्व संग्रहालय एवं
अक्षर वार्ता अंतरराष्ट्रीय शोध पत्रिका का प्रतिष्ठा आयोजन

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विषय

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अक्षर वार्ता
अंतरराष्ट्रीय शोध पत्रिका

स्त्री विमर्श : परम्परा और नवीन आयाम

Discourse on Woman : Tradition and New Dimensions

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प्रमाण-पत्र

प्रमाणित किया जाता है कि श्री/सुश्री/डॉ. Natasha sharma
संस्था Samchi University of Buddhist-Indic studies
ने अक्षर वार्ता अंतरराष्ट्रीय शोध पत्रिका और त्रिवेणी कला एवं पुरातत्व संग्रहालय, उज्जैन (म.प्र. संस्कृति परिषद, संस्कृति विभाग, भोपाल) द्वारा दिनांक 28 फरवरी, 2018 को आयोजित स्त्री विमर्श : परम्परा और नवीन आयाम पर केन्द्रित अंतरराष्ट्रीय संगोष्ठी में सहभागिता की।

इन्होंने character Traits of New women in Henrik
Ibsen's A Doll's House and Manju kapur's Difficult
विषय पर शोध पत्र प्रस्तुत किया/व्याख्यान दिया/ सत्र की अध्यक्षता की। DAUGHTERS

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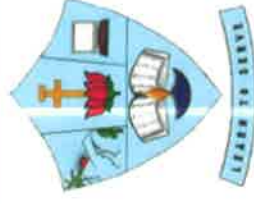
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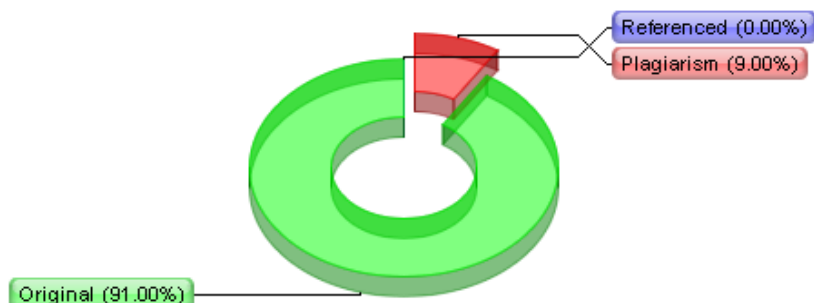


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