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The Depiction of East and West Conflict in R. K. Narayan's *The Guide* and *The Vendor of Sweets*

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ABSTRACT: This article investigates various aspects of East and West conflicts in R. K. Narayan's Novels. The conflict between East and West occurs from different principles and theories of social organization that emerged during the industrialization of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The disparity of East and West civilization in many ways of life and methods of power are very distinct. Such kinds of contrasting attitudes seem conflicting, but they are closely linked. The conflict of western and eastern civilization, the opposition between capitalist means of production and socialist planning; contrast between a parliamentary state governed by the rule of law and a totalitarian state, opposing views into an international political issue these are diverse aspects of these conflicts. The idea of East-West play an important role in Narayan's Indo-English novels. The conflict between religion and reason is found in many Narayan novels. This is reflected in the characters who are influenced by Western culture and have a rational point of view. Some remain enslaved to irrational or superstitious or Eastern practices that occurs from orthodox Hinduism. The author reveals these conflicts through the characters of the novel. Narayan is an advocate of modernization but does not violate the spirit of Hinduism. He saw bourgeois society. Commoners unfamiliar with Western technology still have a desire to prosper and move forward in life. Narayan's beautifully portrayed aspiring people have a spirit of wanting to reach out to accept follow Westerners. This paper will deal with these kinds of issues and conflicts in this regard. It will show how these people influenced, impacted, and got consequences with east and west conflict.

KEYWORDS: East and West conflict, Industrialization, East and West civilization, Power, Capitalist Means of Production and Socialist Planning.

Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami (R. K. Narayan) is a famous Indian writer known for his work and writing in the fictional city of Malgudi in southern India. He is one of the main and famous authors of ancient Indian literature written in English along with two others, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. Narayan's greatest achievement was to make India accessible to the outside world through his writings and powerful language in literature. His novel *The Guide* (1958) earned him the highest national honour from the Indian Academy of Literature which is his country's highest honour. Narayan has received many other awards and honours, including the Order of Civilian Awards, Benson of the Royal Literary Society, Padma Vibhushan and Padma Bhushan, India's second and third highest civilian honours, and in 1994, the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship, India's highest honour. He was also appointed to the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian parliament.

He is a renowned and recognized novelist of Indo-Anglican literature. His style, manners, fashion, language, and morals are admirable. East-West themes play an important role in his Indo-English novels. The conflict between religion and reason is found in many Narayan novels. This is reflected in the characters who are influenced by Western culture and have a rational point of view. Some remain enslaved to irrational or superstitious or Eastern practices that occurs from orthodox Hinduism. The author reveals these conflicts through the characters of the novel. Narayan is an advocate of modernization but does not violate the spirit of Hinduism. He saw bourgeois society. Commoners unfamiliar with Western technology still have a desire to prosper and move forward in life. Narayan's beautifully portrayed aspiring people have a spirit of wanting to reach out to, accept, or follow Westerners. Consider R.K.'s novel *The Guide*. Narayan, the East-West conflict is a big problem. This work is an attempt to show the conflict between tradition and modernity of east and west. Narayan's main goal is to artistically represent Indian life. The Novel, *The Guide* is Narayan's masterpiece. He wrote this novel outside his hometown and brought his name and fame around the world. An adventure story of a railroad guide commonly known as the "Raju Railway". The author describes Raju's various roles within the station, including caterer, tour guide, lust, manager of dancers, imposter, martyr, and mystic. He explains Raju's life and later becomes the owner of the station. He is also a tour guide. This job brought him to the acquaintance of archaeologist Marco and his wife Rosie. During this time, he fell in love with Marco's wife Rosie. Eventually Marco finds out about her sinful behaviour and leaves her. With Raju's help, Rosie became a dancer.



Meanwhile, Raju is put in jail for forgery. Somehow, he managed to break free and let go of his past by living a new sadhu life. There is famine and in the drought that everyone expected of him on the 12th, Raju collapsed from exhaustion, and it is unclear if he really died or just passed out. At the beginning of the novel there is a conflict between his father's and son's ideas. His son wants to attend a trendy school with Western influence when his father forces him not to support him in that school because of the threat of Western civilization. R.K. Narayan did a great job of highlighting the contradictions of the father and son's conflict. This is evident in the text where Raju states:

I don't know what council my father chose to send me here to study when the trendy Albert Mission School was nearby. I proudly call myself Albert Mission Boy. But I have often heard fathers not wanting to send their sons there. They always seem to be trying to convert our boys to Christianity while insulting our gods. (Narayan,9).

It is clear from the passage that shows how Westernization has permeated society. The change in character to the protagonist's education clearly supports and the influence of Westernization on society. Raju's father, on the other hand, adheres strictly to traditional or oriental methods of upbringing. From the beginning, the protagonist recognizes himself on the railroad, indicating that Raju is a post-colonial figure. The railway symbolizes the implementation of Western quality in traditional Malgudi. Modern culture, new ideologies, social developments slowly changed the hero's psyche, and he accepted these social changes. R.K. Narayan showed how Raju transcends spiritual transcendence and enters the world of materialism that characterizes modernity. Raju has a modernist approach. He does not accept the inherited pattern of bending over and touching the feet of his seniors and elders. When Raju came out of prison, the villagers considered him a sadhu. Velan wanted to bow to Raju and touch his feet, but the hero would not allow it. Narayan said:

Veran Rose crouched down and tried to touch Raju's leg. Raju backed off from the attempt. I do not allow anyone to do this. Only God has the right to bow down like that. He will destroy us if we try. I do not allow anyone to do this. Only God deserves such prostration. If we try to take away his rights, he will destroy us. (Narayan).

Rosie has her master's degree but is not modern by her nature. It lacks modernist values. She is a traditional Indian wife who craves care and affection from her husband. Marco didn't like anyone interfering in his professional activities. He hopes that Rosie will appreciate his research. This ideological difference is the reason for the strife between them. Rosie is forced into an extramarital affair with Raju. Narayan said that Eastern societies were rigid, that the freedom of possibility that was once possible was not respected, and that Orientals considered women inferior and did not give them the opportunity to express their claims. This is what hurts the women's community. R.K. Narayan said in my time.

From time immemorial, man gave her a secondary status, remained here with his delicacy and cunning, and she herself began to lose all nations of independence, individuality, status, and strength. Indian society A woman in an orthodox environment was the ideal victim of such a situation. (Narayan).

Marco and Rosie, on the other hand, were not married according to an oriental ceremony, but in a registry office. This is also a sign of the westernization that has gradually captured Indian culture., Society and Civilization. If you look at the name "Rosie" it is westernized and its use in the text indicates her state of exclusion. It was unfamiliar to those in society. Here the foreign name is a sign of Rosie's social integration, and through it Narayan represents the true face of Indian society. After finding out about her Rosie cheating on her, Marco dumped her and took a train to Madras. She came to Raju's house in search of her refuge. Raju's mother is shocked to see Rosie alone that night. To quote from the text:

The first question she asked was, "Rosie, who did you come with?" Rosie blushed ather and hesitantly looked at me. I took a few steps back so she could only be seen dimly instead of in my ragged clothes. I replied I think she came alone, Mother. His mother was surprised. "Daughter of today! How brave are you! And I've only been to the market once in my life while Raju's father was still alive. (Narayan).

The difference is not only in personality but also in temperament. Raju's mother is a traditional Hindu woman who does not allow public access because she is not allowed, she is afraid to go out alone. On the other hand, Rosie is a modern woman. Western influence is evident in their attitudes, behaviour, and temperament. She doesn't hesitate to go out alone. In this novel, we feel the conflict between Eastern and Western cultures, uniting the two through assimilation as evidenced by Rosie's transformation into Nalini. Changing her name from Rosie to Nalini shows that her desire to fit in with a very traditional society is challenging and abandoning her. This is where Lakshmi is sitting. According to Hindu mythology, Brahma also sat on a bed of lotus leaves in a moody state. This is how a Westernized Rosie expresses her social exclusion. Rosie, whose name is Nalini, symbolically shows how she can fit into a mainstream society that has



rejected her search. Contemporary European and American fiction has influenced Anglo-Indian writers in ways that Narayan was unstoppable. So, Bildungsroman and Picaresque's fictional Western fiction model *The Guide* is clear. Narayan's interest as a bourgeois writer is difficultly expressed through his characters and their conflicts. Narayan wrote:

Narayan's novel shows how Indian society confronts the complex terrain of modernization. In this sense, Malgudi becomes a laboratory where different abilities and positions are tested. Arguably Narayan's most famous novel, *The Guide* is a modern Indian tale of an ancient Indian institution, the essence of which is the guru, which really has no exact equivalent. R.K. is a lighter term, somewhat frivolous and certainly more ambiguous, and more informative. (Narayan, 174).

Looking at the characters in the novel, Rosie, Raju's mother, Velan, Uncle Gaffer, the driver, and Joseph, the manager of the wooden house where Rosie's husband is staying, are all from the traditional Indian civilization, a person who represents culture and customs. On the other hand, Raju and Marko are characteristic of Western culture and beyond. This reveals the conflict between East and West in action and dialogue of these characters throughout the novel. The characters in the guide represent not only Indian society and its traditions, customs, culture, religious beliefs, and Orthodox principles, but also Eastern and Western values as well represented by the main character's mother and maternal uncle on the one hand it depicts Raju and Rosie's conflict on the other side. In such a conflict, cultural values, conventional or old, must give way to new ones, so Raju's mother runs away from home for Raju and Rosie wrote from a two-cultural perspective. The conflict between ancient East Indian values and traditions on the one hand and modern Western values on the other is found in many novels.

Raju seems to be a psychological projection of a typical individual in Indian society. A social norm, Raju, itself rooted in his family's tradition, opposes these age-old institutional values. Rosie's caste system is attacked by the public as "the lady of the public", but Raju defies it by claiming that her caste is "the highest caste in the world". R. K. Narayan explains that times have changed because no one accepts Rosie by Eastern Orthodox standards, but Raju believes that Raju gives her an identity in a supposedly civilized society modern and Western to give, he must face even or odd highs and lows. When Raju leaves the company and pursues Rosie, she suffers from a moral decline, and he faces dire consequences. When he returned to society he was saved. In the words of Arun Soul.

This suggests that in the Western context, individuals can grow and develop if they detach themselves from society and become individualistic. On the other hand, in the Indian context, individuals fail to isolate themselves from society, but when they accept society, they are in harmony with themselves and their environment and can develop and mature. (Arun Soul).

R.K. Narayan's *The Vendor of Sweets* was published in 1967. The assembly of East and West is the central theme of the novel. It raised in the West with a stubborn Indian or Eastern father, this work explores the rare complexities of middle-class Indian society trying to adapt to a changing world and Eastern values, alluding to a Western perspective and style. It shows in the blindness of this conflict between him and his son. From start to finish, Jagan is the most vibrant character in his novel *The Vendor of Sweets*. His son, Mari returned from America after three years of education and was converted from Indian to Western. Mari's American-born wife Grace is undeniably Western and rational. The opening paragraphs of the novel are of great interest, especially to Western ears. Quoting from the lyric, "When you conquer taste, you conquer yourself," Jagan told the audience. Beat yourself"? Jagan said, "I don't know, but all our sages encourage us to do so." is refers to Westerners always thinking logically. He never blindly succumbs to blind faith. Jagan shares his thoughts with the sages and never thinks to confirm the truth of what they say. They exploit this is ridiculous to Western ears because the idea of doing something stronger than tradition for no reason goes against our own imagination someone who thinks we're stupid. However, it should at least sound reasonable. Audience Questions "Why?" These are the basics of modern Western civilization and knowing that Indians also ask questions confirms our correctness. There are various verbal encounters between Jagan and Mari, Mari and Grace, and Jagan and Grace. A dialogue describing Jagan's Gandhian principles. He says:

Jagan is disappointed to read the letter. In Hindu scriptures, he has five deadly sins, the first of which is the slaughter of cattle. Jagan was an orthodox Hindu, a pure vegetarian, and a staunch follower of Gandhian philosophy who believed in Ahimsa. This ideology of Jagan stems from his profession of selling candy. Runs his business without the help of machines. Jagan is said to be against the emergence of machines of any kind, i.e., industrialization. Jagan's belief in Gandhi's theory, R.K. Narayan describes the search for 'truth' and 'simplicity' in the key areas of portraying Eastern culture and thought. (Narayan).



Grace, an American girl, wanted to be Jagan's Native American daughter-in-law. So, she puts on a sari and does all the work in her house. She started cleaning Jagan's room and washing her dishes in his kitchen. Jagan's protests were ignored. "She swept all over her floor with a broom and said, 'Dad, do you mind me? not me. Do not forget that I am the wife of an Indian'" Jagan wanted to know where Grace was. So, he told her: "It is customary in this country to know where you were born and raised and who you are in general. Then we move on to other things" The meeting of the East and the modern West is expressed in this conversation. The use of Malian socks in India can be treated as a Western influence. Orientals don't wear socks and have their own reasons for not wearing socks. Jagan, Gandhi, hates this Mali conspiracy in his home. But he dares not pronounce the Mari language. To quote from the text:

Noticing that Mari was wearing socks under her sandals, he said, "Never wear socks. Because it heats up, and it also negates the useful magnetism," he wanted to shout. Electric charges insulate the surface of the earth. I argued in my book that this was one of the possible causes of heart attacks in European countries. (Narayan).

R.K. Narayan deliberately made Jagan says such unreasonable things the author wants to tell the truth through comical situations and conversations. The gulf between Jagan and Mari widens as his son communicates through various devices such as a phonograph and a Polaroid camera. He shares his knowledge of "The Grand Canyon and Niagara, the Statue of Liberty and New York traffic." Mari's character, disposition, demeanour, and complacency affect the innocent Jagan continent. It is therefore clear that Mali believes in Westernization. His interest in Western goods and techniques marks his transformation.

In the evening, when Grace wasn't with Mari, Jagan asked him where she was. Mari replied that she had gone out. Where are you at this time of night? She can go wherever she wants. why is anyone asking her? where is she going why does she leave is she unhappy here? Mari got up and said she is a free woman, not a daughter-in-law of our wretched country".

There is a clear conflict between East and West. A pure Indian, Jagan doesn't believe in women going out alone at night. On the other hand, Mari, a modern man who spent several years in the West, believes that women are as free as men and can go anywhere at any time, just like men. The novel includes a father-son relationship test and a generation gap. It's a story of East vs West amidst these stark contrasts, the similarities should not be overlooked. In the words of Barry Argyle:

Narayan is interested in similarities in states and emotions that might have been the same. But by using a stylish vehicle, he not only hides his true concerns...but creates a tension between appearance and reality. This tension mimics the novel's theme of finding true value among many that are false or obsolete. (Barry Argyle).

Finally, R.K. Narayan's selected works present a deep understanding and analysis of the East-West conflict over the centuries. Narayan's depiction of this conflict is nuanced and layered, revealing the complex dynamics at work between the two cultures. Through his work, Narayan highlights the challenges and struggles that arise when Eastern and Western cultures collide and the impact that conflict has on individuals and societies. One key theme that emerges from Narayan's work is the conflict between traditional Eastern values and modern Western thinking. Narayan presents characters who are torn between two worlds, struggling to reconcile their traditional values with the changing world around them. This tension is especially evident in works such as *The Guide* and *The Vendor of Sweets*, where characters grapple with the impact of Western thinking on their lives and communities.

Narayan also sheds light on the dynamics of power in East-West conflicts, especially in the context of colonialism. Through his work, Narayan criticizes the British colonial system and the way it imposed Western values and ideas on Indian society. He also sheds light on the impact of colonialism on Indian identity and the struggle of individuals to assert their cultural identity in the face of colonial oppression.

According to Ray: Derozio's poem *The Fakeer of Jungheera* displays the pitiable condition of women in the contemporary society of Calcutta. This shows a kind of societal conflict of women.

In *Shades of Resilience*, the author describes the conflict of human being as globalization impacted all humans into localization, the division of boundaries of two sides of life which led groupism at global and local level.

In her book *Flow Free, Breathe Free*, the writer depicts ways of world to deal with all kinds of struggles and conflict. The world is full of hypocrisies people.

In the theses entitled "Globalization patterns of migration and cultural identity in Amitav Ghosh select novels" According to author the novel *River of Smoke* explores the theme of global trade connected with the modernity and shows the impact of cross-cultural encounters of different characters. This cross-cultural conflict paints the



difference as well as similarities of people. It describes that one must look at connections of heart and emotion of people at the level of humanity to terminate all kinds of conflicts and difficulties.

“THE PLIGHT OF DALIT AND CULTURAL TENSION IN ARUNDHATI ROY’S THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS” this article focuses on marginalised people in Indian society which reflects the conflict of different strata of the society. Therefore, the conflicts have the various perspectives of the life in the world which plays a vital role for human society. This can be transformed the personality of a man.

In the article of Mohd Farhan entitled “Alienated Suffering of Divide and Cross: A Study of Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines*” also discusses that ‘*The Shadow Lines* deals with the border studies, conflict studies, history, and political studies and also in literary studies.’ The Paper highlighted the nostalgic feelings and alienated sufferings of divisional and cross of the nation in conflict notion.

At last, but not the least, Narayan’s work offers a thought-provoking exploration of the East-West conflict and delves deep into the complexities of this longstanding cultural conflict. Narayan’s sensitive portrayal of this conflict invites readers to grapple with these issues and reflect on their own experiences with cultural differences and conflict. Ultimately, Narayan’s work is a powerful reminder of the importance of understanding and respecting cultural diversity and bridging the gaps between different cultures to build a more harmonious and inclusive world.

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