
Childhood and colonial schooling in R.K. Narayan's Swami and friends

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Abstract:

R. K. Narayan is greatest personality in the field of English Literature in Indian writing. Tradition, modernity, family and individual freedom are the main concern of his themes in his writing, "Swami and friends" the first novel of his present, childhood school, life and colonial India in the fictional setting of Malgudi is a highly sensitive manner. This paper tried to understand the childhood and colonial schooling through the experience of Swaminathan.

Narayan's specialty is that he never presents the childhood in a sentimental way rather he presents it along with fear, playful, shame, affection and with confusion. The novel begins with tension between rest and discipline, which place the school in opposition to child's freedom. (Narayan 3)¹. To understand the impact of colonial schooling is appropriate right.

Keywords: Colonialism; Schooling; Childhood Experience; Tradition and Modernity; Individual Freedom

1. Monday morning fear.

Swami wants to avoid going to school on Monday. And this is natural childhood resistance, the atmosphere of work and discipline appear like a form of punishment to him. (Narayan 3). The building of school, headmaster, and the fear of cane is coming in his mind before the education. (Narayan 3). Narayan present schooling as anxiety, not a joy here, already burdens on the child when they enter the school rather than curiosity. (Narayan 3)..The opening scene of the school present as a pressure

filled structure rather than a child friendly institution. Coming of Monday is not the starting of the week. But the end of the freedom also, it's a instinctive child response towards the institutional routine, rather than reluctant laziness of Narayan.

2. Classroom boredom and escape

Attention of swami repeatedly wander outside the window railway embankment, Sarayu bridge, mail train and the open space of the school is more alive for him.(Narayan 4)6. For him, asthmatic is not a discover even become a humiliation. (Narayan 4). Pinching of teacher, throw the notebook and condemning remark present school's harsh discipline. (Narayan 4) This section of the play prove that colonial schooling control the child's body while, the mind seeks escape. (Narayan 4).

Narayan presents the classroom as a boredom surveillance and repression. The student physically present in the classroom but wander outside mentally. It present the limitation of schools when there is no space for imagination, their learning become burden.

3. Learning and imagination.

History class of D, Pilli bring a different energy, his story telling make Vasco digama, Clive and hasting alive for the boys.(Narayan 5) It proved that Narayan did not against the learning, even he against the learning of that kind which end the imagination. History become meaningful when it reached the students mind as a experience, not as dry information.(Narayan 5). This contrast is important for pedogically. There is one side is mechanical schooling, and the other side is living teaching. Through D Pillai. Narayan described that child learning is more connected with narrative, drama and curiosity. That's why novel criticised the school, not the knowledge.

4. Scripture, religion and colonial pressure.

Albert mission school is like a missionary atmosphere Institution Mr Ebenezer become the religious aggression face in the school system.(Narayan 5) Swami's anger is child like but culturally rooted.(Narayan 6). He resists because his in hearted religious world feels insulted. Father's later become the register of family, dignity, religious and sensitivity in front of school authority. (Narayan 6).

This section explains that colonial schooling is not only academic, even ideological. Also, there is the pressure of religious and culture level. Swami did not given the mature argument despite his reaction is authentic . For a child, faith is not a abstract debate for him. It's a lived inheritance.

5. Friendship as counter school.

The real education of swami after his school between his friends, his friends, Somu, Mani, Sankar, Samuel the pea and Rajam shape his world. Each friend teaches him a different value. Approval, seriousness, violence and doubt or status. Friendship work here as a counter school Rajam, polished, English and privileged background given the hint of colonial harchery. (Narayan 4).

6. Home, grandmother and emotional education.

Swami's grandmother is a domestic warmth and the world of oral memory. Her stories, lap and affection is more different than the strict rule of school. (Narayan 26). Harish Chandra's stories present the moral education and soft form. (Narayan 23). Swami sleep in the stories of grandmother shows that limitation of his childhood, the home offers emotional shelter even when it does not prove formal knowledge. (Narayan 21, 23). The contrast of home school is imported. School is the world of discipline, schedule and punishment but the grandmother is the affection memory and continuity.

7. Social shame and comparison.

In front of Rajam Swamy felt embarrassed for his room and domestic life. He borrows his father's room to look grand. (Narayan 36) this scene shows that children of colonial schooling become conscious about their status. Swami look himself for the eyes of others, innocent childhood also affected by the social performance. (Narayan 36). Besides being subtle, this scene is most powerful. Here we can see the class comparison and self-consciousness as well. English, furniture, room and family background everything become the identity of makers. In this way, schooling, given not just knowledge, even it's given shame and aspirations also.

8. Examination and anxiety.

In the examination time, all household become nervous Father Granny, Sleep, play and daily rhythm, everything under the control of study. (Narayan 51). Exam culture converts the children in anxious calculator mani's, given the brinjal to the school Clark bring the absurdity system in front. (Narayan 52). Stationary list of swami shows that modern school culture and expensive driven education system. Here, examination not and reach the learning it institutionalise anxiety. Students more than worry about their result rather than knowledge. Narayan presents the whole process

in a humorous manner, but there is a deep critic within humour colonial school system makes the visible pressure on the psychology.

9. Freedom after exam

After the exam, boys energy come out. They compare answers, lie, shout and feel relaxed. (Narayan 65). The destruction of ink bottle, pans and stationery is the symbolic reaction against the school discipline. (Narayan 66). This is not political revolution, but child energy under pressure. Narayan shows here that the excessive control becomes the disorder. (Narayan 65-66). Holiday bring the relief, but it's not a order relief. Children become explosive. It's made clear that the concentrate press from the long time. This scene makes the childhood psychology comic yet critical understanding.

10. Political protest and colonial confusion

The protest of 15 august 1930 combine the school life with colonial protest. (Narayan 93). Swami and Mani did not understand the speech. For them Politics first a excitement not a ideology. (Narayan 93). "Bharat Mata ki jai "some kind slogans convert the school space into the political space. (Narayan 97). The scene of broken pan shows the mixture of childish, mischief and anti colonial emotions. (Narayan 98). Narayan did not force the child consciousness in a adult nationalism language. He shows how a child absorbs the political atmosphere through noise, crowd movement and thrill. This realism makes the novel powerful political protest here become more complex due to child perception.

11. Punishment, rebellion and transfer.

The cane of headmaster highlights the violent form of school authority. (Narayan 105). "I don't care your dirty school." The clear rejection moment of swami (Narayan 106). This is a child protest against their humiliation, not a political statement. Left the Albert mission school for Board High school is not a system change, but a system continuity. (Narayan 107). The oppressive structure level of school never changed itself. (Narayan 107). In novel, we see the limitation of rebellion. Swami revolt, but institution observe him into a institution. Here, we find the continuity of colonial modernity. Form has been changed, but discipline survive continue.

12. Board high school and the loss of leisure.

The work load enhanced in the board high school Narayan state that there is a" little scope for leisure" for boys. (Narayan 122). Force swami cricket become a field of

freedom and identity. (Narayan 129). School timing and head master's rigidity limit the freedom. (Narayan 135). Swami pretends the illness escape from the punishment of school control. (Narayan 140). Loss of the lazure is the Central insight of the paper 4 children. The precious thing is free time and that is snatched by the school Cricket here is not a play, but a alternative salfood. Outside the academic system, swami feel more alive.

13. Escape, return and loss.

After the threaten of severe cannings, Swami ran. (Narayan 143.) His fantasy is large but directionless. His father's worry and family distress. Show the schooling wider emotions cost. (Narayan 151). When he came back, but he was not same. After Rajam the last separation saw the end of childhood. Ending of the novel left the novel on a tender and painful note, the journey of swami, not even show the school trouble, but a journey of emotional maturation, escape, return, guilt and separation, all them take the childhood in a darken awareness, Narayan, make this transition in a quietly and effective way.

14. Findings

The biggest finding of novel is that childhood compressed in the school, but it's not an end. Swami repeatedly hit to the discipline. But after all, he has a enough imagination more than the field of education colonial school becomes the control of mechanism, friendship, grandmother, Cricket and play or river are the other alternative space of childhood freedom. Ending of the novel is shown that schooling is not only the academic development but a emotional formation also. (Narayan 174). The other finding of the novel is that Narayan present the child psychology without moral judgement. He gave importance of swami's everything, his foolishness, shame and his courage. This balance treatment become the novel, literary strength. That's why Narayan take important place in the Indian writing in English.

15 Conclusion

“Swami and friend “show the childhood against school discipline as a live and sensitive matter. For Narayan education, not only the books exam and punishment. This is a power which shape the child inner life. That's why this novel is the critic of colonial schooling and a guard of childhood narrative. The final emotional truth of the novel is that school shapes the boy, but it cannot fully erase his inner freedom. (Narayan 174).

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