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**Usage of Myth as a Device in R. K. Narayan's**

***The Man-Eater of Malgudi***

**Ravaliya Nirali Laxmanbhai**

PH. D. Scholar, Department of English,  
Bhakta Kavi Narsinh Mehta University, Junagadh

**Dr. Nayankumar D. Tank**

Professor,  
Gurukul Mahila Arts and Commerce College, Porbandar



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### Abstract:

R.K. Narayan is chiefly remembered for his lightly satirical, rather more ironical, depictions of Indian rural/suburban life in his novels and short stories. The lesser known works of him contains the rendition of the tales from the Indian mythologies entitled *The Ramayana*, *The Mahabharata* and *Gods, Demons and Others* which shows his prowess over the subject. *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* is a novel published before these collections mentioned above. Present research paper investigates how R.K. Narayan do not adapt a storyline directly from the Indian mythology but rather he uses the elements and characters of the same for creating a structural parallel. This paper also tries to explore how this device helps in making the author's point of view clearer and makes the novel interesting.

**Keywords:** R.K. Narayan, Myth, Mythology, Narrative Pattern, The Man-Eater of Malgudi



## Introduction:

R.K. Narayan, a glorious name in the history of Indian English fiction writing, is mostly known for his depiction of peculiar problems of normal people in an imagined suburb of South India named Malgudi. Often drawing parallels with 'Wessex' novels of Thomas Hardy, Narayan's treatment of the common problems of the common people is less dipped in pathos and more intertwined with subtle humour and irony when compared to 'Wessex' world of Hardy. However, *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* is a different novel in the quiver of R.K. Narayan. Dealing with a rather serious subject and even more serious treatment, R.K. Narayan has used the references of Indian mythical tales frequently to reinstate the thematic logic and to create the atmosphere of fear as he intended.

## Myth as a Structural Parallel in *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*:

The way Narayan sees Indian myth is premised on archetypal structures, which he finds fascinating. He used myth as a structural parallel in two ways: as a structural parallel that underpins the entire story, or as a functional relation being used all through the tale. *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* is steeped in myths and tales, and the usage of this tactic is visible to a greater or lesser extent in mythologizing modern reality. It has been interpreted differently by different commentators; a few have perceived it as an extended metaphor, while others have remarked on how closely the work follows the old Sanskrit poetic pattern. Narayan is very well cognizant of the storyline strategy for the novel he is actually referring. He is successful in maintaining the structural integrity of the building. No matter how terrifying a monster appears, his own terrible proclivities foreshadow his own demise, and thus no matter how freightening a demon may seem, his own demise is quietly hidden within it.

Clearly, this work has a mythological structure of order, which is followed by dislocation of order, and then restoration of order. References to the historic battle between spiritual and material values are used to create this fantastic artwork. The issue then becomes whether Narayan is utilizing myth as a method in the novel or whether it is an unconscious reflection of his underlying viewpoint, which sees a desirable stability in the present order of things that should remain permanent against all chances of evil? The narrative concludes with the reintegration of an initial condition of stability and normalcy.



The celebration has a mythological aspect to it. It's a sign of the community's own reaffirmation. Narayan is a true Indian writer in both letter and spirit, which is why his works have both realistic and fantasy components, which are skillfully combined to produce an organic whole.

As a result, the narrative develops a universal theme: the triumph of good over evil, with the inhabitants of Malgudi symbolizing good and Vasu representing evil. However, Indian mythology helps to reveal this universal motif, in which Gods and devils are continually at fight, and the demons, although appearing to be victorious, eventually destroy themselves. Vasu is the demon in this story, a rakshasa that wreaks havoc and terror in Malgudi before killing himself.

*The Man-Eater of Malgudi* is a novel drawing parallels from Hindu mythological framework, with a substantial use of Hindu divinities. The narrative opens with a portrayal of Natraj's printing press and its office environs. It is hung up with "a framed portrait of Goddess Laxmi poised on her lotus, holding aloft the treasures of earth in her four hands." An idol of Goddess Laxmi and Lord Ganesh is kept in this common sight among Hindu businesspeople in India. Goddess Laxmi, often known as the Goddess of Wealth, is commonly honored in Hindu homes. People pray to her to obtain prosperity and safety from malevolent powers. Natraj was not doing badly by the grace of Goddess Laxmi, for he could afford to send his child to a good school, even his spouse bought classy clothes and ornaments as per her choice. His home was finely supplied with food items, describing a well-to-do family in other words. Goddess Laxmi, unlike Goddess Durga or Kali, is widely revered throughout India's numerous states.

Arrival of a guy of enormous size and disagreeable attitude shakes Malgudi's peaceful and serene existence. Against Malgudi's wishes, he travels into the Mempi forest and shoots birds and animals. The people there are powerless to speak out against him, but they hope, as real Indians do, that a day will come when this demonic beast will meet his demise. Vasu's efforts to murder the much-loved temple elephant fail, and Vasu is discovered dead in his chamber at the conclusion of the tale. He died of a head concussion after slapping his own temple to kill an insect, according to reports.



## References of Mythical Characters Weaved in Narrative:

R K Narayanan began the tale by introducing a popular Hindu Goddess, therefore establishing the novel's legendary base. When Natraj was forcibly driven to Mempi by Vasu and arrived there, he befriended a tea vendor named Muthu, a simpleton, a god-fearing guy who had battled greatly in his life but eventually managed to establish a solid business to feed his family. After settling into his career, Muthu took over the care of the ancient temple at the intersection of highland and grasslands. Indian philosophy is demonstrated when Muthu explains:

*"Hundreds of cars travel to those summits, yet we have yet to hear of an accident, despite the fact that some of the roads are tiny and twisty, and if you are not careful, you will drive over the ridge. However, there hasn't been a single mishap. Why do you think that is? He pointed to the shrine's tower, which was visible above the wayside trees."(23)*

This is another *Sthala-Purana* sort of indication to the sacred importance ascribed to a certain holy place or area that is considered to have supernatural authorities, and it is supposed that the divinities of that temple guard the believers of the region. Goddess *Kenchamma* is mentioned in Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* as well. Here, Narayan, too, made sure that such traditional elements are accurately depicted within the narrative, allowing readers to interact with the milieu and attain an impression of Indian atmosphere while creating this novel on a mythological structure. It's also worth noting that R K Narayan established the *Sthala-Purana* mythology in his fictional village of Malgudi. The social activities of the town are centered on this temple, according to this temple description. When the people of Mempi got together to talk on how to heal the ailing temple elephant Kumar, they met at the temple, where "the four-armed Goddess watched our activities serenely from her inner sanctuary."<sup>(3)</sup> There is a mention of a deity, but Goddess's identity is not revealed. Given that it is a protective Goddess, it might be the Durga, Kali, or a regional deity such as *Kenchamma*.

The actions of the novel mention the poet's attempt to create a huge heroic poem in monosyllables about Lord Krishna's life. God Krishna is another of the most prominent



Hindu Gods, adored all around the country. Hindus consider Krishna to be a perfect Deity who epitomizes most of the attributes they believe a perfect human being should have. He is an admirer, a thinker, a companion, a rescuer, and a diplomat when the situation calls for him to be. R K Narayan, a prominent author of Indian English literature woven the incidents of this novel in such a way that Lord Krishna is mentioned throughout the book. Seeing as Krishna is a Deity who is well-known both to Indians and Westerners, it is possible that Narayan chose the legendary allusion to Krishna as a deliberate choice. Surprisingly, Krishna is not regarded in the same way in the East as he is in the West. Krishna is a puzzle. He is known in the East as "Dark Lord," with an appealing appearance and a pose that is esoteric, intriguing, and playful in its expression.

Western Intellectuals, but at the other hand, are sharply skeptical of Krishna, and their sentiments can be summarized in the following manner:

*“A bizarre figure! A Yadava chief tain who looks and acts not uncommonly like a mortal—and a very ordinary mortal at that—and who has the incredible effrontery to say that he is a god! A cynic who preaches the highest morality and stoops to practice the lowest tricks, in order to achieve his mean ends! An opportunist who teaches an honest and a god-fearing man to tell a lie, the only lie, he had to ldin his life! A charlatan who declares himself to be the god of gods, descended from the highest heaven for establishing righteousness on earth, and advises a hesitat in garcher to strike down a foe who is defenseless and crying for mercy.” (Sukathankar 95)*

As for these kind of viewpoints on Krishna, they have little influence in India. Krishna is deified and adored throughout the nation, with holy places to him in every state. Lord Krishna and Radha are both presiding deities in the story. The main events revolve on the launch of the poet's book at Lord Krishna temple during the Spring Festival. The preparations, deities' decorations, and the parade through town with pictures of Lord Krishna and Radha are all described in detail. The use of such vivid accounts of festivals allowed Narayan to express his Western readership that Indian ideology has deep ties in cognition and judgments are not established on the grounds of some superficial connections to specific



activities. When analyzing the nuances of dharma, epistemology comes into play.

Additionally, R K Narayan includes the bird Garuda in his temple of Mempi's list of deities, which also includes Goddess Laxmi, Lord Krishna, Radha, and an unnamed Goddess with four arms. The Hindus respect this bird since it is considered Lord Vishnu's messenger. As evidenced by his attempt to murder the Garuda bird, stuff it, and sell it off to God-fearing Hindus who wanted to retain it in their homes, Vasu's fame is demonstrated. R K Narayan set constructed the legendary framework of the novel by referring to these Gods, Goddesses, and their messengers, so that regional readers can recognize their ancestral culture as they progressed through the narrative. R K Narayan has the ability to skillfully incorporate non-Indian reader's attention to Indian culture, which is premised on Indian ideology and has its roots in mythos, allowing them to gain a true understanding of India's heritage while also dispelling some of the unfounded but widely held beliefs that exist concerning India and its people. In the novel, the author also mentioned Satyanarayan Puja. Satyanarayan Puja was eloquently pronounced by Raja Rao at *Kanthapura*, adopted by Gandhians as well to build a nonviolent protest against British authority. Satyanarayan Puja is referred when there is a discussion between Shastri and Natraj in *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*: "I wouldn't bother you if it weren't for the fact that this Satyanarayan Puja must be conducted today in my house; my children and wife will be waiting for me at the door." (110)As part of this discussion, Narayan presented another Hindu tradition that has since become popular among Hindu families all over the world. A series of short and strong examples of Pujas by R. K. Narayan has illustrated to the readers the profound connection that Indians have had with the one's cultural customs and also how people compassionately feel a feeling of connectedness with God.

In the story, we learn that the writer goes to an isolated spot by the river every day at sunrise and sat for a while on the sand repeating a prayer to the Sun to brighten my thoughts when the east sparkled. Such ritual of sun-worship and doing so in the river is practiced by devout Hindus till date. The Sanskrit slokas, according to the average Hindu, are highly philosophical, imbibing minute observations of life that individuals who study and practice them feel tranquilly dipped in wisdom.



## **Myth of Bhasmasura, a Demon that Killed Himself:**

In Narayan, there are two types of comedy: one that emerges from a contemporary disrupting a traditional way of life, and another that arises from the unexpected and savage intrusion of evil, violence, or corruptions into the calm tranquil quirkiness of Malgudi. Vasu reenacts the rakshasa Bhasmasura's devastation. This similarity is made obvious in the novel by Sastri, who tells Natraj that Vasu shows all the characterizations of a rakshasa i.e. a demonic monster with immense strength, extraordinary powers, and intellect, but who recognized no kind of constraints of man of God. He continues by saying, the ego of every rakshasa swells up. He believes he is unstoppable and beyond all laws. But, sooner or later, something will bring him down.

From the myth of Bhasmasura, Sastri exhibits this idea who was given the rare ability to scorch anything he touched, despite the fact that nothing could kill him. God, he made humanity suffer. Vishnu took on the form of dance Mohini, a beautiful dancer with whom the asura fell in love. She offered to submit to him only if he copied all of her dance motions and moves. Mohini placed her hands on her head at one point during the dance, and the demon followed in full forgetfulness, and was instantly turned to ashes, the blighting touch becoming active on his own skull. When Sastri refers to Natraj, the moral and meaning of Vasu's unexpected and violent death, another allusion to the Bhasmasura story appears at the end of the novel. According to Sastri,

*“Every demon enters this realm with the extraordinary ability to be indestructible. Despite this, the cosmos has survived all of the rakshasas that have ever been. Every devil carries an unnoticed speed of self-destruction with him, and at the most inopportune moment, he vanishes into thin air. What will happen to mankind if this does not happen?” (58)*

Vasu, in fact, is the perfect embodiment of the classic rakshasa of Indian mythology; he meets the description of the rakshasa provided in the Bhagwad Gita's sixteenth chapter. Among the numerous demonic traits stated there are deception, pride, fury, harshness of speech, insatiable hunger, and cruelty. The rakshasa is depicted as a creature with



superhuman power, a hideous and vicious appearance, and cannibalistic tendencies. A nightly mortal, a forest creature, full of clandestine, murky and impure in habits, completely dishonorable, submitting to none of the societal or Godly laws. Furthermore, they are frequently intelligent, competent, and capable of undertaking penance in order to obtain significant boons from the deities. Shukracharya, the asuras' master, was a scholarly sage who used his talent i.e. *Sanjivani Vidya* to bring the dead back to life; similarly, Ravana, who was a scholar of the Vedas, had formed innovative and systematic ways of reciting them. Mayasura was known to be a skilled architect who built the golden city of Lanka. In every way, such a depiction of the rakshasa suits Vasu precisely. His appearance is described as rakshasa-like in the novel, with a dark face, massive strong eyes behind dense brows, extensive forehead, and a thick stock of messy hairs that resembles a murkyaura. *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* is unquestionably a vivid and noteworthy phenomenon in Narayan's creative work for its inventive representation of an ancient *puranic* story with both serious and sarcastic meanings. In Naik's words,

*“The story is most generally perceived as a moral parable about evil's self-destructiveness, a type of funny and wonderful argument for Gandhi's nonviolence. Vasu, on the other hand, is presented by Narayan as more than a rakshasa. He's a genuine person with a problem that stems from his time in and out of prison, where he was schooled in two strange and brutal professions. Narayan has depicted the victory of religion in Malgudi's Man-Eater, which is representative of the Indian worldview. Muthu, the proprietor of a tea business in Mempi Forest, has a strong trust in God, and it is he who purchases the temple elephant Kumar. Muthu is a man of faith who is faced against Vasu, the devil's servant. He resembles the fabled Vishnu devotee Prahalad, who defied all odds in defense of his devotion.” (Naik 47)*

Vasu, in the guise of science and reason, assaults the Malgudi people's faith and heritage. Ultimately, despite his demonic proclivities, he is unable to bring much harm to Malgudi due to faith. At one point in the story, Sastri returns from his journey with some sacred ash, which Natraj puts to his forehead; this gesture affirms the people of Malgudi's way of life and their trust in the final triumph of virtue over evil. Fortunately, as previously



said, every rakshasa carries the seeds of devastation within him. The demon's ego grows bloated, and he loses his sense of proportion. When Vasu chooses to kill the temple elephant during the Vishnu Festival parade, he tests his limitations. This description demonstrates that the rakshasa of the twenty-first century does not have to be ten-headed and twenty-armed. He has grown more powerful and self-destructive as technology and science have advanced. "In a way, the rakshasa represents evil," Edwin Gerow explains, "but this casts too moral a cast on it; he is more an element of creation - the chaotic, the disruptive; his problem is not that he is terrible, but that he is ultimately not real." (89)

According to Gerow, the fixed order of the universe is a core ontological feature in the Hindu worldview; Vasu introduces change and destroys the ordered world of Malgudi. Vasu's entrance into the press's seclusion, which is separated from the outside world by the blue curtain, which represents innocence, normalcy, and order, symbolizes this. With Vasu's death, Malgudi's order and normalcy have returned. The blue curtain is drawn once more, and Sastri continues printing K. J's soft drink labels. We must observe what Narayan does by making this purposeful use of the mythological after discussing the novel as an exemplification of the age-old fight between "good and evil, the gods and demons, the sura and the asura." Narayan is able to combine the ordinary and mythological, the timeless and temporal, the realm of eternal verities and the world of social change, thanks to the legendary analogy. In fact, the fact that various asuras from paranoiac literature are evoked with Bhasma as Vasu's parallels implies that he has importance beyond the purely human realm.

Through the use of the Bhasmasura story, Narayan depicts, in aspects of imagined art, the archaic Indian faith in evil and the destructiveness of that belief through the lens of fiction. Another comparable traditional notion is implicitly present in the novel. It emphasizes the novel's fundamental theme and allows us to better understand Vasu's destructive aggression, which is aimed almost completely at animals, reptiles, and birds. The traditional belief here is that one's karma, or deeds and conduct, determines one's rebirth over the course of one's life cycle, and Chandiyoga Upanishad, one of the oldest Upanishads, states: "Those whose conduct here has been good will quickly attain a good birth, the birth of a Brahmin, the birth of a Kshatriya, or the birth of a Vaisya." Those whose behavior here



has been wicked, on the other hand, will rapidly acquire an evil dog birth or a *Chandala* birth." "Some souls enter a womb for embodiment; others enter stationery things according to their acts and... ideas," (124)

Despite the fact that myth is used as a conceptual comparison to Bhasmasura's tale in *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*, this is only organic that a narrative cannot be called to tell in a linear fashion. In a novel, there may be some deviations from the main narrative; there could be some turns which, once merged, end up making the narrative quite interacting. Despite the reality that the fiction brings the use of structural linear strategy, we can also see the use of the digressional method in the novel.

In Muthu, a tea merchant in Mempi, the reader sees a compassionate and sensitive god-fearing individual. When Muthu begins to describe his life experience and how he had gotten this far in the novel, we find a narrative inside a story. Although this could simply be just one device to familiarize Muthu's part in the novel, the detour is noticeable when Muthu begins to describe his enterprise to reconstruct an ancient holy place with his resources because he supposed the Spirit in the holy place was protective of the vehicles that went up and down the knoll every day. Muthu's plans included not only refurbishing the temple but also celebrating the 'consecration of the temple' on a huge scale by transporting the Goddess in a magnificent pageant led by an ornamented elephant, accompanied by drums and pipes. Narayan showed the link that regular Indians have with their Gods; through the character of Muthu and expressing Muthu's desire in rebuilding an ancient temple. Muthu bears the responsibility of renewal of the temple with his hard-earned money out of love. Muthu is only a regular roadside tea vendor, yet he has extraordinary bravery to take on such a difficult mission. This bravery stems from a complete trust in the supreme being, knowing that in any honest and decent deed, only He will help, no matter how humble and destitute the worshipper is. Muthu's plan for temple's reconstruction in *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* is narrated, in which the young elephant Kumar leads the procession. We also have a full account of the magnificence of the temple parade in Malgudi, the Radha-Krishna festival, and the commemoration of the poet's masterpiece Radhya-Kalyan. There are communal meetings, followed by ceremonies, to commemorate various religious events, particularly in the Hindu religion. There might be some sociological motivations behind this, since it allows



individuals to come together for a shared goal. Common activity, belief in a shared mythology, and shared ancestry deepen the religious relationship. One does not strive to overcome the harsh urge with processions, pomp, and display. It's an opportunity to experience euphoria. The mythical context functions as a means of achieving transcendence. As a result, communal rituals such as consecration and procession with the deities are planned for everyone. People dance with entire devotion to the God, as described in the novelist's monosyllable "Girls with girls did dance in trance" or in Rangi the holy place's dancer's performance. An emotion of pleasure arises within the performer, and that feeling is transmitted to others through the performer's actions. As a result, we become more aware of the facts that surround us.

### **Values Preached in Upanishad and Bhagvad Geeta:**

Narayan paints a picture of a thriving Indian joint family structure in which individuals of many backgrounds live together under one roof, sharing shared values, norms of behavior, and a firm belief in nonviolence. Grand uncle of Natraj lived in a very small room and used to give Natraj a penny every day to purchase sugar to feed ants and some birds, who were allowed to share human diet since they had the same right to survive as humans. These cultural references aided Narayan in constructing the novel's structure in a thorough Indianized style of storytelling, in which here tells ancient traditional stories and myths "that continue to inform and explain the reader's world in vital ways that keep these stories alive and meaningful, so that 'truth' and 'reality' must inevitably include the fantastic and fictional." Describing the amusing Indian heritage, Narayan also explained how Indians are alienated from their roots; not to forget that they had to pay a high price for it. The writer depicts this by explaining how their long-standing united family fell apart following a little argument on a festive occasion. It was the two uncles of Natraj who chose to abandon their mid-day meal instead of following their elder brother (Natraj's father) tips to stop one such event on a sacred day. They did so even though they had sat down to eat it. The division of the family possessions happened in the days that followed. By this incident, Narayan conveys that we are accountable for establishing a society that continues to rip itself apart by rejecting our tradition. Consequently, Natraj mentions that on his return journey from the ravine since taking a bath, he happened to come conversing with one of Natraj's aunts and uncles, who



tried to give him an ice-cold gaze because she loathed Natraj for residing in one's old house. One idea which warrants focus is that while folks were more awakened as kind of a result of new learning and illustrated how much we allude to as one of the modern perspectives, people progressively became very selfish, egoistic, and preoccupied more often with own selves than they were with the majority of humanity. Even more starkly, this harsh reality is demonstrated once people are reluctant to feel empathy for one's ageing mothers and fathers or weak relatives. This is noteworthy in this situation because the Maya Upanishad teaches that

*"ayam bandhur ayam neti ganana laghu chetasam*

*Udar charitanam tu vasundhaiva kutumbakam"*

(Trans: "Only little men distinguish between relatives and strangers, stating, one is a relative, the other is a stranger. For those who live generously, the entire world is nothing more than a family.") (Swamy 243).

Gandhiji's notion of nonviolence is also claimed to be a magnified version of the olden Upanishadic notion of "Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam". Thus, Narayan touched on some extremely crucial themes of world unification and universal wellbeing through his clever control of circumstances. The author appears to have taken on the role of social commentator. Narayan not only praised Indian mythology, but he also had a critical eye for his own culture. Myth has four primary roles, according to Joseph Campbell. Narayan has described all four mythical roles without diluting the novel's flavor, and he has incorporated them into the novel's framework. Lord Brahma is credited with the creation of the universe, while Lord Vishnu has been credited well with protection of the establishment and Lord Shiva with the destruction of the cosmos. In other words, no matter what occurs to its individuals of the globe, the great wise men and sages have provided an answer in the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, as well as other ancient religious writings, which are said to have been composed with great wisdom while experiencing the Divine benefits inside oneself. It is also customary to begin a legendary work with a prayer to the almighty; which has been mentioned meticulously in the commencement. Also included is the Astrophysical component, in which Natraj eloquently and beautifully describes his extremely early hours



experience in the body of water where the magnificence and breadth of universe are caught, and Natraj offers his modest plea to the Sun, which enlightens the world as well as the psyche of people who do the ritual. Narayan transmits Hindu mythical learning that teach person to somehow be responsive to the universe, to understand its ordered arrangement, and also to be thankful to the vastness of the universe. We can see forest, bodies of water, rock shards, clay soil containers and a soaked toddy in relation to the explanation of the dawn, which brings the entire scene to life, giving the reader the impression that all of these elements have a place and significance in the cosmic plan provided by the tale. The sociological function, according to Campbell, is the third feature of myth. It is those functions that assist to establish a culture and its prevailing social structure by passing down "the law," or ethical and principled rules for individuals of a given values to follow. This role is presumably illustrated throughout the novel *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*. However, whereas tallying the purposes of this function, Narayan skillfully upturned the order of presentation. From the beginning of Vasu's debut to the finish, the narrative depicted a person who fully rejected all socially accepted conduct, words, and acts. People in the society despise Vasu, but because to his great power and raw courage, they are unable to challenge him. The origins of sociological function can be traced back to mythology, which has been revered and robustly abided ever since dawn of time. It follows, therefore, that a person who refuses to adhere to moral expectations or acknowledge its norms of conduct will never be accepted into society. As a result, deviating from certain norms is not tolerated in society. As defined by Campbell, the educational function tries to teach everyone how to access and encounter the distinct phases of our lives, and this is the fourth component. According to Naryan, Vasu was killed once he unintentionally imposed a deadly blow on himself because planning to shoot Kumar, an innocent temple elephant. Vasu was a morally reprehensible brutal man who murdered defenseless creatures remorselessly after his own benefit, acted immodestly to folks, as well as decided to follow a rule of the forest that might be right. Furthermore, despite the fact that his neighbors were curious as to why he died, there were no mourners at his funeral, and he died in the manner of a living creature or an errant dog, as is commonly mentioned of somebody who leads a morally repugnant life of leisure.

As a result, via his work, Narayan explicates in what way an individual should spend



the life in order to smoothly transition from one stage to the next while feeling fulfilled and purposeful. Natraj received good business as a result of his kindness, and he believed he was doing well thanks to Goddess Laxmi's blessings. This demonstrates that Natraj was a God-fearing individual who ascribed his achievement to divine favor. Many Indians have this idea, believing that good and bad things happen to them when Providence wills them to happen. The intellectual teachings of Hinduism are at the root of such a sentiment. Natraj was also inclined towards the ancient Indian way of living, which consisted of separating a parlor and a work area by placing a curtain between them. A strong difference was created between the outside and inside of a home in traditional Indian culture. Outsiders were often not permitted to enter the house, and certain rules were observed, such as removing shoes or washing one's feet before entering. While drawing spaces and parlors were reserved in Western cultures and customs, the strict custom of going into the house was rested to some significant degree. No one, not even his close friends like the poet and Sen, was allowed to go beyond the blue curtain area for Natraj. This was the ideal environment for Natraj until Vasu, disregarding all Natraj rules, encroached beyond the blue curtain into Natraj's seclusion, causing chaos. We find ourselves in a scenario where Natraj is at a loss for how to save the unfortunate elephant Kumar from Vasu's wrath, and the episode has the potential to claim the lives of countless Malgudi and Mempi residents. In such a scenario, the concerned people's common tendency is to turn to God, urgently pleading to be saved. The repeating of various legendary tales in which we see God finally coming to the rescue of the innocent and weak, or the committed who is on the right road, has instilled in us a deep belief in such a concept. That is why the ordinary Indian believes that those who follow the right path will always have God on their side and will triumph. The same way, Natraj, who had been stumped as to how he might end up saving the poor Kumar, the elephant, from Vasu's hands, knew immediately the mythical tale of Gajendra, who'd been saved by Vishnu out from mouth of the croc, and deduced that our ancestors had been shown that elephant has a guarded existence and no one can ever damage it.

The portrayal of how folks take power from legends in times of powerlessness is Narayan's representation of stories like the legend in the Bhagavata Purana regarding Gajendra the elephant, who was a devout follower of Vishnu in his preceding birth, and as he



was caught by the crocodile during his next birth and is now on the brink of dying, he genuinely began to pray to Lord Vishnu that would save him, and his prayers have been answered by Natraj, on the other hand, was enraged and wished to think that God must have assigned all elephants as just a secured species for protection. Because of the typical Indian's reliance on mythology, in times of distress, people would even interpret mythological tales in their own manner in order to gain mental fortitude, a trait highlighted by Narayan. What's more, Natraj delivers his petition to God on the basis of such legendary belief in order to save the elephant and blameless lives.

*“Oh, Vishnu! Save our elephant, and save all the innocent men and women who are going to pull the chariot. You must come down to our rescue now. Unknown to myself, the entire crowd inside and outside the hall stood stunned, and all activity stopped. The Chairman’s speech was interrupted as my voice over whelmed the loudspeaker. Rangī stopped dead in her dance. I was soon surrounded by a vast crowd of sympathizers. I felt faint and choked by the congestion”.*(45)

The depiction of definitive submission to the highest power has its origins in mythology, which has been passed down the generations through the medium of narrative, as Narayan so eloquently articulated when using the phrase "our forefathers." As a result, Narayan saw our mythology's profound origins. Finally, following a series of dramatic events, we find Vasu, a man of immense strength, dying by his own misfortune, and poor Natraj being suspect of assassinating Vasu by his neighbours, but Natraj returns to daily routine with self-esteem. From this, Narayan transmitted the common Indian sentiment that the righteous would be rewarded in the end, which is Indian mythology's ultimate message.

### **Conclusion:**

Traditional Indian belief maintains that no one is bound to endless misery. The soul has the opportunity to earn merit and therefore progress to everlasting life. Though the workings of karma cannot be changed, there is hope. The work confirms Narayan's distinctively Indian perspective on life. Dharma safeguards those who safeguard dharma, according to The Gita. In interpersonal relationships, Narayan also believes in the balance of



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power. He sees change as illusory and considers stability to be everlasting. This reoccurring pattern reflects his viewpoint; hence it appears throughout his writings inadvertently. It is archetypal, coming from global humanity's collective consciousness.



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