Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences
Department of English Language and Literature
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CHARACTERS SEEKING LIBERATION IN R. K. NARAYAN'S *SWAMI AND FRIENDS, THE BACHELOR OF ARTS* AND *THE ENGLISH TEACHER*

Sinem SAATLI

Master's Thesis

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KABUL VE ONAY

Sinem SAATLI tarafından hazırlanan "Characters Seeking Liberation in R. K. Narayan's *Swami and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher*" başlıklı bu çalışma, 18 Eylül 2015 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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ÖZET

SAATLI, Sinem. R. K. Narayan'ın *Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts* ve *The English Teacher* Adlı Romanlarındaki Karakterlerin Özgürleşme Arayışı. Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2015.

R. K. Narayan (1906-2001), çoğu eserinin geçtiği yer olan kurgusal kasaba Malgudi'yi tipik bir Güney Hindistan kasabası olarak tasvir eder. Malgudi, Hindistan'ın küçük bir kopyası olduğu için Narayan, Hindistan'ın İngilizler tarafından sömürgeleştirilmesine ve bunun Hint toplumuna etkisi hakkındaki yorumunu Malgudi ve Malgudi'de yaşayanlar aracılığıyla yapmıştır. Çağdaşlarının aksine, Narayan sömürgeleşmeye karşı kışkırtıcı veya isyankâr bir tutum takınmaz. Narayan'ın İngiliz karşıtı bir söylem içinde bulunarak sömürgeleşmeye karşı çıkan diğer yazarlardan farkı, İngiliz karşıtlığı yerine Hindistan'ın kendi kimliğine, tarihine ve kültürüne odaklanmasıdır. Narayan'ın kendi kültürüne güçlü bir şekilde bağlı olması ve Gandhi gibi kavgacı olmayan bir tutum sergilemesi, Malgudi'yi Hint gelenekselliğinin ve muhafazakârlığının somutlaşmış şekline dönüştürür. Narayan'ın sömürgeciliğe karşı sakin ve mesafeli duruşunu devam ettirmesinde en önemli etken anlatımında mizah ve hiciv kullanmasıdır. Sömürgeleşme sonucunda ortaya çıkan hem bireysel hem de toplumsal problemleri ve tuhaf durumları mizahi bir dille eleştirir. Narayan'ın üçlemesi olarak da bilinen *Swami and Friends* (1935), *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937) ve *The English Teacher* (1945) Malgudi'yi, bir çocuğun, bir üniversite öğrencisinin ve bir yetişkinin gözünden ayrıntılı bir şekilde tasvir eder. Narayan üçlemesinde sömürgeciliğe karşı tutumunu bağımsızlaşma ve kaostan uzak durma, Hintlilik ve geleneksellik ve Hintliliğe sarılarak kurtuluşa erme temalarını tekrar tekrar kullanarak sergiler. Narayan'ın üçlemesinde tekrar tekrar kullandığı temalar bağlamında yapılan bu çalışmada varılan sonuç şudur ki; Narayan, Malgudi'nin bağımsızlaşma olasılığına inanır ve bununla birlikte Hindistan'ın bağımsızlaşmasının ancak Hint değerlerine sarılması ile gerçekleşeceğini öne sürer.

Anahtar Sözcükler: R. K. Narayan, *Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts, The English Teacher,* Malgudi, Hindistan'ın bağımsızlaşması.

ABSTRACT

SAATLI, Sinem. Characters Seeking Liberation in R. K. Narayan's S*wami and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher*. Master's Thesis. Ankara, 2015.

R. K. Narayan (1906-2001) depicts the fictional town of Malgudi, in which he sets most of his works, as a typical South Indian town. Since Malgudi is formed as the microcosm of India, it was through Malgudi and Malgudians that Narayan made his comments on the British colonisation of India and its effects on the Indian society. Contrary to his contemporaries, Narayan does not display a provoking or rebellious attitude towards colonialism. Narayan's difference from the other writers who react against colonialism by employing an anti-British discourse is that he focuses on India's own identity, history, and culture instead. Narayan's strong attachment to his own cultural values and his rejection, like Gandhi, of an aggressive attitude shapes Malgudi as the embodiment of Indian traditionalism and conservatism. The most significant effect in Narayan's maintaining a calm and detached position in his response to colonialism is his use of humour and irony in his narration. He criticises both the individual and social problems and unusual situations which emerge after the colonial process in India in a comic way. Known as the Narayan's trilogy; *Swami and Friends* (1935), *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937) and *The English Teacher* (1945) represent Malgudi comprehensively; from the eyes of a child, a college student and an adult. Narayan in his trilogy displays his attitude towards colonialism by repeatedly dealing with the themes of decolonisation and detachment from chaos, Indianness and traditionalism, and reaching liberation by embracing Indianness. The overall conclusion drawn from the study of Narayan's trilogy in terms of these recurrent themes is that, he believed in the prospect of decolonisation in Malgudi, but he also suggested that India's independence it can only be achieved by embracing indigenous Indian values.

Key Words: R. K. Narayan, *Swami and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts*, *The English Teacher*, Malgudi, decolonisation of India.

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INTRODUCTION

R. K. Narayan (Rasipuram Krishnaswami Narayanaswami, 1906-2001), who is considered one of the founding fathers of Indian-English literature, began his literary career in a period when India was a British colony. He produced many novels and short stories set in the fictional town of Malgudi, which can be considered the microcosm of India. Although Malgudi is a fictional place, nothing seems to be fictional in this town. In other words, through his novels and short stories set in Malgudi, Narayan portrayed the real Indian experience and the texture of Indian culture and created an authentic Indian context. Nonetheless, he has been the subject of much criticism on the grounds of choosing English as his literary language and for not displaying a clear and explicit reaction to the British colonial occupation of India. For instance, Radhika Mohanram criticises Narayan by stating that the author's fictional town, "Malgudi undergoes no violent anti-colonial catharsis" (100). Similarly, Robert Ross complains about Narayan's unpretentious attitude towards political subjects as he states "politics especially radical politics figure very little in his work" (89). Also Amar N. Dwivedi criticises Narayan's novels claiming that they possess a "general lack of social, political and even existential awareness and urgent emotional involvement" (182). On exactly the very ground that Narayan depicted the texture of Indian culture and the social realities of the country through Malgudi, the assumption that he was insensitive and non-responsive to British colonialism in India becomes questionable. Producing his earliest works from within and into a historical and political context in which India's independence was imminent, Narayan seems to have communicated with this bloodless struggle for independence, memorable for Mahatma Ghandi's "passive resistance," in an appropriately non-aggressive manner. It may be argued that instead of explicitly attacking what was British in his works, Narayan vividly portrayed what was Indian as his peculiar – but contextually familiar – way of "passive resistance." In like manner, William Walsh summarises Narayan's attitude in his novels by explaining that "[t]he procedure in Narayan's novels is almost invariably a renovation or reforming of events, which is never, however, total enough to be revolutionary but sufficient to make a new bend in the flow of continuity" (*R. K. Narayan* 5). It seems that Narayan made this

"new bend" by responding to British colonisation, which is an aspect of the real life experience in India, in his own way; that is, by creating the fictional setting of Malgudi and exploring the real life experiences in this space, and also by using humour and irony in his writing. Moreover, Narayan's portrayal and exploration of ordinary life in colonised India revolve around certain overarching common themes that are observed in his works: decolonisation and detachment from chaos, Indianness and traditionalism, and reaching liberation by embracing Indiannes. Therefore, this study aims to scrutinise Narayan's uses of the fictional town of Malgudi in his trilogy consisting of *Swami and Friends* (1935), *The Bachelor of Arts* (1938) and *The English Teacher* (1945) in the context of an analysis of Narayan's response to British colonisation that will be undertaken through examining the dominating themes in his works. The main discussion will be based on the argument that Narayan's dealing with these themes, which place a particular value and emphasis on the indigenous Indian identity, in the fictional setting of Malgudi was how he responded to British colonisation.

The locale of Malgudi as a small South-Indian town enables Narayan to successfully portray the ordinary experiences of ordinary Indian people in vivid detail. Accordingly, Narayan achieves to create familiarity with the ordinary life in Malgudi on the part of his readers by depicting places which could be seen across India, such as a railway station, a river, a high school, a college or crowded streets. Furthermore, as Amisha Garg states, in order to increase the tone of Indianness, Narayan's writing "quietly and unpretentiously" embodies "a sustaining theme of Hinduism" (215). Also he "has used extensively the symbols like temple, river, village, hills, caves, snakes, dance, fire, milk, lotus, tree etc. to present an authentic picture of India" (Garg 215). Narayan's centralisation of ordinary Indianness as such has also resulted in his preserving the position of an observer, which in turn made him "the most authentic 'stylist' of Indian writers as he presents the people as they are without any personal bias" (Trimurthy 426).

With reference to the role Malgudi plays in reflecting Narayan's constant preoccupation with the locale and this locale's ability to represent ordinary Indian life, it may be argued that Malgudi is a very important, if not the most important, feature of Narayan's fiction. Therefore, before an overview on the historical facts that affected both

Narayan's selection of the subjects for his fiction and his literary career, it is necessary to provide a more comprehensive outlook on Malgudi. The power of Narayan's Malgudi in terms of representing India was such that James Fennely even drew a map of this fictional town in 1978 and the map is presented in Charles Nicholl's article (see Figure 1), in which it is given with the title of "The City of Malgudi as an Expression of the Ordered Hindu Cosmos" (Nicholl):

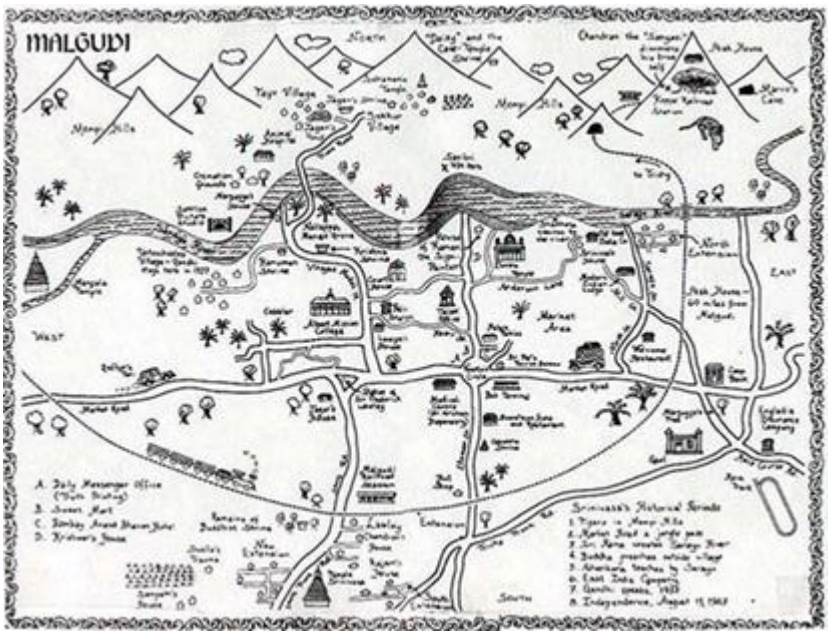

Figure 1: Malgudi representing the Hindu cosmos (Nicholl)

After examining the details of the common places of most of Narayan's Malgudi novels, Nicholl also gives a detailed analysis of the map as follows:

> An old-fashioned pictorial map shows the small south Indian town of Malgudi as it would have looked some time before independence. There is the Albert Mission College, the Ishwara temple, the Welcome restaurant, a cinema called the Palace Talkies. Walking west along Market Road you would pass Dr Pal's Tourist Bureau, and the local offices of the Madras Daily Messenger, and then the statue of a former British governor, Sir Frederick Lawley, after whom the Lawley Extension housing-project is named. To the north the town is bounded by the Sarayu river, near which can be found the Untouchables' village, where Gandhi stayed on a visit to Malgudi in 1937, and the Sunrise Picture Studios, where Mr Sampath the printer made an ill-fated venture into the film industry. Beyond the river rise the Mempi Hills, with tigers and bamboo forests and hidden temple-caves. (Nicholl)

As can be deduced from its comprehensive depiction above, Malgudi is no less than a typical Indian town. In creating Malgudi, Narayan drew his "raw material" from Mysore

where he grew up ("The Road to Malgudi"). Narayan was "a small towner at heart" because Mysore was "a royal city, full of stately buildings, but not really like a city – a little town" ("The Road to Malgudi"). Notwithstanding the fact that no real Indian town with the name Malgudi has ever existed, according to one source, the name of this fictional town may have been derived from the names of two old towns in the Bengaluru region: MAL-leshwaram and Basavan-GUDI ("The Road to Malgudi"). In this sense, that the name of Malgudi is formed by the hybridisation of the two real Indian towns, suggests that Malgudi is not an entirely fictitious space, but a version of real India as perceived and represented by Narayan. Moreover, Narayan created his Malgudi during the British colonial rule in India and because of this his fiction is also affected by this particular historical context. As evidences of the intrusion of context into Narayan's novels, in the society of Malgudi, there are Indian and British characters, Indian public schools and British missionary schools, Hindu temples and churches, or *sanyasis* and British or Anglo-Indian businessmen, all of which are portrayed as parts of the picture of a typical day in colonised India. Nonetheless, colonialism in India is treated as only one of the colours in this picture or as a necessary aspect to portray the daily reality in Malgudian society. The impact of colonialism in India is by no means a definitive element of the life in Malgudi, and thus does not cause violent crises, radical reaction or transformative change. Accordingly, Malgudi does not represent a chaotic atmosphere, but it has a tendency to stay as it is:

> The special feature of the fictional setting of Malgudi Locale is its reluctance for gradual changes. Life here moves at slow pace. It is completely undisturbed by the outside world and it specially remains the same. Here are the people who believed in strongly-rooted traditions and old-age customs. This makes them to look upon any new idea with suspicion and distrust. (Dave 89)

That is to say, the reality in Malgudi, and therefore in India, are much larger than the transitory phenomenon of British colonisation. In his own relationship with this reality as reflected in his fiction, Narayan seems always to have stayed in the position of an observer. With regard to this point, R. Jothilakshmi maintains that Narayan's detachment as a social observer can be explained as an effect of his firm allegiance to his own culture:

> Though he maintains objective detachment from his themes and characters, a close scrutiny reveals his Indianness: and even detachment is an essentially Indian quality […] It appears that Narayan believes that society is not man-made by

> choice: it is a part of the universal order. Therefore if one wants to appreciate his work, one must understand his view of man's life relation to the cyclical universal order and his attachment to the wheel of existence . . . . (6)

Beside this implied homogeneity of Indian life in theme, in Narayan's writing the social reality is "extensively and minutely described" (Dave 89). More importantly, however, the distinctiveness of Narayan's style owes itself to the author's use of irony and humour. This particular style employed by Narayan also sets him apart from his contemporaries such as Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004) and Raja Rao (1908-2006). As J. K. Dave states, Narayan's novels are "light in their approach to life" and they "do not claim to stir deep human emotions or reach tragic heights as the novels of Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao do" (90). Accordingly, Narayan's tendency to repeatedly present what is commonplace or what is exactly the same across all India leads him to consciously weave irony and humour into the plots of his novels. His using of irony and humour also results in his being detached from the chaotic situations and events in Malgudi. As Pushp Lata puts forward, Narayan's detachment from chaos and politics differs him from his contemporaries: "This authenticity and realistic narration actually come from his objective and detached spirit with which he writes. Undoubtedly a great deal of his effect depends precisely on the unhurried pace, then even tone and world of irony" (206). C. Malathi considers this situation as his "great craft" and regards Narayan as "a master in irony writing" because "his ironies are not harsh, hurting, embarrassing instead acute, enjoyable and [they] elevate the story" (124). Likewise, Narayana Trimurthy states that "he is such a stylist that his style is filled with idiomatic expressions and naturalness. Thus his way of writing is delicate and elegant…With the help of agility of style, he poses into humorous, tragic, ironic and realistic portrayal of life" (429).

As one more feature of Narayan's work which makes him different from the other Indian-English writers of his age, one should also acknowledge the ways in which he creates his characters and his India as immersed in Indianness. For instance, unlike the fictional characters in the works of his contemporaries, Narayan's protagonists and characters are rooted and nurtured in the Indian ethics and philosophy and because of this situation he has an "unflinchingly traditional outlook" (Gerow 17). Also as Garg points out, both Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao have used cultural symbols like swamis, snakes or beggars; however, "they were mainly to present a handy guide to the tourists

of India" (216). What Narayan achieved was to use these symbols "for the depiction of genuine India" (Garg 216) by creating a continuous setting which becomes familiar to his readers. In the 1930s and 1940s, the works of literature in India were mainly about the search for identity, isolation in culture, and the individual's place in society and customs (Constable 154). Accordingly, Mulk Raj Anand's writing, for instance, was more political and more nationalistic than those of Rao's and Narayan's. Anand belongs to "the superior caste" and his famous works are "*Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936), *Two Leaves and A Bud* (1937) and *The Village* (1939);" and Raja Rao who received a "European education" produced "*Kanthapura* (1938), *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960) and *The Cat and Shakespeare*" (1965) (Dass 7). As Mary Beatina states, Anand has a Marxist standpoint and he is passionately committed to social, economic and political relationships in colonial India, especially to "social awareness" (10). Rao is complex in thought and style, however, he deals with the "mysterious oriental" (Beatina 10). Nevertheless, as stated before, Narayan is different from them in his writing style and in terms of the Indian themes he deals with. As D. A. Shankar states, "[t]here is hardly ever anything that is unreal about India that he presents in his fiction" (49). His style is praised in the Western world, for instance in *The New Yorker*, as follows:

> Narayan's novels break most meaningfully with those of the West and establish their own tradition. Their significance derives less from the mere fact of being some of the first important Indian fiction in English than from being the first English writing to infuse the novel with an Eastern existential perspective. (Mason "The Master of Malgudi")

What is also prominent in Narayan's style is that he mingles the mundane and the transcendent in the characters he creates. Beatina states that "[t]he integration of the spiritual and the practical is not a discovery of Narayan, but is the very culture and tradition of this [Indian] nation," (1) which can be read as evidence that Narayan wrote about the essence of Indian culture.

On account of providing a comprehensive analysis of British colonialism in and its effects on India by the middle of the twentieth century, it is necessary to provide a general overview on the history of the invasions of India and its eventual subjection to British supremacy. As Peter Robb states, throughout history India became the home of a variety of civilisations ranging from "West Asian Islam to Christianity besides the indigenous Hindu civilisation;" also the structure of the country was different in terms

of "regions and classes" (2). The Indus Valley Civilisation (2500-1750 BC) was "the first civilisation to appear in Indian lands" (Robb 5). Through the Persians and the Greeks, the Westernised name of 'India' was derived from "the great river Indus" (Watson 11) and then the Indus civilisation "was succeeded by the Aryans around 1500 BC" (Watson 30). Sinharaja Tammita Delgoda states that "Aryan civilisation (1500-334 BC) has left two great epic poems, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*," which contributed significantly to the development of a mature literary tradition in India, and as well as "the *Vedas* that is a collection of hymns, poems, prayers and instructions which are preserved unchanged to this day" (33-34). With reference to these important works of literature, it can be maintained that the roots of Indian literature, philosophy and customs that Narayan valued greatly "date back to the Aryan period" (Delgoda 35). As John Mcleod relates, this civilization began to be threatened during the reign of the great Mughal emperor Jahangir when powerful European merchant companies such as "the English East India Company (1600), the Dutch East India Company (1602), and the French East India Company (1604)" arrived in India and started to trade with the Mughal Empire (50). They also began to build "trading posts or factories" from which they exported goods to "Europe, the Far East, and America" (McLeod 64-65). The prospects of trade were not the only reason for the European interest in India. As K. Nayar Pramod points out, "India was always central to European 'fantasy' and imagining of the other or new worlds" (2), a point which is very significant in the context of the cultural interactions of the Europeans with India. For instance, the existence of an Indian-English literature, in which the works analysed in this study are placed, is one major consequence of such an interest.

The arrival of the Europeans in India is of great importance in Indian history. As M. B. Chande states, Vasco Da Gama started an expedition crossing the "Cape of Good Hope in 1497 and reached Calicut in India in 1498" (225). In 1501 Vasco Da Gama came to India again and "founded a factory in Calicut," which caused a conflict with the Arabs. After that, missionary activities started to spread by "a forceful conversion of the Indians into Christianity by the Portuguese" (Chande 226). However, the Portuguese dominance in India was soon challenged "by the Dutch and the English and after the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588," the British desired to develop the trade with India (227). So, "in 1600 Queen Elizabeth granted a charter to the English East India

Company" for trade rights and privileges from India to continents of Asia, Africa and America (229). Philip Lawson states that there were three reasons why the British decided to go to the East: the first reason was that trading with the East was "a new material opportunity" for many British merchants (7); the second reason was the ambition of "the mariners for exploring new lands" and finding new trading routes and the third reason was "the decline of the Portuguese power in the East" which gave the British more opportunities to freely operate in the region (8). However, between 1580 and 1689 the power of the Dutch navies in the East was especially challenging to the British presence in the East Indies (9). Therefore, the merchants in London and their political allies decided to take collective action to meet the Dutch in the region. They suggested forming a new trading company to the East Indies and "established a chartered company" called "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London, Trading into the East- Indies" (17). So, as Brian Gardner explains, having successful results from the trade with the East, "the first English East India Company ship arrived at Surat in 1608" (32); however, the Portuguese were dominant at the trading centre there and for this reason "the English ships set off to Agra," the capital of the Mughal Empire (32-33). The British had good relations with the Mughal Emperor, Jahangir in Agra and shortly afterwards "the Mughals helped the British to strengthen their trading power in India" (Gardner 36). Consequently, the British started to set up factories at "Ahmetabad, Burhanpur, Ajmer and Agra" (Edwardes 15). As the company became richer, the company men began to claim lands and rights from the East India Company. Gardner comments on the strength of the East India Company in India as follows:

> …in 1689 the East India Company issued a formal declaration of intent in India. It declared that the Company 'must make us a nation in India. Without that we are but a great number of interlopers, united by his Majesty's royal charter, fit only to trade where nobody of power thinks it their interest to prevent us'. It was a significant declaration, for it revised the aims of the founders, which had been purely commercial: it foreshadowed the era, not of merchants but of administrators. But the purpose of the whole operation was still trade, and trade alone. (44)

Also, the local administrators in India had difficulties in coping with this policy of foreign traders because the Europeans were organised and the European market in India was becoming popular. In explanation of this issue, Robb states that

> [t]he Europeans gained against local and land-based long-distance traders because of their command of the seas, their enhanced ability to navigate, and their use of

> armed, purpose-built sailing ships manned by experienced captains and crews. They also benefited from privileged or monopoly access to the growing markets of north-western Europe, and from being able to raise capital in European exchanges. They ran their affairs as organized companies under greater or lesser state regulation, while still spreading the risks by operating mainly through semi-independent contractors. The European settlements in India grew into small city-states, extending their influence to producers who were dispersed over much of the country. (99)

In 1717 the East India Company "received privilege of free trade and free coinage in Bengal" by the Great Mughal; however, after the fall of the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century, "the nawab of Bengal attacked the British factories in Bengal" (Dunbar 353). Robert Clive, who had the position of governor general in the East India Company in 1765, got into a war against the Indians and "captured Bengal in the Battle of Plassey" (Kulke 217), which can be considered as "a success for starting the British colonisation in India" (213), and thereby "altered the role of English presence in India" (Pramod 73). Afterwards, the British obtained the political control of "Bengal and Bihar" (Banerjee 6). The East India Company became stronger by the help of Mughals and its effects spread to a wide area as stated below:

> Its [East India Company's] trading establishments in Asia stretched from the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea to the Indian sub-continent and thence across the Bay of Bengal to the straits of Malacca and the China seas. In India the Company possessed three main trading settlements, Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, with half a dozen subordinate factories belonging to each area either in the upcountry or up and down the coastline. […] The Asian settlements and factories supplied the Company with a wide range of trading commodities [….] (Tuck 89)

As P. J. Marshall relates, "by 1784 Britain won a powerful dominance in the Indian Empire" in both formal and informal terms (28). In fact, the British were not concerned with "introducing new technologies or developing new products for the European market," because selling British manufactured goods to the colonies was considered a "better and more profitable policy" (28). Neither the British Government nor the Court of Directors of the East India Company "wanted to use force" in commercial issues (31). As Marshall further explains:

> British attitudes were in fact a strange mixture of the new and old. Government and Company at home viewed India in a way that was to be characteristic of British policy in many parts of the world in the nineteenth century: they wished to maintain an 'open door' and free competition in which British commercial expertise would prevail. (43)

British government's enlarged authority in India, as Harold Schultz relates, caused the Indians to react against the system and the *sepoys* in the Bengal army started a local rebellion which was named as the "Rebellion of 1857" or "the Indian Mutiny" (266). East India Company's aim to "annexe India and expand the control in the lands" and also the discrimination in the employment of the Indians in society were what triggered the revolt (267). Apart from "the dissatisfaction with the payment" and procedures of promotion, there was "another reason" for the *sepoys* to start the revolt, which was basically a religious one:

> The annexation of Oudh [princely state of British India] unsettled the high-caste sepoys from that province, who formed one-third of the Bengal Army. And, as the proximate cause, there was the new Lee Enfield rifle, whose use required soldiers to bite off the end of each cartridge – widely reputed to have been greased with pig or cow fat, polluting to both Hindus and Muslims. When sepoys refused to load the rifles, they were publicly humiliated, even expelled from the service. (Metcalf 101)

On May 1857, Barbara D. Metcalf relates, the *sepoys* posted to north India, especially to Meerut started a revolt after they realised that "eighty five of their colleagues were chained and as a response the *sepoys* massacred the British residents of the town" (101). The *sepoys* marched on Delhi and the British lost control over north India. "Landlords, peasants, princes, merchants took up arms" (101) for their own reasons. However, the soldiers in the Punjap Army "felt no sympathy for the revolt" because they were previously "defeated by the Bengal Army" (101). Madras Army and Bombay Army also remained inactive. In Bengal, Bengali intelligentsia who had Western education and Bengal's *zamindars*, who were Indian counterparts of lords and barons in the European feudal system, "secured their prosperity" (101). The rebellion was suppressed but "the rule of India passed from the East India Company to the British Government," to Queen Victoria with the "India Act of 1858" (Schultz 267), marking the beginning of the British Raj. Therefore, it may be claimed that the Indian Mutiny was a turning point for the Indian-British relationships in the history of India. However, "it did not reach a successful conclusion" from the Indian perspective, because "there was no unifying ideology of any kind" and it was not a "modern, nationalist protest" (Metcalf 101). At the end of the 1850s, Burton Stein relates that as the East India Company achieved the modernisation of Indian industrial technology, "namely jute mills, cotton mills and iron mills" and consequently, the industrial output of India during the First World War "was sufficient to meet the imperial military requirements" in Asia (312). Also, Indian

intellectuals were affected by the themes of revolt and freedom prevalent in Western literature, which stirred the national consciousness in India and the British responded to this demand by "placing a minority of elected Indians" to the legislative councils by the "Council Acts of 1894" (Schultz 298).

As Stanley Wolpert relates, when the First World War broke out in 1914, "India was notified to be at war on the side of the British Empire" (289). Indian National Congress leaders believed that "British victory would bring freedom to India" and they supported the British Empire for the sake of themselves (289). The Indian engagement in the war was so strong that, in Metcalf's words, "[o]ver a million Indians recruited to the army, serving in France and especially the Middle East" (163). The promise of self-government in World War I was to be achieved by the Government of India Act of 1919. Stein states that, Edwin Montagu, the secretary of state for India and the viceroy Lord Chelmsford, suggested in "Montague-Chelmsford Reforms" that Indians would take more part in the administration and this responsible government of India was a "form of limited representative democracy of the British in India" (289). As Robb explains, 1919 Montague-Chelmsford Reforms "took the first explicit steps towards Indian self-government" (154). The central constitution was "diarchy" and the responsibility in some areas such as "education, health and agriculture" were devolved to provincial legislatures while more important matters like "law, order and revenue" were reserved for the central imperial authority (Stein 303). Furthermore, Vincent A. Smith states that, the "Government of India Act" was considered to be the "beginning of parliamentary government" in India (365). However, the reform did not gratify the Indians because of the restrictions in social and political life. Wolpert explains this particular context as follows:

> All Indians, whatever their religious, caste or regional origins may have been, were immediately conscious of the 'foreign' character of the white Christian *sahibs* who ruled their land…from an imperial base thousands of miles away. Their influx missionaries, the funding of English education, the opening of India to private trade, and the continuing process of British unification and modernization, served only to intensify Indian perceptions of their 'native' differences, cultural, socioeconomic and political, from the officials who ran the Company Raj. (250)

In 1919, Metcalf relates, the Rowlatt Acts authorised the government to "imprison any person who lives in the Raj suspected of terrorism" (169). In other words, the imperial

authority gained the power to interfere with and preempt against any kind of revolutionary activities in India. As a response to this authoritarianism, the Indians started a "*hartal*," that is the word for "strike" in one of the Indian languages, which caused the government to introduce "martial law in some parts of India" (169). The protests were so dramatically suppressed that in Amritsar "three hundred seventy people" were killed and "a thousand of them" were wounded by the British troops and accordingly his incident was named as the "Amritsar Massacre" in Indian colonial history and it became "a symbol for colonial injustice, remembered in speech, song and drama" (169).

As a reaction to this situation, the "Non Co-operation Movement" (1920-1922) was started by Mahatma Gandhi and this movement aimed at making the people refuse some regulations of the government by "leaving the schools, not going to the law courts, refusing to vote, not taking government service and boycotting English goods" (Kulke 267). In 1928, the British Government declared that a commission would be formed to examine the results of the reforms, mainly the reforms of Montagu-Chelmsford (Metcalf 190). As Metcalf explains, pioneered by Sir John Simon, after making comprehensive studies in India, the commission stated that "Indians were incapable of deciding their own fate, they were still children who needed all-knowing parents to legislate for them" (190). As a reaction to "Simon's Report," the second non-cooperation movement was started in 1930 which was also known as "Civil Disobedience" (190). Then, as a reaction to the Salt Tax which was in effect at the time, Gandhi and his followers began a "Salt March" in 1930 and they also started boycotts of foreign clothes as a defiance of British existence in India (192). The Salt March made Gandhi not only "a national hero," but also "a universally famous person" and his ideas started to spread throughout the world (191). Moreover, the "Great Depression" of the 1930s which had global consequences "also affected the Indian society" and most of the people "supported the revolts" in order to protest about their economic situations (192).

Later, in March 1931, "Gandhi-Irwin Pact" was signed to "end the Civil Disobedience" in India (Stein 326). However, V. Smith states that the "British Government was determined to leave no stone unturned in order to arrive at a settlement" and the Indian leaders from political parties were invited to attend the "Round Table Conferences in

London" in 1931 but they could not achieve an agreement (371). In 1935, the "Government of India Bill" was passed by Parliament in London and this act "gave the country complete provincial autonomy" (372). Judith E. Walsh states that the act "ended the system of diarchy" and it was a provision for the establishment of a "Federation of India" (196). The act "continued British efforts to preserve their power over India's central government, even while ceding Indian provinces almost entirely to elected Indian control. It created a 'Federation of India' made up of eleven provinces, all the princely states, and a small number of territories" (J. Walsh 196). Nonetheless, the nature of British colonial rule in India was rapidly changing in these decades.

Finally, India was forced to take sides with Britain when the Second World War began in 1939. However, as J. Walsh explains, the Indian National Congress "offered cooperation in the war only on condition of the immediate sharing of power in India's central government" (199). The Indians started uprisings in some parts of India and accordingly the government immediately "imprisoned the major Congress leaders" (199). This problematic relationship between Britain and India was to last for another decade or so until India's independence.

So, one may observe that the "divide and rule" policy had been a safe watchword for a long time in the context of British imperialism in India. However, the British also found another strategic principle which is "divide and quit" before the decolonisation process (Kulke 300). Accordingly, Gandhi asked the British to "quit India" in 1942 when the British were not yet ready to put their "divide and quit" strategy in practice and in their own terms. Also, with the new Labour government in Britain, the British "took the war debts and the reconstruction of the country in consideration" and consequently decided to decolonise India (J. Walsh 200). Eventually, the "India Independence Act" was passed in Parliament on "1 July 1947" and India gained its political independence from Britain (Edwardes 164). In this thesis, that part of India's colonial history which is between 1935 and 1945 will be used as the contextual background of Narayan's trilogy of *Swami and Friends* (1935), *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937) and *The English Teacher* (1945), which is also meaningful because Narayan refers to some of the important historical events of this period in these novels. In fact, the British existence in India, the colonial encounter, and how various characters in Narayan's novels respond to

colonialism will be important points of reference when examining the major common themes in Narayan's trilogy.

A brief account of the characteristics of Indian-English literature, which is defined by Mukesh Williams as "a term which refers to the literary works written in English by Indian writers in India" (176), is also critical for an analysis of Narayan's *Swami and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher*. As a matter of fact, there is a variety of terms used in reference to the literature produced in or about India; therefore, they should be briefly explained at this point. First coined by E. F. Oaten in 1908, the term "Anglo-Indian Literature" means "the literary works written by the British writers who tell about India" (M. Williams 176). However, the term "Anglo-Indian" was later on broadened to include the writers of both England and India writing in English about Indian themes. Indian writings in English have been referred to as "Anglo-Indian," "Indo-Anglian," "Indo-British," "Indian-English" or "Indo-English;" however, the phrase "Indian-English literature" has gained wider usage among literary scholars (176). M. Williams also states that as for the Indian-English literature or "Indo-Anglian" literature – "Indo-Anglian" being a term "popularized by Srinivasa Iyenger in 1973" – it refers to the writings in English by Indian writers (176). Also, the concept of "Indo-British" includes the works of "pre-1947 and the vernaculars into English" (178). To clarify any possible confusion about the myriad of terms used in order to refer to literary works produced in, about and from India by Indian and non-Indian authors, it needs to be stated that the novels that will be engaged in this study are considered the works of Indian-English literature.

The first Indian writings in English, Rashid Hussian relates, "date back to Sake Dean Mahomet" who published his work "*Travels of Dean Mahomet*" in 1793 in England (29). The English language was first introduced "as an official language in India" by the "Charter Act of 1813" that had two immediate consequences, as Gauri Visvanathan states, "one was the assumption of a new responsibility toward native education, and the other was a relaxation of controls over missionary activity in India" (23). Later in time, as Aparna Dharwadker points out, by the issuing of the "English Education Act of 1835" the imposition of English language began, though not to change the language of literary production, but to be adopted in education and administration (89). That is to

say, with the Act, English became the "medium of instruction in Indian education" (Visvanathan 44). Macaulay's 1835 "Minute on Indian Education" refers to the subject of education in English and it expresses that the aim of English education was not to teach and educate the population, "but to create 'a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect" (Dharwadker 90). In political terms, the Act was aligned with the British divide and rule strategy because as Amar Acheraïou describes:

> [c]onsistent with the divide-and-rule scheme, each colonial system tended to assimilate a few socially and culturally acceptable natives into the imperial same, while disregarding the majority as radically Other or inassimilable. Building on these distinctions, the British…drew the native *elites* to the core of the empire, but cautiously kept their movements and ambition in check. (57)

However, this policy soon had resonances in Indian literary production as a marker of civilised progress, as well. Macaulay's ideas "link[ed] language, culture and race in thinking that only a British education c[ould] lift the Indians into light and progress" (Acheraïou 56). These ideas were supported by other similar assumptions based on the argument that the indigenous was the symbol of a "negative identity" and also that "Europeans were superior to Indians not only on religious and technological grounds, but also on linguistic and literary ones. The first could boast accomplished vernaculars and sophisticated written literatures while the second had merely crude languages and rudimentary oral cultures" (58). Therefore, English education and production in English began to be the points of conflict in the literary scene after the idea of rejection of colonial occupation spread throughout India. Consequently, there occured a conflict among the Indian writers and intellectuals especially about using English in Indian literature. The "Gandhian-nationalist" rejection of colonialism, in the 1920s and 1930s, also rejected the creation of literary works in English and they supported the literary production in Hindi or Bengali. However, some writers continued to use English because they thought that "English would not disappear after the decolonisation" (Dharwadker 92). In addition to the "Founding Fathers" of the Indian-English novel, namely Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R. K. Narayan (Dass 7), the other prominent novelists of Indian literature who produced their works in English include "V. S. Naipaul (UK), Toru Dutt, Kiran Desai, Jhumpa Lahiri (UK), Rabindranath Tagore,

Dhan Gopal Mukerji, Nirad C. Chaudri, Vikram Seth, Amitav Ghosh (US) and Arundhati Roy" who dealt with different aspects of colonialism and effects of imperialism in Indian culture (Pagidipalli 4).

The facts of Narayan's life are also important in understanding and exploring his works. Before he became a writer, Narayan was a typical middle-class Indian and lived as a boy in Madras for a long time with his grandmother, who clearly was an important model for Narayan's creation of the conservative Hindu woman type in his novels ("R. K. Narayan"). She is such a strong figure in Narayan's life that, in his memoirs titled *My Days* (1974), he explains how his grandmother "consulted the almanac and arranged the suitable day" for Narayan to begin writing his first novel (77). The contents of *My Days* seem to provide evidence about the way in which Narayan creates the characters of his novels from the real Indian society. It can also be observed that he sometimes mingles these characters with his own experiences. Later, Narayan was united with his parents in Mysore ("R. K. Narayan"). His father was a schoolmaster and therefore Narayan was "repeatedly exposed to the issues of education" from his early childhood (A. Smith viii). Narayan was born and brought up during the British Raj and therefore the British colonial establishment and its consequences affected his life in terms of "language, education, and sense of social order" (vii). He took his Bachelor of Arts degree from the Maharaja College and started to work as a teacher. However, he could not sustain his motivation to work as a teacher for long, so he finished his career soon afterwards. He decided to be a writer and he started to send his writings to the British newspapers and magazines published in India (x). Then, he met his future wife, Rajam whom he married in 1933. Although there were some "traditional obstacles in their horoscopes," they succeed in marrying and Narayan used his experience with the horoscopes in the marriage arrangement in his novel *The Bachelor of Arts* (x). Narayan "lost his wife due to typhoid in 1939" and he was so deeply affected by the death of Rajam that he "wrote about it in *The English Teacher*" (x). As A. Smith states Narayan won the "Sahitya Academy Award in 1958" for his novel, "*The Guide*" (xxviii) and The "Royal Society of Literature" honoured him by "AC Benson Medal in 1980" (xxxii) and his name was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature for several times. He was also presented to "the upper house of the Indian Parliament in 1989" (xxxviv). When he died in 2001, his greatest achievement was to make India accessible for the world literature.

Through his trilogy Narayan's progress in writing can also be observed. His first novel *Swami and Friends* was published in 1935 in Oxford "by the help of Graham Greene" as A. Smith states, and "his writing career formally started as a writer" in that year (vii). The novel is basically about boyhood and how schoolboys are affected by the colonial education and the social system in Malgudi. In other words, the fictional town of Malgudi is introduced to the reader by Narayan as early as his first novel. The implication of this is that Narayan must have been observing, reflecting and mentally creating Malgudi, or India, for a long time at the time of the writing of his first novel. Therefore, as the reader first reads about Malgudi, it evokes a sense of familiarity, because Narayan gives the details about the streets, important buildings and the general geographical information about Malgudi.

The Bachelor of Arts has a more serious narrative frame based on the college boy Chandran's experiences in his education life that reflect colonial impositions, his sufferings because of the dominance of a traditional attitude towards marriage in Indian society, and his reaching liberation after he is integrated to the Indian customs. The process of self-exploration, challenge and reconciliation, as a typical order in Narayan's fiction, are also revealed in the novel. Narayan's writing reaches maturity with *The English Teacher*, the last novel in the trilogy. The subject of the novel is again marriage; however, in this novel Narayan deals with supernatural elements and Indian traditionalism in increased density. The opposition to Western culture and hegemony in education by Krishna, a lecturer at Albert's Mission College, and also his reaching self-enlightenment through communicating with his dead wife, and by liberating and decolonising his soul from the imposed identities are important points related to the novel.

Before examining his trilogy in terms of colonial Malgudi and its portrayal in detail, it is also important to go through the writing career of Narayan beyond the trilogy. As Rosemary Marangoly George suggests, "*The Dark Room* which was published in 1938 as his third novel" chronologically, displays the theme of the "passive obedience of the woman" to her husband in the traditional Hindu marriage (121). In the novel, "the husband deceives his wife" (121) with a woman in his office and upon hearing her husband's deception Savitri attempts a suicide. However, in the end she returns to her

husband's house because she misses her children. Briefly, the traditional place of women in Hindu society is identified by the "customs and patriarchal domination" (121); therefore, Narayan uses the theme of marriage and freedom in this novel to show the patriarchal constraints in Hindu society.

Similar to the theme of the passive obedience of Indian women, another theme that Narayan deals with in his works is the domestic crisis in a typical Indian family that invites the reader to reflect upon the burden of the women in Indian tradition. Jawaid Ahmad Lone states that *Mr Sampath* (1949) is also an "example for female identity crisis" which deals with the experiences of Shanti, who is a widow with a son, her struggle for economic independence, her search for a career as a film actress in Malgudi, and her love affair with Mr Sampath (8). Exploring yet another thematic plane, Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955), as Dharwadker states, could be named as "Gandhi-novel" dealing with the decolonisation process of India and the silent resistance of Gandhi (101). The town of Malgudi experiences colonialism as a political and administrative structure but not as a transformative cultural force. In Malgudi, there is not any violent battle or resistance against colonialism, as it typically reflects Narayan's "distance" from direct and explicit engagement with politics (Dharwadker 101). Another work by Narayan, *The Guide* (1958) was based on the "conservative Malgudi society" and the experiences of a challenger, who is divided between the traditional and modern values (Constable 154). Raju, the protagonist, works as a tourist guide and he meets with a dancer, Rosie, with whom he falls in love. Raju feels alienated in society because of his affair with Rosie and he becomes a guide for the dancer in her business arrangements. Later, he is imprisoned and acts as a moral guide for the prisoners. When he is released from prison, he is mistaken for a *sanyasi*, and he becomes the spiritual guide in a village. His transformation "from a tour guide into a spiritual guide" is important in the sense that Raju's engagement in personal profit turns into self-negation for the benefit of others (Constable 154). As it is evident in *The Painter of Signs* (1976) the protagonists in Narayan's novels mostly experience the conflict between old and new India. As Shankar explains, having the ordinary "problem of caste in love affairs," Raman, who is a sign painter, falls in love with a customer, Daisy, who is "a liberated female character" dealing with birth control in India; and Raman experiences conflict with his aunt about his affair with Daisy (51). Also, in

Narayan's writing, the idea of choosing one's freedom and the pursuit of the truth are sometimes challenged by the corruption of Indian society as it can be observed in *The Financial Expert* (1952). It is an important novel in Narayan's writing career, because, as Brahma Dutta Sharma points out, Narayan's writing "gets its characteristic features" in his telling of "the places of Malgudi in detail" and the characters' being well-developed in this novel (148). In *The Financial Expert*, Margayya, who works as a banking guide for the illiterate Indian people, makes a fortune for himself by taking advantage of the illiteracy of the society. So, "the frustration of the peasants" and "rural poverty" are explored in the novel with the portrayal of colonial India (Sharma 148-149).

Moreover, *The Man Eater of Malgudi* (1961) is an example of a humour book by Narayan, which is based on the ironical relationship between a taxidermist called Vasu and a printer called Nataraj. H. Moore Williams states that the story turns into an "absurd comedy" in the end (6). In the novel, Vasu who is in search of huntable animals comes to Malgudi and meets with Nataraj. This extraordinary outsider disturbs both Nataraj and the public of Malgudi. He causes a chaos in Malgudi because he kills the pets of the citizens and the animals in the wild. In the end Vasu "the man eater" is killed by a fly which is ironically tragicomic (H.Williams 13). *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), based again on a real-life relationship of a father and a son, presents the cultural clash between generations. Ganeswar Mishra states that in this novel, as the owner of the sweet shop, Jagan tries to live "as a traditional Indian man caring for the cultural values;" however, his son shows interest neither in his job and nor in his morals (173). Jagan is the presentation of the Indians who live in the last phase of the British rule and under the influence of Gandhi. The conflict gets worse when the son starts to live with his Christian girlfriend "without marrying her" (Mishra 177). Another depiction by Narayan regarding the life in Malgudi is structured on a relationship between a tiger and the trainer in a circus in *A Tiger for Malgudi* (1983). Joseph A. Dupras states that the tiger, Raja, "decides to take the revenge of his family" members who have been killed by the hunters in the jungle and it attacks the village (187). It is captured and given to a though-hearted animal trainer. However, the tiger eats his trainer in the end and starts to live with a monk on the mountains (189). *The World of Nagaraj* (1990), as Peter Campbell relates, deals with the "constraints of the writers" and how they struggle for

writing in India (20). Nagaraj wants to be a writer with a great project in his mind; however, he is restricted by the circumstances around him and by his portrayal Narayan comments "humorously" on the reality of the "would-be" writers in India (22). Other short story collections of Narayan are *Under the Banyan Tree and Other Stories* (1985), *Malgudi Days* (1942) and *The Grandmother's Tale and Selected Stories* (1994) all of which deal with commonplace "South Indian experience" ("R. K. Narayan"). As evident from the examples above, Narayan is concerned with reflecting the Indian society in terms of any kind of ordinary relationship and this type of narration helps Narayan to depict his Malgudi without the restrictive influence of any other culture or nation. Consequently, Narayan's writing grows even more mature after the independence of India and his Malgudi and everything related to it keep pace with the real life in India. With regard to this point, H. Williams states that after the independence of India Narayan's novels seem to be more sophisticated:

> Malgudi has swollen; industrialization and modernization have been added to the picture; the population is increased by 'immigrants' from Bombay and the North, tourists in search of caves and temples, politicians looking for votes, prostitutes and dancing girls in search of rich protectors. Malgudi now part of free India has lost its innocence but gained in colour and variety- and needless to say in sin and violence. (8)

In other words, as H. Williams puts it, Narayan has become "a wiser but a sadder man" (8).

In studying the novels of Narayan, an understanding of his tendency to refer to Indian mythology is also significant as it is relevant to an explanation of his dealing with indigenous Indian identity and cultural formation of the Indian society. In fact, it seems to be through this tendency that he makes the cultural heritage of India known to the world:

> The Indian epics, *Purnas* and *Shastras* […] are the depositories of ancient values of life and moral codes of conduct used consistently by different Indian writers to delineate various facets of Indian Culture and Civilization; and Narayan being exception exploits these treasure houses of Indian scholarship and wisdom in order to make it known to the world that India is traditionally the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabrata* and the *Purnas*. ("Traditional Approaches to R. K. Narayan" 17)

Narayan mostly mingles the mythical heritage of India and the real life situations of Indian society in his writing. More specifically, he "penetrates the core of Indian mind

and reveals it with all its bewildering contradictions, superstitions and traditions" ("Traditional Approaches to R. K. Narayan" 20). In Hindu literature, forms of gods, demons and angels are frequently referred to and accordingly, Narayan's mythological work *Gods, Demons and Others* (1964) also reflects an interest in ancient Sanskrit works such as the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Upanishads.* As Mishra states, in this novel, Narayan tells about an ideal man who is figured as King Yayati who enters heaven as an ascetic and also experiences how to be "a holy man" as a typical character in Narayan's novels (168). The holy man is an important character in the works of Narayan, because religious motives are fundamental elements in Hindu society that Narayan effectively describes. In other words, while presenting the everyday life in India, Narayan cannot and does not ignore the holy characters that are inseparable from the Hindu social structure. Gandhi as the "freedom fighter" and the holy men take important positions as almost archetypal characters in Indian literature, namely Rama, Sita or Bharata (168).

To sum up, Narayan's Indianness-oriented outlook and his portrayal of the typical life in India in its own atmosphere without commenting on it make Narayan different from the other Indian-English writers of his period. All of the novels and short story collections of Narayan deal with the simple and daily life situations in India during or after the country's colonial history. The Indian characters of his novels, on the other hand, are shaped with universal characteristics of human nature in terms of virtues and follies.

Malgudi in Narayan's trilogy acts as a typical colonial Indian town created as real as possible by the author, and the life in Malgudi is presented in the framework of the meeting of the Western influences and the Indian culture. In the following chapters, life in Malgudi and how Narayan comments on the colonisation of India will be examined as part of a thematic analysis of the three novels. Despite some other minor themes, the dominant and overarching themes in Narayan's trilogy are "decolonisation and detachment from chaos," "Indianness and traditionalism," "reaching liberation by embracing Indianness." His engagement with the themes of decolonisation and detachment from chaos in his writing results from the fact that Narayan keeps his unpretentious approach, in a Gandhi-like manner, to the rejection of colonisation. The

portrayals of colonial India in its natural atmosphere speak louder than his tone of rejection of colonialism in his trilogy. Accordingly, along with the theme of decolonisation, he refers to some historical facts in colonial India, their results, missionary education, assimilation to Britishness and, in the most general sense, he gives a depiction of colonial India. It seems that for Narayan's purposes of portraying the reality in India which was under the influence of colonialism, the theme of Indianness and traditionalism and everything related to Indian identity are prioritised and foregrounded. Narayan describes Indian identity by creating Indian types such as the conservative Hindu women, holy men, fathers who are symbols of patriarchy, people who are gifted by their strong belief in the doctrines of Hinduism. He also depicts situations which are directly based on Indian experience such as praying to the Hindu gods in the *pooja* room, the cremation ritual, the procedure of a marriage arrangement, psychic contacts, or the roles of women and men both in the family and in the society. In terms of the theme of reaching liberation by embracing Indianness, Narayan dwells mainly on the education system in India and the unchangeable traditional codes and their impositions on the characters in his trilogy. In other words, the missionary education after the colonisation in India and its consequences on the Indian students, teachers, and thus, on the society are Narayan's most important concerns in these three novels. Therefore, he structured these novels on the basis of the conflict between preserving the Indian identity and being under the influence of Western rationalism, especially by depicting Indian education as experienced by and from the viewpoint of a schoolboy in *Swami and Friends*, a college boy in *The Bachelor of Arts* and a teacher in *The English Teacher*. Not only in terms of education, but also in various other contexts Narayan's characters are typically trapped in conflicts between Western rationalism and Indian traditions. In relation to this, the theme of reaching liberation by embracing Indianness emerges as the result of this particular conflict. The theme of liberation is explored in each novel after the conflict is resolved as a result of the characters' becoming a *sanyasi* and finding the peace inside, having a happy marriage by arrangement, or resigning from a respected job to find the true meaning of life in simplicity. By prioritising these three themes that are raised as parts of the experiences of the characters in Malgudi, Narayan aims to put forward genuine

Indianness as the most important assertion of his three novels. By this assertion, he also responds to British colonisation in a unique way.

CHAPTER I

THE THEMES OF DECOLONISATION AND DETACHMENT FROM CHAOS IN NARAYAN'S TRILOGY

This chapter examines the themes of decolonisation and detachment from chaos, which reflect Narayan's passive resistance to British colonisation in India in relation to his extensive use of irony and humour in his *Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher*. Narayan's "non-committal" approach and his acting like a "moral analyst" (Misra 61) in the depiction of colonial India enables him to adopt a Gandhi-like strategy of passive resistance against colonialism. Pier P. Piciucco, too, draws attention to the similarity between Narayan and Gandhi in terms of their attitude to British colonialism in India by pointing out that "ironically Narayan's choice of a neutral alternative in such a case is quite similar to Mahatma Gandhi's one, not to accept British imperialism nor to fight a war, but to respond with 'non-violence'" (46). Different from Ghandi, however, the ironical situations and the humorousness of the events in Narayan's fiction embower the tone of rejection or his serious handling of the theme of decolonisation. Accordingly, his use of irony and humour in the portrayal of Malgudian society and the relationships of the characters under the effects of colonisation secure Narayan's detachment from the chaotic atmosphere in India. However, it would be misleading to assume that Narayan was completely detached from the contemporary socio-political context. Due to the fact that Narayan produced his trilogy during the period of colonial India, or the years between 1935 and 1945, the historical events of this period were used as contextual background in his three novels.

As a response to the British colonisation of India, Narayan's exploration of the themes of decolonisation and detachment from chaos in his trilogy mostly takes place with reference to the missionary education in India and through the characters that are either subservient or subjected to this kind of education. Narayan's constant references to decolonisation in education derives from his own experiences of the missionary education. He once described the missionary school as "a gaunt-looking building with a crucifix on its roof, and I hated it at first sight" (qtd. in Mason "The Master of Malgudi"). Narayan's own account of his first-hand experience with the assimilation

and discrimination in missionary schools was reported in Mason's "The Master of Malgudi" as follows:

> Ours was a Lutheran Mission School—mostly for boarders who were Christian converts. The teachers were all converts, and, towards the few non-Christian students like me, they displayed a lot of hatred. Most of the Christian students also detested us. The scripture classes were mostly devoted to attacking and lampooning the Hindu gods, and violent abuses were heaped on idol-worshippers as a prelude to glorifying Jesus. Among the non-Christians in our class I was the only Brahmin boy, and received special attention; the whole class would turn in my direction when the teacher said that Brahmins claiming to be vegetarians ate fish and meat in secret, in a sneaky way, and were responsible for the soaring price of those commodities. (Mason)

The real life experience of Narayan with the difficulties and disadvantages of missionary education in India is clearly reflected as his own life cycle by the portrayal of decolonisation from the eyes of a missionary school boy in *Swami and Friends,* a missionary college student in *The Bachelor of Arts*, and a missionary college teacher in *The English Teacher.* Also, in his response to colonisation of education in India, he refers to some specific historical facts which create challenges for the Indians during colonisation. He tells about the consequences and effects of colonisation through the portrayal of his Western characters and their interaction with the Indian ones.

In *Swami and Friends*, Narayan's argument of decolonisation in education is structured around the experiences Swami in Albert Mission School. As Susan Ram relates, named as "the writer as citizen" (1892), Narayan' focuses on the ordinary life and daily experiences of the middle class Indians. Accordingly, in *Swami and Friends,* which is written in an episodic narrative style, he portrays adventures of Swami with his friends along with his naïve experiences with his family and at school. In this novel, life in Narayan's Malgudi is introduced to the reader for the first time which shares many similarities with his own childhood in Mysore. Also, Stephen R. Graubard points out that, because Narayan "first conceived the idea of Malgudi in the earlier part of the 1930s," by 1935 when he published the novel, he had developed a mature vision of this fictional town and thus could freely and comfortably express what he wanted to explain about India through Malgudi in *Swami and Friends* (234).

In the novel, the education in Albert's Mission School is portrayed as being based mostly on British values. Albert's Mission School is a product of colonisation. In this

context, V. Smith explains the purposes of the colonial schooling in the native lands by stating that "[c]olonial education came in two basic forms: missionary or religious schooling (which was often residential followed later by public and secular schooling)" (64). In accordance with the implied purpose of the missionary schools in V. Smith's explanation, the course programmes in Albert's Mission School are mostly based on British culture and religion; however, students are treated, and at times punished, in the traditional Indian way. In *Swami and Friends*, the schoolboys experience both an idealisation of Britishness and Indian traditionalism in education, which reflects the situation of most of the students in India throughout its colonial history. As Joseph W. Elder explains, this dualism created troubles for most of the Indian students:

> The Hindi pre-colonial heroes tend to be political- kings, queens, generals, and heads of state – whose main virtues include a belief in God, tolerance for all faiths, great courage, and a willingness to sacrifice themselves for their country. No fewer than 41 Lessons of the total 360 Hindi Lessons present such heroes (contrasted with 36 religious or literary scholar-teacher heroes). The villains in the Hindi textbooks are the godless, the religiously intolerant, the fearful, and the selfish. To the extent the West is featured in these stories, the West is the object against which India's heroes direct their activities. (292)

In *Swami and Friends*, the British missionary education is treated like a component of the ordinary life in India. The idealisation of Britishness and its effects on the students are clearly portrayed to the reader by Swami's experiences at school. Accordingly, how Swami reacts against this situation will be evaluated as a standpoint for the themes of decolonisation and detachment from chaos in this novel. Narayan portrays Albert Mission School as a place where Indian students are mostly criticised because of their poor English and converted teachers tend to impose Christianity by insulting Hinduism. Not unexpectedly, Swami is afraid of his teachers: "[h]e shuddered at the very thought of the school: that dismal yellow building; the fire eyed Vedanayagam, his class-teacher; and the headmaster with thin long cane…" (5). Along with the fearing of school, he feels bored during the lessons and his mind is occupied with mundane interests in class. Therefore, his carelessness causes him to get harsh punishments and insults:

> While the teacher was scrutinizing the sums, Swaminathan was gazing on his face […] there was more hair on his chin than one saw from the bench, and that he was very very bad-looking.

> His reverie was disturbed. He felt a terrible pain in the soft flesh above his left elbow. The teacher was pinching him with one hand, and with the other crossing out all the sums. He wrote 'Very Bad' at the bottom of the page, flung the notebook in Swaminathan's face, and drove him back to his seat. (6)

Moreover, most of the teachers in Albert's Mission School consider themselves as the servants of British culture. Narayan confesses in the novel that the efficiency of the education system after the colonisation is less important than the subjects taught at school as follows: "[D.Pillai's] method of teaching history conformed to no canon of education. He told the boys in a wealth of detail the private histories of Vasco da Gama, Hastings, and others" (6). In addition, in the scripture period the students have a lesson with a fanatic teacher, Mr Ebenezar, who scolds the students because of their "wrong" choices in religion. He calls the students who believe in Hinduism as "wretched idiots" (6) and expresses his fanatical thoughts:

> 'Why do you worship dirty, lifeless, wooden idols and stone images? Can they talk? No. Can they see? No. Can they bless you? No. Can they take you to heaven? No. Why? Because they have no life. What did your gods do when Muhammad of Gazni smashed them to pieces, trod upon them, and constructed out of them steps for his lavatory? If those idols and images had life, why did they not parry Muhammad's onslaughts?' (6-7)

Narayan uses Ebenezar not only as a character to show the tendency of the converted teachers at the missionary schools to glorify British culture, but also as evidence for the urgent necessity for decolonisation in Indian education. Ebenezar makes religious discrimination by referring to the Christians as "we," and boasts about his prophet: "Now see our Lord Jesus. He could cure the sick, relieve the poor, and take us to heaven. He was a real God. Trust him and he will take you to heaven; the kingdom of heaven is within us" (7). Ebenezar even sheds fake tears during his lecture on the life of Christ to get the full attention of the students. Also, contrary to what he tells about Christ, he accuses Sri Krishna, who is a holy figure in Hinduism, of going dancing with girls, stealing butter or practicing dark tricks on those around him (7). He openly insults Hinduism in class because he thinks that Sri Krishna is inferior to Christ. Ebenezar's Christian fanaticism, in fact, reflects a contemporary belief that "Hinduism would surely fall from its foundation and the Gospel rise on its ruins- that through science and modern learning 'we must come to one religion'- was quite clearly an ideology that directed missionary labor in India" (Visvanathan 62). This direct insult against

Hinduism is challenged by Swami, who acts as an agent of Narayan's criticism on colonialism throughout the novel. As a Brahmin insulted by his teacher, Swami becomes filled with hatred and protests against his teacher: "If he [Christ] did not [commit any crimes], why was he crucified?" (7). Nonetheless, his reaction does not cause Ebenezar to question himself; on the contrary, he gets into a fit of anger. He gives a sharp reaction to Swami's question by ordering him to come to the board and learn the answer in private, that is by being physically punished, which is a traditional way of solving problems at school. This rough reaction does not stop Swami's questions because he needs to clarify the values of Brahmanism in his mind: "As a Brahmin boy it was inconceivable to him that a god should be a non-vegetarian" (7). Also, as Nihal Fernando states, Swami's conscious does not accept the necessity of Christianity: "Swami's reaction to Ebenezar's outburst suggests that he is as impervious to the spirit and meaning of Christianity…Swami's argument implies that he is capable of grasping neither the essentials of Christianity nor the nature of the sociocultural tradition that underpins the religion" (78).

As Ebenezar continues to criticise the basics of Hinduism, Swami becomes more passionate to inquire about the existence of the Christian god and Jesus: "If he was a god, why did he eat flesh and fish and drink wine?" (7). Yet, Ebenezar considers this question as an insult for Christianity and wrenches Swami's ear. According to Beatina, his unpleasant experience with his teacher "rests on the Westernization of India, both religiously and educationally" (25) and, therefore, it is important in its relation to the message of the need for decolonisation of education in *Swami and Friends*. Ebenezar's ideas about the religion of the British portray the imposition of Western culture directly through education by creating servants of British cultural imperialism. Ebenezar feels himself on the side of the powerful and everything is permissible to defend his superiority even in classroom. Another point which is important to explain is that Ebenezar's severe punishments for Swami stand for the close relationship between violence and inferiority complex. Victor A. Olorunsola interprets violence among the assimilated natives by stating that violence "frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect" (123). Accordingly, Ebenezar's constant insulting against the Brahmins and his

physical punishments of Swami can be read as the results of his own inferiority complex.

In the context of the daily life in India, Narayan depicts the picture of how the facts are interpreted from different perspectives of the people who belong to different social and cultural backgrounds. Visvanathan states that the Bible was used "as an authoritative exposition of religion in missionary schools" (55), and this authoritative treatment is portrayed as a matter of historical fact in *Swami and Friends.* Related to the issue of assimilation at school, the reaction of Srinivasan, Swami's father, is highly relevant as regards the theme of decolonisation. Swami's father does not seem uneasy in reacting against the situation. He writes a letter of criticism to the administrator of the school, informing about Ebenezar's insults to the Hindu religion as a teacher, which "is bound to have a bad effect upon the boys" (8). Also, he denounces the teachers for not wanting "non-Christian boys in school" (8) and threatens the school manager of taking his son to another school after informing the higher authorities about the "unchristian practices" (8). So, it is important to underline the fact that Swami's father gave a formal reaction to the school by writing a letter of complaint about the religious discrimination there, which is again an attribution to the theme of decolonisation in education. Moreover, Srinivasan has a reputation in society as a lawyer and his criticism is symbolic of Narayan's illustration of the perception of an Indian adult towards the consequences of colonisation in the novel. Nevertheless, although Srinivasan threatens the school with informing the higher authorities, he ends the letter as "[y]our most obedient servant" (8). As can be seen from his tone of high respect while ending the letter, Srinivasan criticises the school but it seems that he cannot free himself from the British influence. In other words, he cannot hide his respect for the authority of Albert's Mission School even though he makes complaints about the school. Srinivasan's self-contradictory and thus ironical attitude towards the issue of assimilation process at school can be understood with reference to Ania Loomba's point about how "Indians can mimic but never exactly reproduce English values, and their recognition of the perpetual gap between themselves and the 'real thing' will ensure their subjection" (146). Likewise, Narayan ironically depicts Srinivasan's admiration for the British and, through him, offers a commentary on Indian people's subjection to the British authority.

Moreover, the caution taken by the school master for the complaint about Albert Mission School seems to portray the helplessness of the issue in colonial India. Narayan shows this helplessness by creating a humorous atmosphere through the weird interactions taking place between his characters. After receiving the letter of complaint, the schoolmaster decides to monitor Ebenezar's lessons. Ebenezar starts his scripture lesson with *Bhagavad Gita* and goes on relating it to Hinduism by making very strict and insulting comments about it. Upon the head master's arrival he changes the subject and turns to the Bible as narrated in the following: "He then opened his book where the finger marked and began to read at random. It happened to be the Nativity of Christ. The great event had occurred. There the divine occupant was in the manger. The Wise Men of the East were faithfully following the Star" (11). Ebenezar opens the book and chooses a page randomly because he does not seem to have a plan for the lesson. The schoolmaster wonders about the reason for the course subjects being behind the curriculum and as a response, Ebenezar lies that he is making a revision at that time. It is a fact for Ebenezar's classes that he comes to the lessons unprepared and mostly makes exaggerated references to Christianity to insult the Hindu religion. In the novel, he is not portrayed as a responsible teacher who fulfils the requirements of the course. Ebenezar's lack of responsibility and his missionary services for Christianity are clearly shown. However, the schoolmaster does not make any serious warnings about this situation. Furthermore, as the headmaster tries to question Swami about the letter of complaint, he feels nervous as "[h]e felt he would not mind if a hundred Ebenezars said a thousand times worse things about the gods" (12). It is very clear that Swami disowns the complaint because of his fear of the authority and the headmaster insults Swami about being so foolish as to go to his father about this simple matter. So, Narayan shows the picture of the missionary services at schools in India and how they are received and responded to by the students, their families and the authorities. The headmaster's superficial handling of the insult on Hinduism is of importance in terms of portraying the helplessness of the Indians in voicing their complaints about the assimilation process in the colonial period.

Narayan also examines the interpretations of Swami's close friends about the abasement in Ebenezar's class. With the portrayals of different backgrounds and different characters of Swami's friends, Narayan seems to be expressing the results of cultural

assimilation from different aspects. His friends react to the letter of complaint in different ways because they belong to different social and cultural backgrounds. Somu, who is like "the uncle of the class" (8) because of his calm and confident behaviours, supports Swami. Mani, who is strong in solving matters by physical force, also supports Swami. However, he thinks that "[t]hings of this kind should not be allowed to go beyond the four walls of the classroom" (10), because he believes that he can solve the matter by throwing an ink-bottle to the teacher. Sankar, who is famous for his sycophancy and talking to the teachers about all matters in English, expresses that Swami has done the best to complain about Ebenezar to his father. Lastly, Samuel, who is a Christian boy, does not get offended by Ebenezar's words about Hinduism. He feels himself on the side of Ebenezar; however, he does not tell this openly. He just directs his comments on Ebenezar's clothes and appearance (10). As can be understood from their comments on the issue of the humiliating assaults towards their tradition, the boys, except for Samuel, support Swami's father's reaction to the school. He finds trivial and negative things about Ebenezar to complain about, because he wants to belong to the group of his friends. This is because they are bound together in the idea of friendship and fun: "The bond between them was laughter. They were able to see together the same absurdities and incongruities in things. The most trivial and unnoticeable thing to others would tickle them to death" (10). Hence, the world of the children is shown in all its purity without making connections to the issues discussed on the foreground. It is important to note that children, unlike most adults, can reconcile with each other although they have different beliefs about social or religious subjects. So, Narayan reflects the opposition to assimilation at school from the eyes of the schoolboys by portraying their childish approaches to the issue, which helps him to portray the events naturally or as they exactly appear in real life. Accordingly, this makes him stay as a detached observer in the novel.

The problem about education in Albert Mission School is not only the assertion of the superiority of British culture, but also the passivity of the characters who are supposed to represent the indigenous culture. Narayan criticises the education system also in terms of the inefficiency in teaching the Indian values. In *Swami and Friends*, the teacher of the Tamil language, contrary to Ebenezar, does not impose authority on class; in fact, he cannot even suppress the noise of the students. The students do not act

respectfully in Tamil courses because the teacher is portrayed as careless and helpless. The chaotic atmosphere of the class is portrayed in the novel as follows:

> The Tamil pundit, with his unshaven face and the silver-rimmed spectacles set askew on his nose, was guiding the class through the intricacies of Tamil grammar. The guide himself was more enthusiastic than his followers. A continual buzz filled the air. Boys had formed themselves into small groups and carried on private conversations. The pundit made faint attempts to silence the class by rapping his palms on the table. After a while he gave up the attempt and went on with his lecture. His voice was scarcely audible. (41)

As it is evident from the above quotation; the inadequacy of education and the disinterestedness of the students in Tamil courses indicate that Narayan does not dwell on the idea of nationalism for its own sake. However, he offers a critique of the education system in order to prove that missionary teaching is more appealing for the students than the national subjects. That is to say, the inability of the Tamil teacher, who is portrayed as ineffective, to teach the details of the native language is helpless when compared to Ebenezar's ability to lure the attention of the students into the British values.

Another criticism of the Indian way of education in the novel is the punishment of the students by beating their hands with a stick if they miss a class in Board High School. This primitive treatment about forcing the students to complete some tasks is pointed out in the novel as "the drill master treated you as if you were his dog. He drove you to march left and right, stand attention, and swing the arms, or climb the horizontal or parallel bars, whether you like it or not, whether you knew the thing or not" (99). Consequently, Narayan wants to depict the defects of both the assimilation of the Indian students through the British values and the custom-bound and primitive way of education which causes the students become reluctant at school. The necessity for decolonisation is given as a message by depicting the violent attacks towards Hinduism and not taking serious precautions about the issue. Nevertheless, Narayan also shows the passivity and inefficiency of national education which completes the picture of reality in India. Narayan's depiction of the real picture of an ordinary missionary school by showing every detail as real as possible makes the reader understand Narayan's non-aggressive call for a silent resistance against colonialism in his novel. Moreover, these ordinary events and details become a serious pretext for Narayan's handling of other

problems in his later novels, as his writing "comes to possess a richer, denser texture" (Shankar 53).

Secondly, in *Swami and Friends*, Narayan focuses on Swami's understanding of the various aspects of colonial India by integrating the ordinary details of Swami's life in order to explore the theme of decolonisation in India. Swami always questions life and his study session about Europe can be taken as an example for this situation. Swami starts to think about the mapping of Europe and how the Europeans have first come to India. Through Swami's stream of thoughts, Narayan seems to be making a reference to the physical occupation of the Indian lands:

> It puzzled him how people managed to live in such a crooked country as Europe. He wondered what the shape of the people might be who lived in places where the outline narrowed as in cape, and how they managed to escape being strangled by the contour of their land. And then another favourite problem began to tease him: how did they find out that Europe was like a camel's head? Probably they stood on high towers and copied what they saw below. He wondered if he would be able to see India as it looked in the map, if he stood on the top of the town hall. He has never been there and nor ever did he wish to go there. Though he was incredulous, tailor Ranga persistently informed him that there was a torture chamber in the top storey of the town hall to which Pathans decoyed young people. (46)

Regarding Swami's examination of the "political map of Europe," Mason states that "Europe is both a distant abstraction and an imperial reality, [Swami] homogenizes it into 'a crooked country.'" Also, Swami's being afraid of going to the top of the town hall because of the danger of torture is significant. As Mason further comments, "[c]rookedness, strangulation, torture: these words draw their own map, one that describes how it might feel to live in a country ruled by another" (Mason "The Master of Malgudi"). By looking at the map, Swami finds that the Europeans needed to escape from their land, because they were strangled there due to its narrowness in some parts. As Gita Rajan explains, the measurement of the land can be taken as a reference to the colonial process:

> He wonders how 'those map-makers find out what the shape of the country was?' Narayan raises this very significant question of appropriating land and using cartography- a scientific measure of land- which also gives a reasonable explanation of colonization, to hint the insidious power behind Imperial practices. (32)

As a further comment on Swami's wondering about "the shape of the people" living in Europe, Narayan may have been implying his opposition to the representations of the

Eastern people by the West. As Pramod suggests, "the English mapped India as different, inhuman, chaotic, varied and dark" (5). In a wider observation about the depiction of India in Western imagination, Norman R. Smith expresses that Knidos, who was a Greek physician contemporary with Hippocrates, in his geography book called *Indika* that was based on contemporary 'knowledge' about India, depicted the population living there as people with a dog's head, one-footed people "who hold their single giant foot umbrella-fashion above their heads when the sun is hot" or people with big ears that "can be wrapped around the body like cloaks" (48). As it is understood from Knidos' depictions of the Indian people, they are no less than monsters or creatures. Accordingly, Narayan can be considered as referring to this monster-like depiction, and implicitly criticising such historical bias as Swami wonders about the appearance of Europeans who live in such a "crooked country." Therefore, Swami's preoccupation with "the shape of the people" in Europe can be read as Narayan's challenge to reverse the established portrayal of the East.

Next, in *Swami and Friends* one of the references to the process of colonisation and how it happened in India is implied with the story of "Brahmin and the Tiger," the moral of which is asked as an exam question in the Tamil class. The story is about a Brahmin who encounters a tiger near a pond and the tiger offers a gold bangle to him. The Brahmin refuses his offer; however, the tiger insists on being innocent about his purpose. After that, when the Brahmin tries to reach the bangle, the tiger suddenly eats him (49-50). The story may be significant as an allusion to how the Indian people are deceived in the disguise of modernisation offered by the West. India loses its freedom like the Brahmin loses his life, because similar to the Brahmin, India has not understood the insidious plans of the British. Nevertheless, the parallelism of the idea of loss both in the story and in India is not stated explicitly. What is portrayed to the reader is Swami's questioning of the difference between "the love of gold" and "love of gold bangle" that causes the fall of the Brahmin in the story (51). Swami cannot understand why most of his friends have stated "love of gold" as their answer to the question where there is only one gold bangle in the story. His shallowness in thinking of the moral of the story may stem from his being too young to comment on it comprehensively. In fact, here Narayan may be implying the theme of the colonial surrender of Indians by telling a symbolic story. In doing so, Narayan does not make any visible protests against the

severe losses caused by colonisation. On the contrary, his criticism is offered through his non-aggressive deployment of irony. As Ram states, Narayan uses "some subtle, unconscious process of deflection" (1892) in his works. This "deflection" can be explained as Narayan's way of determining the target of his criticism for his readers. So, the parallelism between the ironic interpretation of the "Brahmin and the Tiger" story and the colonisation of India is conveyed to the reader again by creating an unpretentious style.

In *Swami and Friends* another reference to Swami's conception of colonial India and the appropriation of the situation to the roles in the society is shown through a joke made by Swami and his friends. This incident is important in terms of appropriating the power relations in the colonial society of India to the nature of the joke. Moreover, it can also be considered as yet another example of Narayan's unpretentious way of dwelling on the theme of decolonisation through preserving his role as a detached observer in the novel. Related to the issue of the joke, Swami, Mani and Rajam, who is the representative of the Western values in the novel, stop a young cart driver passing on the road and they start to fool him pretending to be policemen. Swami asks questions to the cart driver with strictness; however, his questioning creates a sense of comedy because of the weirdness of his questions:

> 'Why have you not washed the animal, you bullock-head?'
> The villager replied timidly: 'I have washed the animal, sir.'
> 'But why is this here?' Swaminathan asked, pointing at a brown patch.
> 'Oh, that! The animal has had it since its birth, sir.'
> 'Birth? Are you trying to teach me?'Swaminathan shouted and raised his leg to kick the driver. (65)

The humorousness of the questions creates an unserious atmosphere; however, the children's assumption of superiority over the cart man is significant in terms of picturing the relationship between the authority figures and the average Indian citizens. Also, their sharing of the authority and the roles in the joke is important in defining the sense of superiority among them. The role sharing is done as follows: Swami notes the number of the cycles passing by him, the number of people going bare foot and the number of people walking with sandals or shoes on; Mani turns the bullock to another direction although the cart driver wants to go to a different way; and Rajam, who adopts the supreme position, questions the cart driver about some details. He also orders

Swami to record the information. In the end, the three sign under Swami's recordings and give it to the cart driver supposing they have fulfilled a great duty (66). In fact, in the organisation of the joke, Rajam gets the highest authority because of his social status as the son of the Police Superintendent, and he orders the others to do some tasks. They accept their roles without questioning and with a sense of serious responsibility. Accordingly, Ross comments on the reflection of the power relations among these children as follows: "[*Swami and Friends*] tells how children internalize the 'colonial oppressors' and eventually develop a sense of their race in relation to the history" (91).The cart man answers all the absurd questions of the boys supposing them as policemen and this situation proves the defencelessness of the Indian people towards the authority figures in colonial India. So, the most important point about Narayan's integrating this joke as an ordinary experience of an ordinary day in India is a criticism of the Indian people who surrender to authoritarian oppression without questioning.

In *Swami and Friends*, Narayan's most explicit call for decolonisation is shown by the protests against colonial practices in Malgudi. These protests directly criticise the situation of colonial India with a sense of revolt and wish for resurrection of the native values. However, specific to Narayan, his ironic treatment of the subject and integration of humour into the core of his argument again enables him to adopt a non-aggressive attitude to colonisation. As he depicts the chaotic atmosphere in Malgudi, he uses the historical facts in Indian colonial history by referring to the uprisings of the 1930s when Gandhi and the Congress began a new campaign of revolt. In the novel, the cause of the protests is the arrest of a political worker in Bombay, Gauri Sankar, on the 15th of August in 1930. The leader of the rebellious group openly states the need for independence and rejects the supremacy of the British. He accuses the British for causing a loss of identity in India and his accusation is very important in making a call for decolonisation in the novel:

> 'We are slaves today' he shrieked, 'worse slaves than we have ever been before. Let us remember our heritage. Have we forgotten the glorious periods of Ramayana and Mahabrata? This is the country that has given the world a Kalidasa, a Buddha, a Sankara. Our ships sailed the high seas and we had reached the height of civilization when the Englishman ate raw flesh and wandered in the jungles, nude. But now what are we? […] We are slaves of slaves. (75)

Then, he criticises the Indian bureaucracy for becoming slaves of the British and for creating "intimidation and starvation" (75) for the Indians. He calls the Britishmen "a handful of white rogues" trying to govern them: "England is no bigger than our Madras Presidency and is inhabited by a handful of white rogues and is thousands of miles away. Yet we bow in homage before the Englishman! Why are we become, through no fault of our own, docile and timid?" (75). The description of the situation in India as "[b]owing homage before the Englishman" and the calling of the British as "a handful of white rogues," again are related to the theme of decolonisation in the novel. The leader of the group defends that there is no need to obey the British, because they are smaller in number. Furthermore, the protester suggests everyone to "spit England, and the quantity of saliva will be enough to drown England" (75), which aims at creating a sense of superiority of the Indians over the British both in numbers and, thus, power. Nevertheless, at this point Narayan avoids promoting an aggressive nationalism with the interference of Swami. During the protests, Swami and his friend Mani try to understand the protester's words by discussing with each other. Mani states that Europeans will shoot them if they spit on them because they have no heart (76). Accordingly, Mani thinks that Europeans are brutal and senseless.

In addition to the call for a strike against the colonisers, there is another reference to the theme of decolonisation, which comes in the form of rejection of the British goods such as Lancashire and Manchester cotton. The protesters claim that the owners of the colonising companies have cut the thumbs of the Dacca muslin weavers who produce Indian clothes. Here again, Narayan alludes to the historical fact of cutting the thumbs of the muslin weavers in Dacca in order to emphasise the brutal attacks of the British onto the national economy of India. Robb explains that "Dacca [was] considered the first manufactory in India and produc[ed] the richest embroideries in gold, silver and silk" (51). In fact, the khadi muslin became popular in the eighteenth century in Europe and after the British invaded India they ended this popularity. As Krishnan Kant relates, they cut off the thumbs of the weavers in order to prevent their production and without efficient production the quality of the Dacca Muslin decreased (256). The other historical fact about the national production of Indian clothes refered to in *Swami and Friends* is the 'khadi movement' which is a traditional type of Indian clothing. The khadi was the symbol of "hand-work" and with Gandhi's encouragement "All-India

Spinner Association" took and organisational form in the name of "khadi movement" (Metcalf 184). By wearing this "simple, usually white cloth" people wanted to eradicate the "distinctions of region, along with those of caste, class and religion" and the wearer was defined as "a member of universal Indian nation" (Metcalf 184). In the novel, the significance of wearing the khadi is emphasised by lighting a bonfire of foreign clothes as a reaction to colonialism. Likewise, the throwing of the foreign clothes into the bonfire can be considered a nationalistic reaction to the colonial occupation of India and its local economy.

Related to the rejection of the foreign clothes, Narayan also depicts the outlook of the boys and their confusion. Mani supposes that Swami's cloth is a Lancashire one; and accuses the foreign cloth producers as "Lancashire devils" (76). As it is clear from his association of "devils" with the British, Mani seems to be aware of the evils of colonialism. Additionally, Swami is so deeply affected by nationalistic reactions that he throws his cap into the bonfire of foreign clothes "with a feeling of saving the country" (77). Furthermore, he throws stones at the window panes of Albert Mission School with the group of protesters who cry out the slogans of "Bharat Matha ki Jai," "Gandhi ki Jai" and "Gaura Sankar ki Jai" (78). Narayan's depiction of a group shouting in their native language against colonialism and the protesters throwing stones at the windows of Albert Mission School can also be considered expressions of the need for decolonisation and the rejection of homage to the British. In fact, looking at the subject from Swami's point of view, it is clear that he is lured by the idea of revolt and he does not act with a proper mind because he beats a young boy only because he wears a foreign cap (80). There is a sense of comedy in the way Swami expresses his protest and this humorousness in Narayan's novels is defined as "the perfect comic product or by-product of the colonial situation" (Dharwadker 100). So, the humorousness of Swami's conception of the revolt serves for Narayan's typical self-positioning as an observer without promoting powerful nationalistic emotions. That is to say, Narayan's call for decolonisation is not violent. On the contrary, it is very much like Gandhi's passive resistance because he treats these controversial issues as a commonplace of ordinary life in India.

As a result of the revolts, Narayan presents the harsh reality of destruction of the protestors by the police force. The crowd is challenged by the army of policemen who declare that the protests are unlawful. Among the policemen, Swami sees Rajam's father as the Police Superintendent which means that he is the head of those traitors (80). Swami faces severe reality that the father of his best friend, Rajam, causes many Indians to die. He sees that they stand on different sides in terms of national concerns. Also, Rajam's father is described as a "butcher" by Swami's father because he has caused fifty people to be hospitalised after the protests (81). However, Swami is not old enough to have meaningful implications from Rajam's father's being a "butcher" and he mostly focuses on the absence of his cap that he has thrown into the bonfire. His naïve nature and childish concerns about the harsh realities decrease the tone of Narayan's engagement in portraying the destructive effects of colonisation in India. Unfortunately, as Srinivasan asks about the strike at school, Swami tells a lie about his cap that somebody has taken it because it is made of Lancashire cotton. Srinivasan gets angry and scolds him for being careless because the truth is that he has bought it from the Khaddar Stores. He confesses: "I won't have a paise of mine sent to foreign countries. I know my duty. Whatever it is, why do not you urchins leave politics alone and mind your businesses? We have enough troubles in our country without you brats messing up things" (82). It is clear in his words that Srinivasan also supports the national economy; however, he criticises the protestors as "brats" who cause trouble for the country. Belonging to the upper-middle class caste, his way of saving the country is simple and cautious. It is evident in Srinivasan's comments about the protests that he wants to support the Indian economy, yet he does not choose to fight against colonisation. With this portrayal of Srinivasan it is again proved in the novel that Narayan creates a sense of detachment from physical violence and chaos.

After the strike, Swami is punished by the school's authority for breaking the windowpanes of Albert Mission School and he is dismissed. Narayan does not praise Swami for involving in a strike for national concerns. On the contrary, Swami becomes punished because Narayan portrays the events in their natural environment or as they exactly appear in real India. He does not create a hero out of Swami, because Swami is not portrayed naturally as an ardent supporter of the revolution. As Rajan states, Swami belongs to the strike as "an agent, albeit a naïve agent, of India's desire to be free" (33).

Not as a hero, but a naïve agent Swami fulfils his duty of portraying the colonial India and through his eyes as a child, Narayan could secure his safe attitude of non-commitment to violence. Therefore, the strike to reject the colonial existence supports the theme of decolonisation in the novel and at the same time the humorousness of Swami's conceptualisation of the events stand as evidence of W. Walsh's evaluation of Narayan's novels as "comedies of sadness" (*R. K. Narayan* 5).

In the second novel of the trilogy, *The Bachelor of Arts*, Narayan deals with the themes of decolonisation and detachment from chaos similarly by portraying the missionary education at Albert Mission College and the experiences of the protagonist, Chandran, at the college and also in the colonial society of India. The plot is based on the life of a middle-class Indian man, Chandran, and his experiences in education life, marriage arrangement and self-quest within the context of Narayan's exposé of universally recognised aspects of human nature and its fallibility. It can be clearly examined throughout the novel that the effects of colonisation in Malgudi cause Chandran to take a journey of self-exploration and find his freedom as an individual. The traditionalism in Indian family, the complexities of arranging an Indian marriage, the figures in education who aspire to possess Western values and impose them strictly on the Indian students, the revolt against the constructed identities as products of colonisation and the meaning of freedom are the main concerns of Narayan to set his novel, *The Bachelor of Arts*, as an example of the picture of colonised India.

The first matter to be examined in *The Bachelor of Arts* in terms of the theme of decolonisation is the issue of Chandran's experiences as a college boy at Albert Mission College. The novel starts with the background of a debate organisation which is to be held at the college. Chandran has to participate in the debate on how to correct the manipulated form of Indian historiography as the Prime Mover because he has promised the College Union to do so beforehand. As a student in History department, Chandran is reluctant to defend the position of "historians be slaughtered first" (149). As Chandran does not want to defend the argument, his ideas about the subject reveal a sense of humour:

> 'His'ians to be slaughtered first. Who should come second? Scientists or carpenters? Who will make knife-handles if carpenters are killed first? In any case why kill anybody? Must introduce one or two humorous stories. There was once a

> his'ian who dug in his garden and unearthed two ancient coins, which supplied the missing link of some period or other; but lo! They were not ancient coins but only two old buttons…Oh, a most miserable story. Idiotic. What am I to do? Where can I get a book full of jokes of a historical nature? A query in some newspaper. Sir, will you or any of your numerous readers kindly let me know where I can get historical humours?' (149-150)

Chandran's engagement in finding historical humours in order to capture the attention of the audience during the debate can be considered significant in terms of Narayan's typical tendency of integrating humour into the serious events. In the end, Chandran reaches the conclusion that it is appropriate to kill the historians first because "they might not be there to misinterpret the facts when scientists, poets, and statesmen were being killed in their turn" (150). He thinks that this is a funny argument and by this way he would entertain the people. Also, he points out that "[t]here was quantity of literature in support of history, but not one on the extermination of historians" (151). It is evident in Chandran's handling of a serious subject in a humorous way that Narayan wants to underline the superficial treatment of the serious subjects or national concerns in missionary education. In order to win the debate, Chandran tells the funny story of "the professor who dug up brass buttons in his garden" (153). By this incident, Narayan wants to point out that the thesis of the punishment of historians is approved by the voters because they are entertained by the speaker, not because they take the issue into consideration due to the existence of a national history. The profile of the students at the college is depicted as ones who care for humour and entertainment more than serious subjects. One of the consequences of missionary education that Narayan seems to be implying by this scene is the loss of consciousness about the national concerns.

Another point about the debate scene is related to Chandran's evaluations about Professor Brown, the principal of the college, who manages the timing and warns the audience when they overreact to the talks. He rings the bell when something inappropriate happens among the audience. He has a pink face while he listens to the speakers and Chandran thinks that Professor Brown's pink face is a sign for his boredom from being there among the hall of Indians (152). He also knows that Professor Brown would much rather to go to his English Club and play tennis instead of being with them:

> He is here not out of love for us, but merely to keep up appearances. All Europeans are like this. They will take their thousand or more a month, but won't do the slightest service to the Indians with a sincere heart. They must be paid this heavy amount for spending their time join the English Club. Why should not these fellows admit Indians to their clubs? Sheer colour arrogance. If ever I get into power I shall see that Englishman attend clubs along with Indians and are not so exclusive. Why not give the poor devils-so far away from their home- a chance to club together at least for a few hours at the end of a day's work? Anyway who invited them there? (152)

As evident from Chandran's stream of thoughts given above, he questions the sincerity of Professor Brown, and in his person, of all the British in India. He expresses criticism of the idea of preventing the Indians to go into the English Club, because the Englishmen came to their land without being invited. He protests about the colour discrimination and the Englishmen's being paid just because they entertain themselves in those clubs. Therefore, Chandran's distrust of the Europeans and his criticism about the established system of the interaction between the colonisers and the colonised in Malgudi can be considered a constituent of the call for decolonisation.

Furthermore, in the novel, Professor Brown is the embodiment of Western supremacy at Albert Mission College. Chandran also wants to challenge the perception of the people about Professor Brown, because he thinks that due to his insincerity he is not worth the attention paid to him by the Indian students. In other words, Chandran does not want the people at the college to consider Professor Brown as an image of superiority. To illustrate this point, after the debate Chandran discusses about Professor Brown's speech with Natesan, who is the secretary of the College Union and the organiser of the debate, and finds out that Natesan is also fond of Professor Brown's careless speech about an important subject. While referring to Professor Brown, Chandran calls him as "the Boss" (154) and this attribution can be taken as a direct reference to prove Brown's assumption of a superior position at the school. Chandran finds Natesan's love of Professor Brown nonsense by stating that "[i]t is an idiotic belief you fellows have that everything he says is humorous. He has only to move his lips for you to hold your sides and laugh" (154). On the contrary, Natesan thinks that Professor Brown is a good man just because he attends all the meetings in the Union. Natesan does not seem to understand Chandran's point of view about Professor Brown because he considers his own benefits as the secretary of the Union who cares for the attendance of the professors to the conferences. As a reaction to Natesan's shallowness about the issue,

Chandran thinks that Professor Brown has to attend the meetings because "he gets his thousand a month" (154) and this is his responsibility. He also warns Natesan not to forget that "he is a scoundrel at heart" (154). It is clear in the novel that Chandran criticises the majority's acceptance of the superiority of Professor Brown, one of the colonisers in India, and his discontentedness about Professor Brown's image can also be evaluated in relation to the theme of decolonisation. However, as the characters are portrayed both with their virtues and follies, Chandran needs to find a safe place for himself at the end of the speech or does not want to appear on the opposite side of the principal. Therefore, he makes a final remark about Professor Brown by explaining that he does not "dislike" him:

> 'Another thing,' said Chandran. 'Don't for a moment think that I dislike Brown. I agree with you entirely when you say he is a man with a pleasant manner. He has a first-rate sense of humour. He is a great scholar. It is really a treat to be taught Drama by him. I was only trying to suggest that people saw humour even where he was serious. So please don't mistake me.' (155)

As it can be deduced from Chandran's explanation, because he does not find support from Natesan about his ideas about Professor Brown, he changes his target of accusation to the people who tend to laugh at everything Professor Brown tells even though they are not funny. This regression in his oppositional thoughts can be significant in terms of understanding the restraining effect of the society on the individual. As A. Smith states, in *The Bachelor of Arts* the message of "we can be ourselves to an extent but we all need to be anchored in society" (xvi) is clearly conveyed to the reader by this incident. Also, the antipathy towards the British and the underlining message of the need for decolonisation in the novel is carried to a neutral place where Narayan can show everything in their natural atmosphere. Ironically, Narayan also gives clues about the inappropriate behaviours at the college to prove the inefficiencies of missionary education which does not prevent the students from behaving like cheaters and becoming selfish. For instance, Natesan's becomes the secretary of the College Union which is a respected position for a student, unethically by begging, borrowing and stealing votes at the Union elections (153). So, Natesan does not seem to care about Professor Brown's being insincere about the Indians or the people's laughing at everything he tells, because his primary concern is not the ethics but his personal benefit. Likewise, as a passive member of the society, he cannot

understand the self-centeredness of Professor Brown or establish empathy with Chandran. Therefore, with the portrayal of Natesan's situation Narayan illustrates the defects of missionary education which is mostly based on assimilation-oriented instruction, and definitely not on creating an appropriate Indian identity for the students.

Another reference to the effects of colonisation on education can be observed in the names of the courses at the university such as "Modern History, Ancient History, Political Theories, Greek Drama, Eighteenth-Century Prose, and Shakespeare" (162-163). The students are exposed to Western culture through examining the basic texts of the Western world. One of the important figures in the novel who is depicted as a servant of Western culture is Gajapathi, the Assistant Professor of English. He always complains about the lack of knowledge and refers to the limited understanding of English literature among Indian students. He creates a sense of self-inferiority among the Indian students by accusing them for not using proper English and offends his colleagues by correcting their English:

> He said everywhere that not ten persons in the world had understood Shakespeare; he asserted that there were serious errors even in Fowler's Modern English Usage; he corrected everybody's English; he said that no Indian could ever write English; this statement hurt all his colleagues, who prepared their lectures in English and wished to think that they wrote well. When he valued test or examination papers, he never gave anybody more than forty per cent; he constituted himself an authority on punctuation, and deducted half a mark per misplaced comma or semicolon in the papers that he corrected. (167)

Gajapathi's constant criticism of people's use of English is significant in understanding his idealisation of Western culture. As a matter of fact, Gajapathi creates a sense of hegemony over the people around him by making them feel unskilled in English. However, he does not let the students look at him during courses: "He probably felt nervous when two hundred pairs of eyes stared at him. It was his habit to order as: 'Heads down and pencils busy, gentlemen'" and "'[l]isten to me with your pencils, gentlemen'" (168). This situation in Gajapathi's courses may be interpreted as resulting from his lack of knowledge about the subjects that he teaches, because he always keeps the students busy to prevent their possible questionings. Also, Gajapathi is portrayed as a fanatical admirer of Shakespeare and he thinks that "there has not been anything worth reading after the eighteenth century, and for anyone who cares for the real flavour of literature nothing to equal the Elizabethans. All the rest is trash" (276). His fanaticism

about Shakespeare may be taken as a result of his academic ignorance about the other writers, which is also stated in the novel: "Evidently this man read only Shakespeare and his critics" (276). So, with such a portrayal of Gajapathi, Narayan proves that colonisation in education creates teachers without self-confidence and cause the students to develop a sense of inferiority.

Another significant character in terms of Narayan's construction of ideas around the theme of decolonisation in *The Bachelor of Arts* is Professor Ragavachar, who is portrayed as the opposite of Professor Brown in terms of personality and concern, and who starts the Historical Association in the college. Professor Ragavachar is depicted as a college teacher who reacts against colonialism in India openly and his primary preoccupation as a teacher is to teach the necessity of India's decolonisation to his students. Therefore, in order to promote the Indian national identity at the college, he forms the Historical Association: "I for one feel that the amount of ignorance on historical matters is appalling. The only way in which we can combat it is to start an association and hold meetings and read papers" (170). Evidently, he wants to draw the attention of his students to Indian history. He assigns Chandran as the secretary of the Historical Association and asks him to organise the Inaugural Meeting. Professor Ragavachar's speech in the opening ceremony is significant in terms of creating a public awareness about the issues of "Self-Government," "Economic Independence," and "a clarified, purified Indian History" by referring to some controversial historical facts from Indian history:

> Great controversial fires were raging over very vital matters in Indian History. And what did they find around them? The public went about their business as if nothing was happening. How could one expect these fires to be extinguished if the great public did not show an intelligent appreciation of the situation and lend a helping hand? To quote an instance: everybody learnt in the secondary school history book that Sirajudowlla locked some of the East Indian Company people in a very small room, and allowed them to die of suffocation. This was the well-known Black Hole of Calcutta. There were super-historians who appeared at a later stage in one's education and said that there had been neither Black nor Hole nor Calcutta. […] True history was neither fiction nor philosophy. It was a hardy science. And to place Indian History there, an Association was indispensable. If he were asked what the country needed most urgently, he would not say Self-Government or Economic Independence, but a clarified, purified Indian History. (178)

As obviously stated in his speech above, Professor Ragavachar explains the necessity for establishing a Historical Association and the need for the decolonisation of the country, as well. He refers to "Black Hole of Calcutta" in a serious tone and explains how the incident is told in different versions of the history. In fact, according to one of the versions of the Black Hole of Calcutta incident, which is given by Ben Johnson, in 1756 the Nawab of Bengal, Siraj-ud-daulah invaded Calcutta and captured the possessions of East India Company (Johnson). He imprisoned 146 English people in an airless dungeon and 123 of them died. However, some historians state that 146 people could not be placed in such a room with a certain size. Also some Indian scholars claim that the Nawab did not participate in this incident and only 69 English people were imprisoned (Johnson). As it can be understood from the incident of Black Hole of Calcutta, Professor Ragavachar wants to emphasise the need for a clarified history that is more important than getting the independence, because, as Professor Ragavachar thinks, people can only be unified by a national history to decolonise their country.

Contrary to Professor Ragavachar's serious speech about the national history, Professor Brown talks about frivolous subjects and events when he takes the stage. He seems that he has not prepared a speech about the importance of establishing the Historical Association and he starts to talk about his experiences as a student at Oxford University. His disinterestedness in historical matters is shown in his words: "don't ask me the date of anything. In all History I remember only 1066" (179). It is clear from his evaluation of the history that Professor Brown does not have comprehensive knowledge about British history and he does not consider the subject as serious as Professor Ragavachar does. This opposition to Professor Ragavachar's ideas about history is evolved with his comments about personal understanding of the history that it should be studied like art, that is, "for its own sake" (179). He also thinks that studying history after school is better because the students would feel free to read about anything they like without being examined by the facts. As he states, "[f]acts are, after all, a secondary matter in real History" (179). Contrary to Professor Ragavachar, Professor Brown displays an unserious attitude in his opening speech and his disinterestedness in the subject functions as the portrayal of a typical British man in India.

In addition to the display of different concerns of Professor Ragavachar and Professor Brown about the issue of having a unified history, the Historical Association in *The Bachelor of Arts* is also significant in bringing together various characters with different attitudes about the national matters. Veeraswami is one of the students who wants to present a paper titled "The Aids to British Expansion in India" in the association. The subject of his paper shows a way for the decolonisation through using physical force against the British. Nevertheless, as the principal of the college, Professor Brown becomes disturbed by the sharp language of the paper and warns Professor Ragavachar to send all the papers to him before they are presented in the meetings which can be considered as an act of censorship. However, Veeraswami wants to present another paper titled "The Subtleties of Imperialism" without showing it to Professor Brown and Chandran has to decline his application (186). Veeraswami is portrayed as a character wishing for a revolt. He seriously prepares himself for an attack on the British as stated in the novel as: "he was even then preparing for that great work. His education, sleep, contacts, and everything, were a preparation" (186). Also, he calls for taking arms for a national unity and decolonising the economy of India: "Imperialism was his favourite demon. He believed in smuggling arms into the country, and, on a given day, shooting all the Englishmen." (186)

Moreover, Narayan integrates humour and irony into the portrayal of Veeraswami who proves himself to be a radical by his ideas about decolonisation. To illustrate, Veeraswami thinks that Indians can cure hunger by eating coconuts and cacti. He writes papers about this solution in the languages of Tamil, Telugu and English to be shared with the people. He thinks that Indian people get ill because the British intentionally spread illnesses in society for the benefit of the British drug manufacturers. Also, he wants to prepare the minds of the Indians for a revolution by improving their physique: "he would assume the garb of a village worker, a rural construction maniac, but secretly prepare the mind of the peasantry for revolution" (186). No matter how irrational his solutions for gaining independence may seem, through his explicit way of sharing his solutions for the decolonisation of India, it can also be assumed that Narayan aims to portray the causes of the despair in India such as hunger and illnesses which became worse with colonisation. Veeraswami's most radical idea about decolonisation is starting a "Resurrection Brigade" for which he offers to bring "poets, philosophers,

musicians, sculptors and swordsman" together (202). He argues that the brigade will create a big revolution in the country:

> It is only an attempt to prepare the country for revolution. Montague-Chelmsford reform, Simon Report, and what not, are all fraud. Our politicians, including the Congressman, are playing into the hands of the Imperialists. The Civil Disobedience Movement is a childish business. Our brigade will gain the salvation of our country by an original method. (202)

In addition to Veeraswami's thoughts given above, he refers to some important historical matters in Indian history as "wrongdoings" (202) and accuses the Indian congressman of being under the hegemony of the colonisers. He wants to settle another solution for the process of decolonisation rather than leading a Gandhian way of passive resistance. As was also explained in the 'Introduction' chapter, the "Civil Disobedience" policies from 1930 to 1932 were a non-violent way taken by the public in order to decolonise India by changing the laws and government policies such as the abolition of the salt tax or by releasing the political prisoners (Bakshi 540-541). Veeraswami challenges these attempts of passive resistance and believes in taking arms to fight with the enemy. So, through Veeraswami's portrayal as a radical figure in the novel, Narayan achieves to show different approaches of different people about India's gaining its independence. More importantly, however, through Veeraswami's weird solutions to the problems in colonial India and his extreme ideas such as forming a brigade, Narayan integrates a humorous tone in this episode.

Another important character who wants to give a paper in the Historical Association is Mohan. He is a college student and he also writes poems in English because it is "the language of the world" (187). He states that he cannot read his poems before the Literary Association because Professor Brown opposes every original work and creates his own standardisation in literature: "As long as he is in this college no original work will ever be possible. He is very jealous, won't tolerate a pinch of original work" (187-188). Mohan is a prolific poet and writes about a wide variety of subjects, nonetheless, he cannot get approval of publication in any of the papers (189). As it is clear in Mohan's situation, he cannot publish his poems at the college because of Professor Brown's autocracy. Yet, he does not seem to be defeated by his unsuccessful attempts in publishing his poems, because he states "I shall go on writing till my fingers are paralysed […] I hope some day I shall come across an editor or publisher who is not

stupid" (189). His dedication to writing can be considered a rejection of standardisations of any kind perpetrated by the British in the Indian society.

Lastly, with respect to the depictions of the characters at the college and the point about the college's inefficiency in forming appropriate national identities for the Indian students, the derogation in the personality of Aziz, the peon working in the service of the principal for years is worth mentioning. Before the Inaugural Meeting of the Historical Association, Chandran wants to personally invite the principal, Professor Brown, to the meeting. However, Aziz does not let Chandran in the principal's office, because he has orders not to let anybody in (173). He expresses that the principal is busy and refuses to see people. Chandran gets very angry and protests that the principal is paid just to sit behind that door. Yet, he cannot change Aziz's mind because Aziz thinks that Chandran does not have the authority to inquire about the duty of the principal. Consequently, Chandran understands that he cannot persuade Aziz by asking challenging questions about the ethics and he tries offering an old coat to him if he lets Chandran in. Fortunately, Aziz accepts Chandran's coat and lets Chandran see Professor Brown. As it is evident from this incident, Aziz abuses his post to own an old coat; in other words, Chandran can only see the principal by bribing Aziz. By this incident, Narayan seems to be criticising the corruption of the employees in the missionary schools.

Narayan's last novel to be discussed within the scope of the depiction of colonial India is *The English Teacher* (1945), as Charles Larson relates, which is also published in the United States with the name of *Grateful to Life and Death* (352). *The English Teacher* possesses the typical aspects of Narayan's early novels in dealing with the subjects of "the effete young man, indecisive, uncertain of their roles in society; the crisis of life, often one of spirituality; the symbolic conclusion, indicating a new maturity, coupled with a return to the traditional value system" (Larson 352). Being based mainly on the experiences of Krishna, an English lecturer at the Albert Mission College, *The English Teacher* more specifically deals with the consequences of an education system based on British values, the Indian teachers becoming the agents of such a system.

As it is an important theme in both Narayan's *Swami and Friends* and *The Bachelor of Arts*, the theme of colonial oppression, especially as strongly tied to the theme of the

necessity of decolonisation of Indian education is firmly established in *The English Teacher*. Krishna, the protagonist, teaches English literature at the Albert Mission College, of which he is a graduate and he is portrayed as a man who cannot find peace in him as stated in the novel: "I had done almost all the things I wanted to do, and as a result I felt heroic and satisfied. The urge had been upon me for some days past to take myself in hand. What was wrong with me? I couldn't say, some sort of vague disaffection, a self-rebellion I might call it" (421). It is evident that Krishna feels himself surrounded and depressed by the responsibilities and the monotony of the working life. He criticises the dominance of the routine relating the feeling of dissatisfaction he feels with "a sense of something missing" (421). He feels that he is "doing the wrong work" because he feels himself to be a "poet." He describes his life routine as teaching "Milton, Carlyle and Shakespeare," the students "mugging up" on them and getting his "hundred rupees on the first of every month" (421). His self-criticism about his job results from the clash of his own values in education with the imposed values of the authority of the college. Leena Sarkar summarises Krishna's criticism of the system and his situation in the college by pointing out that

> [t]he administration in the college is under jurisdiction of the Imperial rulers and this constantly puts pressure on him. The very fact alienates him from his traditional existence. The alienation is also from his culture- as a teacher of English, being a colonised subject; and at the same time as a worker under the colonial institution. (1)

As was the case in *The Bachelor of Arts*, the embodiment of the colonial authority at the college is the principal, who is presented to the reader in *The Bachelor of Arts*, and his demands and criticisms about the education at the college contradict with Krishna's ideals. To be precise, an important portrayal of the colonial oppression in education in the novel is Professor Brown's criticism of the students' spelling of the word "honour" without the letter "u." He calls all the instructors of the college to his office to discuss the issue in a serious atmosphere. His graveness about the spelling mistake of the students is evident in his following expressions: "Could you imagine a worse shock for me? I came across a student of the English Honours, who did not know till this day that "honours" had to be spelled with a "u"" (422). As the authority on the English language at the college, Professor Brown severely criticises the efficiency in the teaching of English and the teachers' potential. Then, he begins a lecture on his efforts of thirty

years in teaching how to write and speak correct English and the need to protect its purity. He uses the expression of "opening the eyes of the Indians" (422) to refer to the necessity of knowing correct English and this remark can be considered as a direct reference to the cultural assimilation process. As a reaction to his criticism, nobody in the meeting makes any comments, which can be considered as a passive acceptance of the accusations. After leaving the meeting, Gajapathy, who is also presented to the reader in *The Bachelor of Arts*, empathises with Professor Brown's evaluation and states: "Disgraceful! I never knew our boys were so bad…" (422). However, Krishna opposes him by expressing that "…there are blacker sins in this world than a dropped vowel'' and he wonders if Professor Brown can say "the cat chases the rat" in "any of the two hundred Indian languages" (422). As it is clear in his implication about Professor Brown's talent in any Indian language, Krishna reveals his "heightened sense of hatred" towards Professor Brown's supremacy (Acharya 1). Furthermore, Krishna challenges Professor Brown's criticism against the Indians about speaking perfect English by asking: "Why should he think the responsibility for learning is all on our side and none on his? Why does he magnify his own importance?" (422). It is clear in Krishna's evaluations that he is against the colonial authority and this situation is attached to the theme of decolonisation and to the need to re-establish the native values. As Gaur puts it, "Krishnan's abhorrence of Western education is a realisation of self, a rudimentary feature of Gandhian philosophy of education" (2). Nonetheless, Gajapathy does not support Krishna's criticism and leaves him alone. Upon his unsuccessful attempt in challenging the authority, Krishna starts to accuse himself of having talked about his thoughts openly and not controlling himself while criticising the authority as none of his colleagues dare to voice their comments. So, he relates his state of being out of control to the lack of exercise and decides to take a walk near the river in the mornings to relax his mind and soul (422). This incident can be evaluated as Narayan's attempt at depicting how the colonisers impose Western values without mistake at the missionary schools. Professor Brown's focusing on the supremacy of English as a means of creating British values in India and forty-five minutes of speech about the missing letter "u" (422), which is perceived as a great subject at the college. In this supremacy of Western assimilation, Krishna's opposition as a servant for this missionary education does not produce any distinct consequences. Krishna chooses to

focus on and preserve his inner peace rather than changing the ideas of the others. After a long walk near the pool, Krishna becomes delighted by the scene of Eastern skyline and feels content in his mind, which can be taken as a symbol of his enlightenment from the East or from where he belongs to. Krishna gets into the pool naked and reaches a "new release of life" (426). As he finds his freedom in nature, he is able write a poem that can be considered as a significant reference to the theme of decolonisation of the soul from the imposed identities and enforcements of the society. His happiness of releasing himself from the oppression of his working life is expressed in the novel as follows: "I felt I had discharged a duty assigned to me in some eternal scheme" (428).

Moreover, as it is clear in *The English Teacher*, Krishna's being surrounded by his responsibilities as a teacher prevents him to spare time for his special life. Nevertheless, spending time for individual pleasure causes Krishna to begin his lecturing unprepared. Because of this situation, he gets the attendance of the class orally to pass time and shouts at the students who do not listen to him. Sparing extra time for individual concerns causes a problem in his working program at the college. His discontent with this chaotic situation in class makes him inquire the source of assumed supremacy in class. He likens his job to a "lion-tamer" and confesses that he teaches English literature just to earn money:

> …the boys became quiet because I out-shouted them. The lion-tamer's touch! In a sober moment perhaps I would reflect on the question of obedience. Born in different households, perhaps petted, pampered, and bullied, by parents, uncles, brothers- all persons known to them and responsible for their growth and welfare. Who was I that they should obey my command? What tie was there between me and them? Did I absorb their personalities as did the old masters and merge them in mine? I was merely a man who had mugged earlier than they the introduction and the notes in the Verity edition of *Lear*, and guided them through the mazes of Elizabethan English. I did not do it out of love for them or for Shakespeare but only out of love for myself. If they paid me the same one hundred rupees for stringing beads together or tearing up paper bits every day for a few hours. I would perhaps be doing it with equal fervour. But such reflections do not mar our peace when we occupy the classroom chair. (428-429)

It is revealed from Krishna's stream of thoughts that his profession does not mean anything more than money and that he does not want to allow any cultural imposition in his teaching. This portrayal of Krishna can also be considered as a challenge against the British supremacy in education. Moreover, Krishna feels the need of a confession to his

students about his coming to the class unprepared as stated in the novel: “My dear fellows, don’t trust me so much. I am merely trying to mark time because I couldn’t come sufficiently prepared…” (429). Another reference to the inefficiency of education in the novel is Krishna’s lack of free time for discussing the mistakes of the students’ compositions. He teaches “*rather very, as such* for *hence*, split infinitives, collective nouns, and all the rest of the traps that the English language sets for foreigners” (431) in class, which are the detailed subjects of English grammar. Yet, he does not have the opportunity to give proper feedback because of the heavy workload on him. In addition to his lack of time for the discussion of the mistakes, Krishna criticises the unmodified subjects of the composition classes. For instance, the topic of “man is the master of his own destiny” seems “an idiotic theme” for Krishna, yet he “had been ordered to set this subject to the class” (431). Through Krishna’s evaluations about the unchangeable structure of school subjects, Narayan portrays the situations of the teachers as the servants of a colonised education system. It is clear in the novel that the teachers at Albert Mission College cannot challenge the system because they are not expected to promote native values; all they can do is to obey their British masters. Alpana S. Knippling summarises this situation as follows: “the subject-position of the teacher, or the set of rules enabling him to inhabit structures of power in the classroom, is most powerfully and ironically underwritten by both the colonial agency that assigns authority (“I had been ordered to set this subject”) and the “theme” of the composition topic…” (175).

Another important reference to the perception of colonial authority at Albert Mission College is clear in the cutting off points from the English spelling mistakes of the students in the examinations. The logic lecturer, Sastri and Dr. Menon, the Assistant Professor of Philosophy reject the idea. However, Gajapathy thinks that the accuracy of English is very important (432). As a reaction to the imposition of accurate English without any mistakes; Krishna refers to Americans’ spelling of the word “honours” without the “u” and Dr. Menan supports Krishna by commenting that “Americans are saner than their English cousins in most matters” (432). However, Gajapathy does not agree with them and calls the American spelling as “foolish buffoonery” (432). Then, contrary to Gajapathy’s evaluation of the American spelling, Krishna states that “[i]f we had the Americans ruling us, I suppose we would tell the same thing of the English

people" (432). So, Narayan portrays the unquestioning attitude of Gajapathy about Western culture to show how these values are strictly imposed upon the Indians and how they have lost their sense of belonging to their own nation. His lack of self-confidence and assimilation into the British ways makes Gajapathy significant in the portrayal of the products of the missionary education in India. The inefficiency of missionary education and the need for decolonisation are again underlined in the novel both by the portrayal of the teacher's ineffective role in education and the depiction of the teachers as assimilated servants of the British colonisation.

The last point that can be made about the depiction of the defects of missionary education in *The English Teacher* is related to Professor Brown's hypocrisy of granting passing grades to the students who have won an award in Western sporting games. He motivates the students by sending them to a tour and makes them get extra food at the college to encourage their playing of one of the Western games. Professor Brown seems to be doing this for the sake of implanting the culture of Western sports into Indian culture and he makes these games a part of education. Accordingly, Krishna criticises Professor Brown for bribing the students to learn the Western culture, as he believes that learning Western sports cannot contribute to India's modernisation (557). Also, a friend of Krishna, who is also the Headmaster of Krishna's daughter's school, criticises the same attitude of the colonial authority by condemning the colonisers to "worship sports" (557). He thinks that "[t]he main business of an educational institution is to shape the mind and character" and the sports games should not be put at the top in the scale of importance (557). He also thinks that the demand for sporting games creates "monkeys," not students in the education system (557). So, it is evident in Professor Brown's encouraging the students into playing a Western game shows the scope of the British efforts of the assimilation of India.

To conclude, in this chapter, Narayan's display of the evils of missionary education, specifically how it damages the identities of the students and the education system as reflected in the trilogy, has been discussed in relation to the theme of decolonisation. It has been discussed that, as a distinct attitude of Narayan, he stays a detached observer of the situations and events in Malgudi, that is, in India. Moreover, it has been shown that by the employment of irony and humour, the tone of Narayan's call for

decolonisation is rendered non-aggressive, which also enables Narayan to adopt a Gandhi-like resistance towards colonisation. Like Gandhi, Narayan chooses to stay calm, detached from chaos, and adopt an unpretentious style in his depiction of colonial India. Narayan's call for decolonisation is not a revolutionary one; on the contrary, he may be considered as literary representative of the idea of passive resistance towards India's freedom.

CHAPTER II

INDIANNESS AND TRADITIONALISM IN THE MALGUDIAN WORLD

One of the themes that recur frequently in Narayan's trilogy is the theme of Indianness and traditionalism which especially comes to the foreground through the preservation of Indian identity and customs by the majority of the Malgudians. In this chapter, Narayan's involvement in Hindu culture and Brahmanism, along with depicting the picture of everyday life and the relationship of the British and the Indians in Malgudi, will be elaborated on in order to argue that Narayan responds to colonisation by emphasising what is local and Indian, not by attacking what is British. George states that "[Malgudi] is the utopia of a benevolent Hinduism. The order and pattern that Narayan maintains in his novels constructs a conservative nationalism in its confidence that Hindu India survives" (123). The idea of the survival and conservation of Hindu society and culture in the trilogy places Narayan in a stable position in his rejection of the British colonisation. Contrary to his contemporaries, Narayan deliberately ignores or underplays the significance of the Western elements and characters in his novels by focusing on his own culture and especially Hindu characters. In support of this interpretation, one may also refer to Darshana Rani who states that Narayan's "British characters, though rather lifeless, serve as a prototype rather than characters in their own right" (16). In other words, in his own peculiar way, Narayan chooses to underline the importance of Indianness and Indian traditions as his strategy of responding to British colonisation. To illustrate this point, conservative Hindu women, the traditional relationship of the conservative family members, patriarchal family systems, *sanyasis*, psychic contact, astrology, horoscope mismatch and following of the almanacs, marriage arrangements, Hindu gods and how people pray to them, and the cremation ceremony that contribute to Narayan's depiction of the conservative Hindu society in Malgudi will be discussed throughout this chapter.

In *Swami and Friends*, the Indian identity is clearly represented by Swami's old grandmother, Granny, who lives with them. She is so old that Swami does not even want to introduce his grandmother to Rajam (31). She can be considered as the

embodiment of the Indian culture and history. Also, Narayan presents Granny through her communication with Swami and Srinivasan to show the generation gap, or how culture evolves in time. Granny does not change in time; however, this also means that she cannot keep up with the times. In addition, Narayan integrates humour into her conversations with the younger characters and this adds a natural tone to his narration. Granny's ignorance about the cricket game can be considered an example of her belonging to the past and the humorousness of her conversations with Swami. Swami practices with the cricket team of Albert Mission School and he wants to share this experience with his Granny. Nevertheless, she does not know about this foreign game and wants to learn about it. Her ignorance dispirits Swami and he begins to scold her: "I wonder what the boys and men of your days did in the evenings! I think they spent all the twenty-four hours in doing holy things" (102). Due to the generation gap between them, Granny's ignorance of cricket seems absurd to Swami. Then, he gives a long speech about the history of cricket to Granny and his future plans of becoming a famous cricket player (103). As Fernando states, Swami acts like a guru for her, because her only connection with the real world is through Swami. Also, Srinivasan's interference in the conversation between Swami and Granny is significant in terms of portraying Granny's opinion about new India. In a cynical way, Srinivasan teases his mother: "Indeed! I never knew Mother was a sportswoman. Mother, I hope Swami has filled you with cricket-wisdom" (103). Yet, Granny gets angry with his son's teasing and accuses him "of not explaining things" to her because they are "all big men" (103). Granny belongs to the period of time when India was a country based on Indian traditions and values, and so she is not happy with her loneliness in the new India. There is also a sense of accusation in her words when referring to his son and people who have serious responsibilities in society as "big men." As it is evident in Granny's words, the lack of communication between his son and herself is directly because of his son's commitment to his business and his neglection of her. Also because the Granny character was inspired by Narayan's own grandmother, his tone in the depiction of this representative of the old Indian custom and tradition is quite sympathetic.

Another portrayal of Granny in the novel is also necessary to understand Narayan's attachment of importance to family. Narayan pictures the birth of a new member of Swami's family, his brother, realistically and during Swami's nervous waiting for the

birth, Granny appears as a 'reassuring' figure near him because Granny knows everything about familial events and affairs. Swami "was allowed" to sleep with Granny because it is a special occasion (40). In addition to Granny's representing ancestral wisdom, Narayan portrays the scene of the birth experience in the family as real as possible:

> She [midwife] behaved as if the house belonged to her. She entered Mother's room, presently out of the room came a mingled noise of whispers and stifled moans. She came out of the room with a serious face and ordered everybody about. She commanded even Father to do something. He vanished to do something. He vanished for a moment and reappeared for with a small bottle in his hand. He hovered about uncertainly. The hushed voices, hurry, seriousness, agitation, hot water, and medicine-preparations for ushering a new person into world-were too bewildering for Swaminathan's comprehension. Meanwhile Granny kept asking something of everybody that passed by . . . . (40)

Evidently, Narayan gives the details of the experience and how the members of the family behave in accordance with their roles and situations in a real Indian family. From this portrayal, it is important to note that even the father is commanded by the midwife. The authoritative positioning of the father in the family is underlined by Srinivasan's taking a role in the birth preparation work. Also, very similar to Granny, Swami's mother is also portrayed as a traditional Hindu woman. She is the stereotype of an Indian housewife in her commitment to housework and her children. She is under the command of her husband and economically dependent on him. Due to this situation, Srinivasan uses a serious and authoritative tone when he talks to Swami's mother as reflected in the following:

> Mother stopped Father and said: 'By the way I want some change. The tailor is coming today. He has been pestering me for the last four days'.
> 'Ask him to come tomorrow,' Father said. Mother was insistent. Father returned to his bureau, searched for the keys, opened it, took out a purse, and gave her the change. 'I don't know how I am going to manage things for the rest of the month' he said, peering into the purse'. (22)

Both Granny and Mother "are models of virtue and are steeped in the ancient traditions" (George 25). They are silent and passive when compared to Swami's father. According to Gaur, "[t]hey belong to the same class and confine themselves to the four walls of the house. Both of them are satisfied with their role of a homely, submissive, subservient and serviceful household lady. They represent the age-old traditional women of the Indian middle-class family" (20).

Considering Srinivasan's relationship with Swami and his portrayal as a father figure in the novel, he appears as a serious and demanding figure, as well. Due to his respected status in the society as a lawyer, he wants to establish the same respect in his family. Accordingly, he does not let himself have an intimate relationship with Swami. He frequently criticises Swami harshly for his way of passing spare time and his performance at school. To illustrate, Srinivasan shouts at Swami about his list of school needs to be bought before the new term of the school starts. In the depiction of this incident in the novel, Swami is portrayed as nervous and excited before he presents the list to his father. He hesitates to go into Srinivasan's room because he seems very busy. He is so afraid of his father's reactions that he cannot answer Srinivasan's questions after he has realised the presence of someone. His father scolds him because he feels himself disturbed in his room because of others' interruptions:

> 'You idiot, why couldn't you answer instead of driving me hoarse calling out "Who is that? Who is that?" A man can't have peace in this house even for a second. Here I am at work- and every fifth second somebody or other pops in with some fool question or other. How am I to go on? Go and tell your mother that she can't come to my room for the rest of the day. (48)

It is obvious in Srinivasan's anger that he complains about not being able to concentrate on his work and as the authority figure at home he prevents his wife's coming into his room until he finishes his works. As he has an important position as the breadwinner, he does not want to be involved in the household's world of mundane interests. Although Swami does his best not to be scolded by his father, he becomes the target of his severe criticism as exemplified below:

> Swaminathan had to cough twice to find his voice. 'It is-my-examination list.'
> 'What examination list?'
> 'My examination begin the day after tomorrow, you know.'
> 'And yet you are wandering about the house like an unleashed donkey! What preposterous list is this? Do you think rupees, annas and paise drop from the sky?
> […]
> He took out an awful red pencil and scored out the 'Pad' from the list. It almost gashed the list. He flung it back at Swaminathan, who looked at it sadly.
> […]
> He was just going out when Father called him back and said: 'Here, boy, as you go, for goodness' sake, remove the baby from the hall. I can't stand his idiotic cry. (48)

From their conversation, evidently, Srinivasan insults his son and calls him an "unleashed donkey" because he does not start to study for his lessons and throws the list

back at Swami as he finds it "preposterous." Therefore, Srinivasan creates a distance between himself and his son, and the other people at home because he has the authority to scold everybody if he gets irritated by their behaviours or existence.

Furthermore, Srinivasan calls Swami "an extraordinary idiot" (70) as Swami is not able to show his arithmetic skills in solving a problem. Because Swami abstains from being criticised by his father, he cannot concentrate on the solution. In order to please his father with a proper answer, he feels that he has to think every detail very carefully and he begins to question if the mangoes in the arithmetic question are ripe or not. He tries to understand the logic of paying fifteen annas for ten mangoes because it is too much a price if they are not ripe (71). The humorousness of Swami's way of thinking is an evidence for Swami's childish nature and of how much he cares about pleasing his father. Nevertheless, Srinivasan's harsh punishments of Swami proves him a hard-hearted father figure as depicted also in the following:

> His hand took Swaminathan's ear and gently twisted it. Swaminathan could not open his mouth because he could not decide whether the solution lay in the realm of addition, subtraction, multiplication or division. The longer he hesitated, the more violent the twist was becoming. In the end when Father was waiting with a scowl for an answer, he received only a squeal from his son. 'I am not going to leave you till you tell me how much a single mango costs fifteen annas for ten.' (71)

Upon his father's insistence on his finding the answer, finally Swami solves the arithmetic problem, but he cries because of his father's oppression. Concerning Srinivasan's attitude towards Swami with detached aloofness that comes from his occupation as a lawyer, his preserving the authoritative decision maker position at home creates distance and anxiety for Swami. In fact, Srinivasan's role at home is a distinct example of patriarchy; nevertheless, his commitment to save this perception is the same with his tendency to preserve his respected image in the society. Towards the end of the novel, after Swami is dismissed also from Board High School, he is lost in a forest because he loses the way. Granny and Swami's mother become worried about Swami's disappearance, yet Srinivasan seems non-caring because he does not want to appear as a desperate man whose son has done such an embarrassing thing (122). Srinivasan searches for his son just because the household wants him do so and he thinks that it is not a proper behaviour to search for him because it is Swami's lack of responsibility. He

does not want his son to think that he is in a helpless situation and warns the household: "If he comes before I return, for heaven's sake don't let him know what I am out for. I don't care to appear a fool in his eyes" (123). Obviously, Narayan portrays Srinivasan's domestic and social concerns as a typical Indian man titled as a father in a patriarchal family and as middle class man in Indian society. Torn between the tasks at home and in society, he never lets himself to experience the humanistic feelings as a person, and chooses to pretend to ultimate rationalism. The portrayal of Srinivasan's concerns about his status both at home and in society in the novel is significant in pointing out the effects of colonialism to the caste system. As a lawyer of Western education, Srinivasan belongs to the upper middle class and he tries to preserve his serious and privileged image in the eyes of the Indian people who belong to the same class. Possessing the title of a lawyer with Western education, he is more careful than an ordinary Indian person and this situation causes him to adopt an insensitive attitude towards his family.

Another observation on the conservative Hindu society in *Swami and Friends* is conveyed to the reader by the incident of Swami's praying to the gods. The incident begins with Swami's aim of getting a cycle wheel to play with in the summer holiday. He goes to a coach man who seems to be sympathetic to Swami because of his kind attitude and pays five rupees for the wheel. Then the coachman offers a magic box which is worth six paise. He stimulates Swami's mind by telling a lie about putting the box on the ground and performing some yoga to change the copper inside the box into silver. He warns Swami about hurrying up to find the money because he will be going away with his master (54-55). Upon the coach man's instructions Swami goes home and tries to get money from his parents, but no one gives him the money. Then, as a Brahmin, he aims to perform a religious offering to the gods in order to get the money as the coach man has explained. He finds a box and puts two pebbles in it to be changed into three-paise coins. He begs the gods with great sincerity and starts to wait for a while (56). After Swami's prayers, unfortunately, nothing changes in the box. Disappointed by the gods, Swami becomes enraged and kicks the box. However, immediately he realises that the Hindu gods have the potential to destroy his life if they are disturbed by his irrational behaviour. Swami's stream of thoughts about the consequences of offending the gods is reflected in the following:

> The indifference of the gods infuriated him and brought tears to his eyes. He wanted to abuse the gods, but was afraid to. Instead, he vented all his rage on the cardboard box, and kicked it from place to place and stamped upon the leaves and sand. He paused and doubted if the gods would approve off even this. He was afraid that it might offend them. He might get on without money, but it was dangerous to incur the wrath of gods; they might make him fail in his examinations, or kill Father, Mother, Granny, or the baby. (57)

Swami's Brahmanism and deep feelings about his religion can be considered as a strong reference to Indian spiritualism in the novel. Although his efforts to change the pebbles into coins by praying to the gods results unsuccessfully, he does not care about the money anymore because of his strong belief in gods' potential to change one's life to a disaster. His attachment to this spirituality may be interpreted as Swami's rejection of Western materialism, which is in line with V. Smith's contention that "[t]he values, attitudes, concepts and language embedded in beliefs about spirituality represent, in many cases, the clearest contrast and mark of difference between indigenous peoples and the West" (74). In other words, as a typical Brahmin, he does not let himself revolt against his gods and thus against Indian customs, because he believes that only if he follows his tradition, he can survive.

In the second novel of the trilogy, *The Bachelor of Arts*, Narayan mainly focuses on the value of the indigenous in order to portray how Indian customs shape the lives of individuals in India. In relation to this, conservative Hindu society and modern India under the effects of colonialism are depicted as challenging one another and Chandran's life is completely affected as a result of this clash. However, Narayan repeatedly expresses the value of Hindu conservatism in *The Bachelor of Arts* and creates a sense of inevitable dependence on Hindu customs, although most of the time he also underlines the irony and humorousness in the practice of Hindu customs in colonial India. In relation to this point, S. Girija comments on Narayan's style as follows:

> Conservative India is seen with humour and some satire as a mixture of traditional holiness, with the comfort-loving sterility of the bourgeoisie. Modern India is seen as an inevitable, but inescapable phenomenon, compounded of extreme political activism, permissive notions, the breakdown of the transitional joint family system. The secret of Narayan is his ability to keep these values in a perfect balance. It makes him a sub-title writer, concealing irony beneath a blandly simple; exterior as a plain story-teller. (32)

The subject of marriage in *The Bachelor of Arts* can be considered as the most important point to be discussed with reference to the value Narayan ascribes to the indigenous culture. After Chandran graduates from Albert Mission College, he begins to take long walks near the Saruyu River to think about his plans for future. One day, he sees Malathi near the river and falls in love with her. He does not have any information about the girl's family and due to this situation, the customary restrictions that govern marriage in the Hindu culture begin to worry Chandran's mind: "Suppose, though unmarried, she belonged to some other caste? A marriage would not be tolerated even between sub-castes of the same caste. If India was to attain salvation these water-tight divisions must go-Community, Caste, Sects, Sub-sects, and still further divisions" (197). It is evident that Chandran protests the Hindu traditions in society which prevent people from establishing relationships without considering the appropriateness of social hierarchy and he feels nervous about his possible relationship with Malathi. However, what is humorous about his affection to Malathi is that Chandran does not even figure out her physical features clearly: "He had not made out yet whether she was fair or light brown; whether she had long hair or short, and whether her eyes were round or almond-shaped; and he had also some doubts about her nose" (203). So, his falling in love with a girl whose figure is not clear in his mind can be considered as a comic element by which Narayan wants to underline the humorous aspects of the practice of conservatism in India. Trimurthy explains this point as follows: "The prominent forte of Narayan's writings is his comic vision, which is universal in appeal without losing the essential fragrance of its Indianness. He is the most authentic and artistic of all Indian writers in English and presents people as they are unbiased" (426). So, Chandran's obsession of considering his feelings for Malathi as love can be explained as the source of his sufferings. His obsession makes him create illusions about her and this situation strengthens the humorous tone:

> She was invariably absent on Fridays and came late on Wednesdays. Chandran concluded from this that the girl went to the temple on Friday evenings, and was delayed by a music master or a stitching master on Wednesdays. He further gathered that she was of a religious disposition, and was accomplished in the art of music or embroidery. From her regularity he concluded that she was a person of very systematic habits. The fact that she played with her young companion showed that she had a loving disposition. (204)

In order to arrange the marriage proposal, Chandran consults to his father's advice. However, Chandran's father does not know the necessities of the custom properly and he asks his wife about the marriage arrangement. Chandran's mother opposes to his decision because "a Head Clerk's daughter was not what she had hoped to get for her son" (207). She protests that the girls that have been introduced to Chandran are "richer and more beautiful" (207). Yet, Chandran does not mind his mother's protests and insists that he "will marry this girl no one else" (207). Chandran's assurance about the girl's possible feelings about him may be considered as his self-centeredness. Accordingly, Beatina calls Chandran's one-sided love as "selfishness" and states that "[w]e see in Chandran the feelings and emotions of an adolescent lad, but the arrogance with which he attempts to satiate his desires unveils his selfishness and mundane freedom" (45). Contrary to Chandran's insisting on marrying the girl he wants, his mother as a conservative Hindu woman cares for the appropriateness of the two families in terms of caste by questioning "what they are worth for":

> 'But how are you sure they are prepared to give their daughter to you?'
> 'They will have to.'
> 'Extraordinary! Do you think marriage is a child's game? We don't know anything about them, who they are, what they are, what they are worth for, if the stars and the other things about the girl are all right, and above all, whether they are prepared to marry their girl at all…' (208)

Chandran's mother, as an embodiment of a conservative Hindu woman, insists on following the customs and acting properly. According to the Hindu customs, the girl's family should propose first to the boy's family and Chandran's mother supposes that the girl's father waits Chandran to propose first and consequently they will not have to pay the dowry (210). She feels deep pain about the inappropriateness of the arrangement:

> That man, the girl's father, seems to be a deep man. He is playing a deep game. He is waiting for our boy to go to him, when he can get a good husband for his daughter without giving a dowry and without expensive wedding…This boy Chandra is talking nonsense. This is what we get for our all our troubles…I shall drown myself in Sarayu before I allow any proposal to go from here. (210)

Chandran's mother's commitment to the survival of tradition and her nervousness about not getting the wedding dowry can be considered within the concept of strong conservatism which is also common in Narayan's fiction. So, even though it can be equated with selfishness, Chandran's mother cannot sacrifice her conservatism for

Chandran's happiness. Narayan may be deliberately showing the significance of tradition for Hindu culture by picturing this extreme loyalty which is about to cross the line to selfishness. Peter Nazareth evaluates this situation as Narayan's extreme attachment to reality: "Narayan presents his characters as comic in the blindness of their egoism; and yet as never so small that one cannot feel sympathy for them" (125).

After all, in order to find a way for a marriage arrangement, Chandran's family decides to get help from the match-maker Ganapathi Sastrigal. As a procedure of Indian tradition, he visits the girl's house and comes to explain his opinion about the family. Ganapathi does not feel any contradictions between the two families and he manages the traditional requirements in order to arrange the marriage. According to the information that he shares with Chandran's family, "she is by no means to be classed as a dark girl" (213) and she "has just completed her fourteenth year" (214) which means that Chandran's family hopefully would not be condemned by the Indian society to marry their son to a girl who is older than sixteen, an issue that is given in the novel as follows: "[Chandran's mother] wouldn't have to marry her son to a girl over sixteen, and incur the comments of the community" (214). Ganapathi reveals the information that the family has accepted to propose Chandran's family because they plan to marry their daughter in the *Panguni* month. Yet, the girl's father Krishnan has doubts about the appropriateness of the castes of the families, that is about whether Chandran's family cares about his status or not (214). However, it is evident in the novels of Narayan that the caste background does not significantly affect his characters: "Narayan seems to allow caste to enter fictional works only in its broadest and most general aspect so that it does not tie him down too much" (Shankar 51). Accordingly, Chandran's mother, for instance, wants to prevent their being perceived as a family which overvalues economic concerns:

> 'Status! Status!' Chandran's mother exclaimed. We have seen with these very eyes people who were rich once, but are in the streets now, and such pranks of fate. What a foolish notion to measure status with money. It is here today and gone tomorrow. What I would personally care for most in any alliance would be character and integrity. (214)

Nevertheless, although Chandran's mother reveals that she thinks money is not important in relationships, she does not abstain from asking the amount of the dowry that Malathi's family is supposed to pay. Ganapathi states that the family is going to pay

"two thousand rupees, silver vessels and presents up to a thousand, and spend about a thousand on the wedding celebrations. These will be in addition to about a thousand worth of diamond and gold on the girl" (214). Yet, Chandran's mother is "slightly disappointed at the figures" and suggests that they can settle the issue later (214). This representation of Chandran's mother as a woman of values can be defined by Narayan's "talent for creating characters with all their idiosyncrasies" (Nazareth 129).

However, the last but the most important step in completing the marriage arrangement is the matching of Chandran's and Malathi's horoscopes. To point out the importance of the horoscopes, Ganapathi explains that in the Hindu marriage customs only if the horoscopes match, the couple will get "health, happiness, harmony and long life" (215). Referring to the importance of horoscopes is vital in portraying the deep roots of Hinduism in astrology, as well. Moreover, Narayan's paying a special attention to the matching of the horoscopes in his novels is also related to his own marriage experience. He mostly brings the subject of astrology to the foreground in his novels and as Chandra S. Sharma states, "[m]any of the protagonists in his novels are staunch in his faith in Astrology and thus, in fatalism. They believe that wrong matching of horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom results in calamity or even death of either of the two" (19). In Chandran's point of view, the matching of the horoscopes is not necessary; however, he has to follow the custom for the sake of his family:

> He felt that he could easily have talked to her when she was alone on the sands; he could have tried to write to her; he could have befriended Mr Krishna Iyer and asked him for the hand of his daughter; and he could have done a number of other things, but he didn't, for the sake of his parents; he wanted everything to be done in the correct, orthodox manner. (217)

After the arrival of Malathi's horoscope, Chandran's mother needs to warn him about the time to be waited for the result of the matching of the horoscopes and the necessary procedures of the marriage arrangement, which is also a significant example of Narayan's depicting the Hindu custom without missing the details:

> 'Chandra, you must not think that the only thing now to be settled is the date of the marriage. God helping, all the difficulties will be solved, but there are yet a number of preliminaries to be settled. First, our astrologer must tell us if your horoscope can be matched with the girl's; and then I don't know what their astrologer will say…After that they must come and invite us to see the girl.'
> […]

> Chandran sat biting his nails: 'But, Mother, you won't create difficulties over the dowry?'
> 'We shall see. We must not be too exacting, nor can we cheapen ourselves.' (219)

This conservatism in the novel becomes more dominant when Malathi's family turns down the marriage proposal because of a mismatch in the horoscopes. Malathi's father writes a letter to Chandran's father explaining that he has a "great faith in horoscopy, and . . . [he has] known from experience that the marriage of couples ill-matched in the stars often leads to misfortune and even tragedy" (221). Yet, Chandran's mother seems doubtful about the honesty of the girl's family, because they may have created an excuse for not paying the dowry they are supposed to pay. She also thinks that the flaw in the horoscope must be in the girl's, not in Chandran's, because his "is a first-class horoscope" (221). As it can be understood from her opinions, she believes that there should be the appropriateness in castes. She accuses Malathi's family for finding an excuse for the dowry and considers his son superior to the girl. From the beginning of the marriage arrangement, Narayan portrays the traditional concerns of a conservative Hindu woman through Chandran's mother and in such a problematic situation her deep belief in the elitism of her caste and not accepting the flaw in Chandran's horoscope prove her as a woman who cares for the well-being of her family, as well. Her accusation of the other side is also for the sake of another traditional concern as she reveals in the following: "If they go on spreading the rumour that Chandran has Mars, a nice chance he will have of ever getting a girl" (224). Nonetheless, Chandran feels so depressed and disappointed that his family requests Krishna Iyer to visit them in order to talk about the subject comprehensively. According to the astrologer of Chandran's family there is not a mismatch in the horoscopes. Chandran's father orders an eminent astrologer and almanac-compiler in the town to study the issue again. Their discussion of the results of a more detailed study on the horoscopes is significant in the novel in terms of the portrayal of the strength of beliefs and traditions in making decisions about people's lives:

> Srouthigal looked at Krishna Iyer and said, 'These two horoscopes are well-matched.'
> 'Did you notice the Mars?'
> 'Yes, but it is powerless now. It is now under the sway of the Sun, which looks at it from the Fifth House.'
> 'But I doubt it, sir.' Krishna Iyer said.

> Srouthigal thrust the papers into Krishna Iyer's hands, and asked, 'How old is the boy?'
> 'Nearly twenty-three.'
> 'Was it twelve and eight?'
> 'Twenty.'
> 'How can the boy be affected by it at twenty-three? If he had married at twenty, he might have had to marry again, but not now. Mars became powerless when the boy was twenty years, three months, and five days old.' (223)

As it is obvious from the deep discussion presented above, traditions speak before the feelings of the people in a marriage arrangement in India. Consequently, although the families follow the Hindu culture in planning the marriage of their children, the varieties within the same culture prevent the marriage because Chandran's family uses the *Drig* almanac, but Malathi's family follows the *Vakya* (223). Likewise, other than the sociocultural and economic backgrounds of the families, the different interpretations of the tradition can also decide people's fates. The detailed depiction of the Indian traditions and the power of cultural concerns in deciding one's fate can be considered as Narayan's attachment to his own culture and its distinctive details by focusing on the theme of Indianness and traditionalism in *The Bachelor of Arts.* Related to this point, Nazareth thinks that Western readers "may be shocked" by these facts in the novel because "we get a picture of Indian society in so far as it differs from Western society" (133).

In the novel, after Chandran loses his hope to marry the girl he loves, he decides to leave Malgudi and goes to Madras for a change in his mood. However, this journey changes into a kind of self-realisation for him. Chandran decides to wander around as a *sanyasi* in order to forget his depression. At the end of this journey he understands that Malgudi is the place that he belongs to and his love for Malathi has been just an affection, not true love. As Chandran is back to Malgudi, his mother organises a marriage arrangement with a girl in Talapur. Chandran agrees to see the girl, yet he has some doubts about offending the girl if he declines the proposal because of the girl's appearance. Yet, Chandran's mother gives an answer which again reflects her traditionalism: "You can marry only the person whom you are destined to marry and at the appointed time. When the time comes, let her be the ugliest girl, she will look all right to the destined eye" (285). Related to Chandran's mother's conservatism, Gaur underlines the fact that "[h]er views about marriage reveal her intransigent adherence to

traditional code, customs and beliefs which to her are sacrosanct and inviolable. She is a die-hard orthodox" (27).

Also, Narayan deals with another basic belief of Hinduism, the *dharma*, "the traditional Hindu moral order" (Constable 152), into his portrayal of the Indian customs and through the advices of Chandran's mother about fate, her belief in *dharma* is also reflected in the novel. She reveals that "[it] is all settled already, the husband of every girl and wife of every man. It is nobody's choice" (286) and that Chandran "must allow the things to be done in proper order" (288). Constable further explains that Narayan uses *dharma* to fully portray custom bound realities in India: Narayan's novels propose a solution to this [tradition and individual freedom] contradiction by translating the traditional Hindu moral order (*dharma*) and the individual's role in life (*karma*) into modern terms of reference and situation" (152). Also, Ashok Bery states that Narayan's giving the message of *dharma* is significant in explaining the general outlook of the Hindu culture to life: "Perhaps the most important [point to understand Narayan's traditionalism] is the notion of *dharma* a term which has been translated variously as "law," "religion," "the eternal law that governs all human and non-human existence," "right action," "conformity," "with the truth of things," "the rules of conduct of a group"" (8). That is to say, *dharma* may be considered as one of the indigenous points of reference in Narayan's portrayal of Indianness in the Malgudian world.

The last point to deal with in relation to the theme of Indianness and traditionalism in *The Bachelor of Arts* is Narayan's focusing on holy men and their respected fame in Indian society. To illustrate Narayan's concern about this matter in the novel, his focus on Chandran's mother and her tradition-bound beliefs about the holy men can be commented upon. The holy man picks flowers from the garden of Chandran's family without getting their permission in early morning hours and he is mistaken for a thief by Chandran's father when he is caught as he picks some flowers. Yet, Chandran's mother understands that he is a *sanyasi* because his loin-cloth is ochre-coloured and he has matted hair and she shouts in fear of capturing a holy man because she does not want to get "the curse of the holy man on the family" (183). Her deep conservatism can be sensed from the following quotation:

> Chandran was cynical. 'What, Mother, you are frightened of every long hair and ochre dress you see. If you are really a holy man, why should you do this?'
> 'What have I done?' asked the thief.
> 'Jumping in and stealing flowers.'
> 'If you lock the gate, how else can I get in than by jumping over the wall? As for stealing flowers, flowers are there. God-given. What matters it whether you throw the flowers on the gods, or I do it. It is all the same.'
> […]
> Mother interposed and said, 'You can go now, sir. If you want flowers you can take them. There couldn't be a better way of worship than giving flowers to those who really worship.' (183)

So, it is clear that she does not want to draw the hatred of the gods upon herself by punishing a holy man. Consequently, the holy man understands that Chandran's mother "never let a day go without worship" (184) and he decides to take only a handful and leave the rest for her use. As Nazareth states "Narayan's great strength is that, without much pretension, he sees his characters 'in time', as part of the Indian scene" (129) and through the portrayal of this simple incident, Narayan can prove the respectful attitude for the holy men and their commitment to the worship of gods who believe that everything in the world belongs to the gods, not the people. Accordingly, in order to prove that India is a country with its unique customs and beliefs, as Vipul V. Makodia relates, Narayan "advocates acceptance of traditional Indian philosophical norms, for the sake of spiritual tranquillity and social harmony" (68). In *The Bachelor of Arts*, the theme of Indianness and traditionalism, along with the characters' concern about the preservation of the Indian identity and customs, is revealed to the reader in a detailed way or very much like the real India.

The similar preoccupation of Narayan in *The English Teacher* is observed in Krishna's family life, especially through the depiction of conservative Hindu women, his interactions with his friend, the Headmaster, the portrayals of Malgudians in different contexts, and Krishna's spiritual communication with his wife which is the most traditional and unique experience in the novel. Like Chandran's mother in *The Bachelor of Arts*, Krishna's mother in *The English Teacher* is the representative of conservative Hindu women and possesses the ability of running the house and fulfilling the requirements of the custom and religion in the family. She is a helpful mother and acts as the authority in domestic matters. Through her portrayal as a mother of responsibilities, Narayan shows the Indian system of family life. At the beginning of the

novel, Krishna's wife, Susila and their daughter Leela live in Susila's family's house because Krishna works in Malgudi to arrange a proper settlement for his family. Before his family's arrival, Krishna's mother comes from the village to Malgudi in order to help him make up the house. She supplies the needs of the house and arranges the order with careful work and self-sacrifice. She knows her duties as a woman, which she states as follows: "If a woman can't take charge of a house and run it sensibly, she must be made to get into man's dress and go out in procession…" (446). Also, Narayan portrays her diligence in detail, which helps the reader to visualise her commitment to domestic matters: "She was completely wrapped up in her duties. House-keeping was a grand affair for her. The essence of her existence consisted in the thrills and pangs and the satisfaction that she derived in running a well-ordered household. She was unsparing and violent where she met slovenliness" (446).

In addition, her respect to the religious issues is portrayed in detail as she cleans the house every time the cow comes in and out. She never goes near the cows before she bathes. Likewise, after the arrival of Susila and Leela she conducts a short religious ceremony: "She had decorated the threshold with a festoon of green mango leaves and the floor and the doorway with white flour designs…She had a pan of vermilion solution ready at hand and circled it before the young mother and child, before allowing them to get down from the carriage" (451). So, Krishna's mother wants to relate every step she takes in the formation of a new family to pleasing the gods.

In the novel, Narayan also emphasises the continuity of the traditions from the older generations to the younger ones. To illustrate this point, Krishna's mother has kept Susila near her after she gets married with Krishnan in order to teach her the responsibilities of running a household. As an authority in domestic matters she thinks that "[e]very girl on earth should be made to pass through [her] hands" (446) if they want to marry. As Susila is the last daughter of her family, she has spent her time "reading, knitting, embroidering or looking after the garden" (446) and therefore she needs to be trained about serious subjects in managing the house as stated in the novel: "My wife had picked up many sensible points in cooking and household economy, and her own parents were tremendously impressed with her attainments when she next visited them" (446). It is observed in the novel that, a wife's role in the conservative

Indian society is to know how to cook and manage the economy of the house. Trained by her mother-in-law, Susila fulfils the requirements of a conservative Hindu housewife:

> She is depicted in various roles of a considerate, dutiful, contentious and charming wife, a loving mother, a reverential daughter-in-law and a darling daughter of her parents. She is amiable by temperament. She is an ideal woman who carries our successfully the different proverbial roles of a Hindu woman in a middle-class family. She annoys none and radiates an aura of joy, peace and cordially around her. Susila possesses great physical charms. (Gaur 43)

In further depictions of Susila in the novel, she keeps "silver images of the gods," covers them with flowers, prays before them every morning by lighting "two small lamps" (453). Also she knows how to practice economy at home: "a hundred rupees seemed to do work of two hundred" in her hands (453-454). She listens to her husband's complaints about work and she always takes side with him. She also likes to read books and poems as a couple. She prefers to read "Tamil classics and Sanskrit texts" (460) on her own, but she needs help in the English ones. In her portrayal as a literate lady in the house can also be considered as Narayan's message about the necessity for women's education to achieve perfection. She is a responsible mother and she states that it is the parents' duty to secure the life of a child. She warns her husband not to make unnecessary expenditures and save money. Apart from her being an ideal housewife, she is also a close friend of her husband at home. Krishna shares his dreams of being a famous poet in the future with her and Susila cheers him up by making jokes. She has the potential of being an exemplary traditional Hindu woman and a modern wife at home. As Gaur states, Susila is the combination of modern and traditional values:

> Krishna's wife, Susila, in *The English Teacher*, is a class in herself. She is educated, genial, physically charming and a darling of all the members of her in-law's family and of her own parents. She is delineated as an ideal middle-class Indian woman who, despite her modern education, fits so well in different social roles of a homely woman such as a wife, a daughter-in-law and a daughter. She is a synthesis of the 'mundane' and the 'spiritual' qualities. Her skill in house-management coupled with her loving and regardful attitude towards all those who came in contact with her presents with her as an idealized harmonious combination of both modernity and of the traditional tenets of the Indian society'. (230)

Moreover, Susila has quite an important role in determining a turning point in Krishna's life and in the novel's narrative. After Susila is united with her husband under the same

roof, Krishna begins to experience the quality of domestic life at home. Apart from his responsibilities as a teacher, he needs to fulfil the requirements of being a husband and a father at home. Because he wants to give a better life to his family, he meets his colleague Sastri who also deals with selling houses. In order to decide together, Krishna takes Susila with him to see the house. As they examine the house, Susila unfortunately gets stuck in a dirty lavatory in the garden where she catches typhoid. She feels desperate when Krishna rescues her. She lies in bed for days and does not eat properly because she detests the memory of the flies and other creatures that she has seen in that dirty lavatory. She suffers from headache and high temperature for a long time and eventually passes away.

Related to Susila's death, another point to take into consideration in terms of the theme of Indianness and traditionalism in *The English Teacher* is the process of Susila's cremation. Narayan tells the details of the process as follows:

> The priest roams over the house, asking for one thing or other for performing the rites…The corpse-bearers, grim and subhuman, have arrived with their equipment- bamboo and coir ropes. Near the front step they raise a small fire with cinders and faggots- this is the fire which is to follow us to the cremation ground […] Everyone gathers a handful of rice and puts it between her lips- our last offering. They shoulder the stretcher. I am given a pot containing the fire and we march out …. (513)

Narayan also continues to tell about the carrying of the body to the cremation field, the person who collects the fee after he takes the information about her "name, age and disease" and writes it on the notebook, the carrying of the dry cowdung fuel, Krishna's performing a rite before her lifeless body, lighting up of the cremation fire and people's placing her to the cremation ground "leaving only the face and a part of her chest out, four layers deep down" (514-515). The scene which Narayan creates before the eyes of the readers is exactly the same with the real traditional process in India. Also, as it belongs to the real life experience of Narayan, the death of Susila can be considered as the death of Rajam, Narayan's wife. Mason comments that Narayan and Rajam got married although there was a mismatch in their horoscopes which would make the wife die after a while (Mason "The Master of Malgudi"). So, Narayan tells about his own marriage life through his novels *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher* by discussing the cultural restrictions surrounding the marriage ritual in India. In the light

of the information about the marriage arrangement in India and Narayan's marriage in his biography provided so far, Narayan's life story is displayed by the mismatch of horoscopes in *The Bachelor of Arts* and the death of his wife in *The English Teacher.* Narayan uses the same name, Susila, for the wife of Chandran and the wife of Krishna and also portrays his own wife's story by telling the issues of mismatch in horoscopes and death in different novels. He also does not let Chandran lose his wife because of a mismatch and Chandran prefers to follow the rules of tradition in the end of the novel. Likewise, Krishna does not lose his wife because of a mismatch in horoscopes, but illness. In that sense, Narayan may follow the rules of Indian cultural rules about marriage and reflect his close ties to Indian traditions and customs by this way. Narayan's organisation of the marriage issues in *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher* reveals that he is likely to explicate both the stories of Susila-Chandran and Susila-Krishna in relation to the value of the indigenous Indian identity and traditionalism.

Also, in *The English Teacher*, the death of Susila can be considered to be the most significant turning point in terms of Narayan's turning this agony into illusions: "The theme of the novel is obviously the death of Sushila [Susila] in the first half and her resurrection in the second; paradise lost being followed by paradise regained. Initial sense of loss at the death of his wife is reverted into the feeling of ecstasy in his spiritual communion with her spirit" (Makodia 77). However, even after her death, Susila does not want to be separated from Krishna and she succeeds to send a message to him by a medium who can communicate with the spirits by "automatic writing" (530). The medium sends a letter to Krishna informing him that his wife has a message for him and immediately they meet at a certain place where the medium falls into a trance and uses automatic writing to convey Susila's message to Krishna. Krishna gets illuminated by the experience and he starts to meet with the medium once a week. The place where Krishna and the medium get together is presented in an oriental atmosphere which is unique for holy meetings: "It looked like a green haven. Acres and acres of trees, shrubs and orchards. Far off, casuarina leaves murmured. 'Beyond that casuarina, would you believe it I have a lotus pond, and on its bank a temple, the most lovely ruin that you ever saw! I was in ecstasy when I found that these delightful things were included in the lot" (530). Moreover, he thinks that the *pyol* that he spends his nights around has an

attachment with Eternity because he feels that "it will not be touched by time or disease or decay" (532). Lured by the feelings that touch his heart, he tries to write a poem and starts to bring a pencil and a pad near him during his visits to the *pyol*. Finally, in one of his visits he realises that his pen moves on the pad without his intention and he explains his experience in detail:

> I poised the pencil over the pad. Presently the pencil moved…I was struck with the ease with which it moved. I was pleased. All the function my fingers had was to hold the pencil, nothing more… "Thank you" began the page. "Here we are, a band of spirits who have been working to bridge the gulf between life and after-life. We have been looking about for medium through whom we would communicate. There is hardly any personality on earth who does not obstruct our effort. But we're glad we've found you…Please, help us, by literally lending us a hand, and we will do the rest." I replied, "I am honoured, I will do whatever I can." (532-533)

Communication with the spirits through automatic writing is a direct reference to Indian spiritualism in the novel. As the medium sits for a trance, he writes so fast that his writing is not legible. The spirits warn the medium about being calm and taking short rests in his attempts to fall in trance. They point out that "[t]his is an attempt to turn the other side of the medal of existence, which is called Death" (534). The medium and Krishna feel the existence of the spirits by seeing "radiant presences- like myriad dewdrops sparkling on the grass on a sunny morning" (535). In order to be sure about this experience, Krishna asks the name of his daughter to be answered correctly by the spirits. However, he gets "Radha" instead of "Leela" which deeply disappoints him. Yet, Susila intentionally gives a wrong answer to make fun of her husband's attention about the issue (536). Narayan portrays this incident like an ordinary communication in daily experience. The following week, the second attempt at communication by means of the experience of the medium's automatic writing becomes successful, as well. In a very natural tone of communication Susila states: "I had not learnt very grammatical Tamil in my days and if there are any mistakes, don't laugh at me" (537). As obvious in Susila's concerns about her language, Narayan does not attribute any strangeness to the communication between them, on the contrary, he portrays this incident as if it was an ordinary experience in India. Although Susila is dead, she goes on reflecting the properties of a traditional Hindu woman whose primary concern is the well-being of her family. The medium conveys the message to Krishna that Susila "wants to say that she is as deeply devoted to her husband and child and the family as ever. She watches over

them and prays for their welfare – only she is able to see things far more clearly than when she was on Earth, although you are not aware of my presence at times…" (536). As a woman of domestic concerns the first subject she asks Krishna is about the love letters and the reason why he has destroyed them after her death. Krishna feels embarrassed because of his misbehaviour and accepts to find the other letters somewhere at home or in Susila's father's home as she wants him to do. She also gives a description of "a sandalwood casket" which her mother-in-law has given her and she asks Krishna to keep it (539). It is very likely that Susila continues her special relationship with her husband by making him possess the things that are special for her. Then, as she has the ability to watch Krishna in a spiritual form, she comments on the act of Krishna's opening Susila's trunk and finding the sari she has worn during their first meeting. Her speech can be related to the immortality of the soul which is a significant component of Indian belief and to the perfection of the conservative Hindu woman as follows:

> I come to meet my lord and I dress myself as befits the occasion. I think of the subtlest perfume and it already pervades my being; and I think of the garment that will most please you: the wedding sari, shimmering purple woven with gold, I have on me at this very moment. You think you saw it in that trunk, how can it be here? What have you seen is its counterpart, the real part of the thing is that which is in thought, and it can never be lost or destroyed or put away. (553)

Obviously reflected in the above quotation, Susila desires to preserve the memory of the past and makes Krishna remember the special moments of their relationship. Also, as a responsible Hindu woman she has been watching Leela for a long time and according to her observations about Leela's heart, she likes to go to little children's school. Susila thinks that Leela is aware of her death and she does not speak so much about her mother because she tries to avoid upsetting her father. Furthermore, Susila's comments on death and life may be seen as attempts to help Krishna cure his sorrow. Susila tries to set the order of Krishna's life again and make him understand the realities of the world:

> Perhaps it may look like selfishness for me to be so happy here when there you are so sorrow-filled and unhappy…It would hardly be right if I produced that impression. If I succeed in making you feel that I am quite happy over here and that you must not be sorry for me, I will be satisfied. Your sorrow hurts us. I hope our joy and happiness will please and soothe you. (551)

Moreover, Susila understands the dilemma in Krishna's mind that he has thought of killing himself because of his sorrows after her death and she plans a psychic contact with Krishna in order to help him. Accordingly, she warns Krishna: "…it is not right for you to think of passing over before the appointed time. So do not let your thoughts go in that direction. It is to prevent it that I want you regularly to bring me to your side at a stated time" (577). Through their communication Krishna feels that he is about to "make a profound contact in life" (546) and this experience helps him to survive alone. Consequently, in creating Susila as such a character, Narayan portrays the traditional and virtuous Indian woman who sacrifices herself for the service of her family. Also, her Indian character and traditionalism can be taken as Narayan's commentary on Western rationality and materialism. As it is clear in the novel, Susila preserves her Indian identity and traditional role as a wife and a mother even after she dies and this may be taken as an expression of the belief in the eternity of Indian culture and values.

Narayan also portrays the other world through Susila's experience and gives messages about how to live properly in life. Susila expresses that she is pleased with her situation in the other world because everything is perfectly organised to make them happy. In Susila's depiction of the other world, Narayan evidently constructs one of the basic beliefs of Hinduism which is 'death is not an end of life':

> 'How do you spend your time usually?' I asked.
> 'Time in your sense does not exist for us,' she replied. 'Our life is one of thought and experience. Thought is something which has solidity and power, and as in all existence ours is also a life of aspiration, striving and joy. A considerable portion of our state is taken up in meditation, and our greatest ecstasy is in feeling the Divine Light flooding us. We've ample leisure. We are not constrained to spend it in any particular manner. We have no need for exercise as we have no physical bodies. Music is ever with us here, and it transports us to higher planes…Things here are far more intense than on earth; that means our efforts are far more intense than on earth; that means our efforts are far more efficient than yours. If by good fortune we are able to establish a contact with our dear ones who are receptive to our influence, than you say that that person is inspired.' (551)

As it is conveyed above, life after death is a dominant belief in Indian culture. As C. Sharma states, in Indian belief the "[s]oul is immortal and ultimately it merges with God, the Divine Spirit" (13). Narayan also portrays that if there is a proper relationship between the married couples, it will last forever.

Another traditional Indian figure in *The English Teacher* is Susila's mother. She appears in the novel as she comes to Krishna's house to look after Susila who suffers from typhoid. She acts according to the established norms in her relationship with Krishna, who explains that "[m]y mother-in-law was brought up in a social condition where she had to show extreme respect for a son-in-law, and so she never came before me or spoke to me" (501). Also, she believes that the Evil Eye has fallen on Susila or "a malignant spirit" at the new house, which Krishna and Susila have gone to visit, has attacked her. She regularly visits the temple and prays for her daughter's recovery. She brings sacred ash from the temple and puts it on Susila's forehead. She invites an exorcist to the house to expel the evils when Susila is in bed. Relatively, although Susila's mother is a passive figure in the novel, she also portrays the Hindu conservatism in her outlook to life.

Leela, who is brought up in a conservative and traditional environment, is also depicted as a learned child of Hindu culture. On an occasion between Krishna and her daughter, Krishna tries to persuade Leela about washing up by referring to "Goddess Saraswathi" who is the goddess of learning. He warns Leela that they must not touch a book if they are dirty because the goddess of learning may get angry. So, in order to please the goddess of learning Leela accepts washing up. It is clear in this incident that, Krishna gets help from his religion to persuade her daughter for something and from her very young age Leela gets involved in the living customs of India. Another reference to Leela's integration into the Indian culture is portrayed by her making a temple of mud and putting flowers on its top: "'This is our temple,' she said. The god was a piece of stone embedded in the mud. She reverently prostrated herself before it. 'She is the temple man,' she pointed to her friend. 'She does the pooja.' Her friend came up with a piece of coconut (a castor seed) and flowers (grass tufts) and offered them to me" (487). As it is evident from her references to the religious terms, Leela depends on Hinduism even in imagining a street play with her friend.

Consequently, as Nazareth points out, in *The English Teacher* Narayan displays the unusual Indian experiences such as "psychic contact" and they "are difficult for Western readers to accept" (132). It may be argued that Narayan refers to these uncommon experiences of Indian life to create an awareness of the uniqueness of the Indian themes

of his novel. His raising of the spiritual concerns as the basis of his novel creates distinctiveness in his work as an Indian one. Partha Chatterjee explains this common preoccupation of Indian writers by stating that it is not the "material" concern that brings the nationalist feeling in India, but the "spiritual" concern which creates "distinctiveness" as a nation (624). Also, Edwin Gerow thinks that we can understand Narayan with following "traditional philosophical and metaphysical universe of discourse" (17). In other words, throughout the trilogy, Narayan seems to have suggested that in the face of creating a distinctiveness of Hindu ethos, the coloniser cannot penetrate either the national and cultural heritage of a nation; or the spiritualism and the identity of the East. As a writer of traditional concerns, he achieves to keep the Western characters as minor details in the picture of Malgudi and he mainly presents the native experiences of India to the world. Therefore, Narayan's Malgudi is India and all that India is is in Narayan's Malgudi.

CHAPTER III

NARAYAN'S CHARACTERS REACHING LIBERATION BY EMBRACING INDIANNESS

Even though the West and the Western entities in Narayan's trilogy are not assigned extraordinary significance, his major characters, and especially his protagonists, frequently find themselves facing a conflict resulting from the clash of the East and the West. However, it seems that in each of the three novels, the resolution of such conflict comes in the form of these characters reaching liberation by embracing Indianness. Beyond the importance of this theme in itself, it can even be argued that idea of reaching liberation by finding refuge in the indigenous Indian identity, traditions and customs can be considered as Narayan's implied final comment in each novel. Accordingly, Narayan weaves the plot of his novels to reveal the essential importance of the Indian culture. The conflict between the West and the East is generally depicted as one of the inevitable consequences of colonialism, but is treated like an ordinary phenomenon of Malgudian life. This kind of conflict results from Malgudian people's experience of the elements of Western culture which are imposed mostly through educational institutions. The predominance of reason in the Western culture and the traditionalism of the Indian culture clash at some significant turning points of the novels and after this clash, Narayan establishes a liberation for his characters, which is entirely Indian. The eventual liberation takes various forms such as isolation from society, becoming a *sanyasi*, accepting the superiority of Indian tradition or decolonising the soul from the imposed knowledge of materialism. Narayan also structures a resolution stage within the order of his trilogy. The protagonists in each novel appear in the different stages of the life of a man from boyhood to adulthood: Swami as a schoolboy, Chandran as a college student and Krishna as a college teacher. In other words, the conflict in each novel is mainly structured on the effects of the missionary education in India, namely in Albert Mission School and Albert Mission College, and it is resolved by the act of resigning from the college or by renunciation at the end. As John Thieme explains: "*Swami and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher* are often grouped as a kind of loose trilogy about the coming of age of the male protagonist, a

figure whose name changes from novel to novel, but whose main characteristics and situation as a young Brahmin experiencing various stages of the English-oriented colonial educational curriculum" (*R. K. Narayan* 23) stay unchanged.

The conflict caused by a sense of belonging to the Western or the Indian values in *Swami and Friends* is structured on Swami's relationship with Rajam. Swami acts like Rajam's servant rather than his friend because throughout the novel Swami is engaged in accomplishing Rajam's aim of forming a cricket club at school and be the winner as a team in the competitions. In fact Swami's conflict only occurs because he befriends Rajam, in other words, a proxy representative of the West. That is to say, Swami experiences the conflict between fulfilling the responsibilities of his life as a schoolboy and preserving his position as a friend of Rajam. In order to portray Swami's naive dilemmas as a child, it is necessary to focus on the nature of the friendship between Swami and Rajam. Throughout the book, Swami is subjected to Rajam's supremacy in terms of his being the representative of the Western culture and at the end of this subjection Swami is eventually set free. However, because of his innocence as a child, Swami cannot realise that he is in a dilemma of accomplishing his responsibilities at school his life and being subjected to Rajam and obeying his orders. His liberation from such subjection is triggered by the effects of *dharma*. Swami's loss in the dark forest before the cricket match, which has been an extremely important occupation of Rajam for a long time, indirectly causes the end of Swami's attachment to Rajam. So, before elaborating on Swami's reaching liberation, it is necessary to explain the portrayal of Rajam and Swami's admiration of him.

Most specifically, in *Swami and Friends* the effects of colonialism are reflected through the attitudes of Rajam and the others. As Thieme suggests *Swami and Friends* "is aptly titled [so]: it is centrally about friendship, but its treatment of the theme is unsettling, suggesting the difficulties of finding common ground and sustaining relationships, not simply between boys at certain stage of development, but more specifically because of the conflicting codes to which Malgudi boys are subjected in that colonial situation" (*The Double Making of Narayan* 180). In the novel, one of the most significant cultural consequences of colonisation is Rajam. Narayan successfully creates him as friend of Swami whom he idealises and the nature of their friendship is important in portraying

the relationship between the indigenous proxy of the coloniser and the colonised. Rajan states that "[Swami] idolizes Rajam, the Police Superintendent's son, because the Superintendent symbolizes direct, Imperial state power" (27). Moreover, Rajam's arrival at school is told as if he belongs to the royalty:

> He was a newcomer; he dressed very well- he was the only boy in the class who wore socks and shoes, fur cap and tie, and a wonderful coat and knickers. He came to the school in a car. As well as all this, he proved to be a very good student too. There were vague rumours that he had come from some English boys' school somewhere in Madras. He spoke very good English, 'exactly like a "European"; which meant that few in the school could make out what he said. Many of his class-mates could not trust themselves to speak to him, their fund of broken English being small. Only Sankar, the genius of the class had the courage to face him, though his English sounded halting and weak before that of Rajam. (14)

As it is clear from the narrative above, Rajam is perceived as the embodiment of perfection with his developed skills in English and his being exactly like a European. The boys in class do not have the courage to talk to him because of their poor English. His Western outfits and the fact that he comes from Madras, which is bigger than Malgudi, cause an inferiority complex among the boys. Also, Rajam challenges the established power relations in the class. Mani, as the strongest in class, does not want Rajam to be the new power at the school and he wants to suppress the attention paid to Rajam. His hatred of Rajam also results from his being the Police Superintendent's son and for this reason he wants to "crack [...] [Rajam's] shoulders" (14). Yet, Swami warns Mani that he should not do such a thing because the policemen "are an awful lot" (14). As it is evident from Swami's words, Rajam seems to have an untouchable status among them. However, a quarrel is a must to determine the stronger; therefore, Mani suggests having a fight without arms. Contrary to their promise, as they meet, they both have guns: Rajam has an airgun and Mani has a club. It is evident that they have not trusted each other. In the end, Rajam shoots up in the air to threaten the others. Therefore, Rajam's carrying a gun and shooting it to create terror before the others is significant in formally proving his superiority. Mani protests this unfair situation:

> 'But this is unfair. I have no gun while you have…It was to be a hand-to-hand fight.'
> 'Then why have you brought your club? You never said anything about it yesterday.'
> Mani hung down his head.
> 'What have I done to offend you?' asked Rajam.
> 'You called me a sneak before someone.'

> ‘That is a lie.’
> There was an awkward pause. ‘If this is all the cause of your anger, forget it. I won’t mind being friends.’
> ‘Nor I,’ said Mani. (18)

Upon this resolution a peace between Rajam and Mani is made and Swami is the happiest one among them. However, this time their strong friendship troubles some of their other friends in the class. Swami’s friends start calling him as “tail” (27) because he is always with Rajam and there is a sense of accusation for sycophancy in their remarks. Somu tells that Swami’s name can be changed as “Rajam’s Tail” and complains as follows: “We aren’t enough for you, I believe. But how can everyone be a son of a police superintendent” (28). Also the real reason for their reaction is “the sense of social inadequacy that they experience in relation to the upper class Rajam” (Fernando 79). After this show of jealousy, Swami’s anticipating group of friends write “tail” on the board with huge letters. When Swami sees it, he becomes furious and starts a fight in the classroom. Clearly, his friends react against Swami severely due to their resentment and envy because of Rajam’s “link with the Malgudian elite” (Fernando 79). Evidently, in order to be friends with Rajam, Swami has to endure the insults of his Indian classmates and this situation does not discourage Swami about his friendship with Rajam.

Moreover, the incident of visiting Rajam’s house is important in portraying how Rajam and others play their roles in their friendship. Swami and Mani begin to admire and respect Rajam even more when they visit his house. Before going into Rajam’s, that is the Police Superintendent’s house, they are checked by a policeman in front of the house and such exclusive protection of the house creates prestige for Rajam. Then, they are taken to Rajam’s father’s room as if it was Rajam’s own room, which impresses the visitors with its bookcases full of serious books and a time piece on the table. The formal atmosphere in his father’s room sharply distinguishes Rajam from the others. Rajam makes them wait in the room for a while because he wants to be seen as a busy man like his father. When he enters the room, Swami and Mani stand up to show their respect. Swami and Mani start touching everything in the room because they consider being in a Police Superintendent’s son’s room as a unique experience. To impress his visitors further, Rajam calls the policeman waiting behind the door to order something

for the guests. When the cook comes in, Rajam starts to scold him in order to show his authority to the others as narrated below:

> The cook entered with a big plateful of eatables. He set down the plate on the table. Rajam felt that he must display his authority.
> 'Remove it from the table, you-' he roared at the cook. The cook removed it and placed it on a chair.
> 'You dirty ass, take it away, don't put it there.'
> 'Where am I to put it, Raju?' asked the cook.
> Rajam burst out: 'You rascal, you scoundrel, you talk back to me?' (24)

Due to Rajam's rudeness to the cook, he gets angry and threatens Rajam by complaining about him to his mother. However, "to be outdone by his servants before his friends" (24) is very painful for Rajam and he goes back to the kitchen and takes the plates himself. He explains: "I have to bring this myself. I went in and gave the cook such a kick for his impertinence that he is lying unconscious in the kitchen" (25). Swami and Mani believe in Rajam's stories no matter how unbelievable they seem, because Rajam is the symbol of perfection in their eyes. He tells that he has killed two lions in the forest with his gun or that his mother has "a black trunk filled with jewels" (33) and Swami believes in him without a question. Passing time with Rajam makes Mani and Swami feel special and they try to visit him frequently. They even feel free to scold the policeman who accuses them of getting into Rajam's house by jumping from the wall. Mani asks the policeman ''is the wall your property?'' (36) because he considers himself superior to the policeman as he is a close friend of Rajam. In fact, Swami and Mani want to preserve their close friendship with Rajam and do not want to share him with the others in their class. As a reaction to sharing Rajam's friendship with the others, namely Somu, Pea and Sankar, they attempt to leave the house (38). However, Rajam achieves to make up with them and they are unified under the roof of Rajam. In order to give a lesson for his friends, Rajam starts to tell and read stories about friendship. Assuming the role of an adviser, he expresses that union is strength and "a friend in need is a friend in deed" (38). Rajam's successful peace-making is very important in understanding the nature of their friendship. Both of the sides respect Rajam because he is more European and he seems to know everything better than the boys. He acts as a mediator among them. As Beatina suggests:

> Rajam proves himself a boyish *guru*, and a mediator among the boys. Moreover, he mediates between the mundane and the transcendent, in his boyish way, with the

> aid of stories from the Indian classics learnt at home. This is the simple way in which the spirit of the scriptures is lived, and also how life and religion are integrated. This is what the novel does-it mediates. This is what Narayan seems to do- to mediate between the public and the world of liberation, transcendence-which he does without moralizing. Through the ordinary, normal events and incidents of childhood, Narayan portrays the extraordinary potential of being human. (32)

Also, after impressing the boys, Rajam offers prizes for their good behaviour. He rewards them because they have followed his guidance (39). This behaviour clearly shows that as the boys accept his hegemony, he gives prizes to cheer them up. His praising of the boys proves his superiority among the boys and in addition to this, he does not let them to choose what they want from his room as gifts. He delivers the toys to his friends himself because he does not want to lose the authority. Rajam knows how to be the centre of attention and this situation creates benefits for him as "Rajam needs this very peace to carry out his own project in the future-the formation of a cricket club" (Beatina 33). The forming of a cricket club is Rajam's irreplaceable aim and in order to reach his aim he needs this cooperation. As a superior figure respected by most of his friends, Rajam's uniting his friends to form a cricket club, which is a product of British colonisation, may be considered as a direct reference for determining the nature of their friendship on the basis of the relationship in colonial Indian society.

Finally, Swami and his friends form the cricket club calling it the Malgudi Cricket Club. Rajam, as the captain of the team, organises the training hours and orders everyone to appear on the cricket field on time. However, Swami has trouble with coming to the trainings on time because he attends Board High School after he is dismissed from Albert's Mission School and he has to stay there for the drills classes after school. Rajam gets very angry with him although the situation is not Swami's fault. He threatens Swami by not seeing his face again if he keeps on coming late for the trainings. Rajam's threatening of Swami by using his friendship triggers the conflict and causes Swami to take risks in order not to lose the privilege of being a friend of Rajam. To catch up with the cricket trainings, Swami does not attend the drills anymore. Yet, Swami's long term absence is noticed and the schoolmaster comes to the class to check for Swami and learn the reason for this situation. He punishes Swami by beating his hands with his cane. As a reaction to this severe behaviour Swami takes the cane from the headmaster's hand and throws it out of the window (115). Swami's reaction against

the authority results from his desire to attend the cricket trainings, enforced by his precious friend Rajam. However, he can only catch up with the cricket trainings by escaping from the drills classes. He feels guilty but at the same time he knows that if he does not sacrifice his drills classes he will lose Rajam. Swami evidently experiences the conflict of considering his responsibilities as a schoolboy and pleasing Rajam with his sacrifices. Hence, being punished with a very harsh treatment causes Swami to rebel.

Swami's resentment of being dismissed from Albert Mission School is also significant in understanding the strong bonds he has with his friends. He feels like an outcast as he sees his friends in the garden of his former school as reflected in the novel: "All his friends were there, Rajam, Somu, Mani and the Pea, happy, dignified, and honoured within the walls of the august Albert Mission School. He alone was out of it, isolated, as if he were a leper. He was an outcast. He was filled with a sudden self-disgust. Oh, what would he not give to be back in the old school!" (117). Swami considers his friends as "honoured" who go to that school because Rajam is among them. Depressed with the truth that he is also dismissed from Board High School, he also feels nervous about telling the bad news to his father. He thinks that "[i]f he went home, Father might beat him, thrash him, or kill him, to make him return to the Board High School. Father was a tough man…" (120). Swami plans to run away from Malgudi after the cricket match because there is no other school in Malgudi to attend. It is clear in Swami's thoughts and considering of his situation, he is in a serious dilemma, which is in fact an extension of his larger dilemma caused by his desire to remain attached to Rajam.

Due to the rush of ideas in his mind and his nervousness about his father's reaction to his dismissal from a school for the second time, he loses his way in the jungle (130). Swami's loss is the beginning of his disengagement from Rajam as a typical example of the conflict resolution way Narayan uses for his characters, which is explained in the following:

> Since the quest motif is well-established..., its operation has a well recognized modality. The usual pattern is that the quest begins with a departure from the ordinary, the common and accepted order. What follows next is a long and deep retreat inwards, deep into the psyche leading to a chaotic series of encounters. These encounters may be terrifying to begin with, but lead to a new harmonizing personality with new courage (Bhatia 121).

Swami becomes afraid of the dark and starts to see hallucinations on the jungle road. He gets so frightened that he loses his consciousness and falls asleep by the road in the dark. Fortunately, he is saved by a passer-by and delivered to his family. As soon as Swami regains his consciousness, he writes a letter to Rajam explaining the reason of his absence. However, Rajam does not show any interest about the matter as he takes the letter during the cricket match. After the match Swami does not have any courage to talk to Rajam because he feels guilty: "he was filled with a sense of guilt: he had not gone and seen Rajam even once after his return. Fear, shame, a feeling of uncertainty, has made him postpone his visit to Rajam day after day" (139). Swami feels so ashamed of his loss on the day of the cricket match that he does not have the courage to give his farewell gift, a book titled *Fairy Tales*, to Rajam at the train station. Fernando evaluates this situation by explaining that "Swami feels nervous about meeting Rajam, but what he actually experiences when he is about to confront the latter is a kind of paralysing fear rather than mere nervousness. And this fear is the result, not of Swami's feelings of guilt about the promise, but of his consciousness of Rajam's socio-cultural sophistication or superiority" (80). As the train starts to leave, Swami comes near Rajam's window and says goodbye to Rajam. However, Rajam does not respond. Mani gives Swami's present to Rajam and Rajam waves a farewell to both (142). This incident is very important to explain the nature of Rajam-Swami relationship. From Swami's point of view he cannot go near Rajam to give his gift because Rajam, who is surrounded by the policemen, seems impossible to reach. From Rajam's point of view, on the other hand, he knows that Swami wants to say farewell to him, yet he does not seem to accept it because Swami is to be punished due to his irrational behaviour. In fact, Rajam does not act like an ordinary school boy; on the contrary, he seems to be a boy of mature values, and these values are based on his Western aspect. The nature of the friendship between them shows that Swami is subjected to Rajam. Although depicted as a friendship of the two children in the novel, this can be an imitation of the sahib and servant relationship in colonial India. Accordingly, Ross clearly states that "Swami realizes that he is dispensable, valuable only when he can fulfil a need. Rajam's attitude toward his one-time friend typifies the way the British had trained the Anglicized Indians to treat their non-Westernised country-men" (93). This superiority and fame of Rajam blinds Swami's eyes and he cannot think of his own benefits and

priorities. Swami's endless efforts to please Rajam ends in the destruction of his 'Self.' In other words, Swami's completing the tasks assigned by Rajam for the cricket club destroys his education, even his life. He is squeezed between his responsibilities and Rajam's demands. At this point, Narayan causes Swami to unconsciously resolve his dilemma. That is to say, Swami's initial conflict caused by his attachment to Rajam is also a conflict between the significant Western other and the Eastern self, and the eventual resolution of the conflict is achieved as Narayan develops the character of Swami by adopting an attitude inspired by the Indian *dharma* and *karma* and depicts him as he reaches liberation in an indirect way. In the most general sense, in the following quotation David W. Atkinson explains the concepts of *dharma* and *karma* and how Narayan uses them as moral codes of his writing:

> Dharma is that which comprises and distinguishes an individual: it is the totality of individual's abilities, talents and limitations. But dharma does not absolutely determine how an individual lives, and it does not mitigate individual responsibility. Thus the law of karma determines what an individual becomes through what an individual does. Karma refers to the law of causation applicable to both the physical and moral realm...Narayan stresses how each individual, limited by inherent capabilities but gifted with freedom of choice, determines his/ her own actions and thus who he/ she is. (16)

Accordingly, Swami becomes lost in the jungle because of his inexperience as a child, but his being lost causes his liberation.

In *The Bachelor of Arts*, the conflict between reason and tradition, or the West and the East is first pointed out by the protagonist Chandran in a rebellious attitude. However, it results in acceptance of the Eastern custom and the renunciation of Western rationality in the end. The conflict in the novel stems from Chandran's way of understanding of life which is based mainly on Indian traditionalism but also partaking from the modern and exclusively reason-oriented ways of the British. Fernando explains this kind of conflict by attributing the issue to the Western education of Chandran and Hindu culture that confronts him as follows:

> Many "English educated" Hindus found the western approach to love and marriage both rational and humane, but as it was not endorsed by the conservative sections of their society, particularly by the "uneducated"-usually female-elders, they were yet unable or reluctant to practice it. Conflict between the generations and between the westernized and traditional elements of society was often a corollary of this situation. The kinds of impact that such conflicts have on family life is a central theme of Narayan's fiction, and especially of *The Bachelor of Arts*. (81)

As it is clearly explained above, the Western approach to loving and marrying somebody causes difficulties for the Western-educated characters of Narayan who live in the conservative Malgudian world. The mismatch of the horoscopes of Chandran and Malathi prevents the marriage arrangement and Chandran is disappointed by his indigenous custom. Mohan, Chandran's close friend from Albert Mission College, also accuses the old Indian generation of valuing money over happiness as "[m]oney is the greatest god in life. Father and mother and brother do not care for anything but your money. Give them money and they will leave you alone" (209). In addition, he writes a poem for Chandran which can be conceived as a significant reference to the clash of the Indian tradition and Western reason:

> The parents loved you, you thought.
> No, no, not you, my dear.
> They've loved nothing less for its own sake.
> They fed you and petted you and pampered you
> Because some day they hope you will bring them money;
> Much money, so much and more and still more;
> Because some they, they hope, you'll earn a
> Bride who'll bring much money, so much and
> More and still more… (210)

As a reaction to this situation, Chandran furiously states: "To the dust-pot with your silly customs" (208) and decides to leave Malgudi because he feels that he does not belong there anymore. As Gaur states, *The Bachelor of Arts* mainly "illustrates the resilience and unassailability of the Indian social edifice built upon the inherited age-old traditions and customs and also how an individual is coerced into a clash and its consequential tension with this highly stratified social order" (24). In order to punish his family, Chandran does not meet his uncle at the train station of Madras but disappears to find his freedom alone (230). However, in relation to Chandran's escape, Beatina refers to such a way of liberation as "unrealistic" and "immature" because "he supposes that he can acquire anything in life merely by asserting or wishing it" (47). Unfortunately, Madras does not meet Chandran's expectations because Madras also has some limitations as a big city. In the big city, Chandran does not find the hospitality and sincerity he has been used to in Malgudi. His soul gets hurt when he faces the materialistic life of the Westernised urban culture in Madras. To illustrate, he criticises the *jutka* driver who does not talk to him after he gets his money, which makes him feel

"neglected;" and the receptionist at the hotel who does not look at his face until he gets the money for the room (230). Later, Chandran meets Kailas, one of the representatives of urban culture, who stays in the same hotel with him in Madras. Kailas shocks Chandran with his lifestyle and thoughts, because contrary to the conservative people in Indian society, he has an experimental outlook on life and he lives for pleasure. He comes to Madras to have fun in some parts of the year while his two wives wait for him at home (231). Also, Kailas is very different from Chandran in that he is older and he does not seem to care about anything in life rather than enjoying it. Unlike Chandran, he takes alcohol and goes to the prostitutes, which are all forbidden according to the Hindu customs. After a while Chandran understands that he cannot find his freedom in Madras and decides to escape from the evils of urban life, too. He feels that he belongs to neither Malgudi, nor Madras and his agony makes him feel beaten by life:

> Chandran realized that he had definitely left his home. Now what did it matter where he lived? He was like a sanyasi. Why 'like'? He was a *sanyasi*; the simplest solution. Shave the head, dye the clothes in ochre, and you were dead for aught the world cared. The only thing possible; short of committing suicide, there was no other way out. He had done with the gamble of life. He was beaten. He could not go on living, probably for sixty years more, with people and friends and parents, with Malathi married and gone. (236)

Chandran takes the train to Mylapore and he gives all his money to a barber there who helps him get the appearance of a *sanyasi* by shaving his hair and giving him an old dhoti (238). Chandran discards his identity and everything related to his life in order to find his true self. C. Sharma generalises this tendency in Narayan's novels by stating that "[f]rustrated under the pressure of social customs and circumstances, they sometimes run away from the problems of life, other times they become monk and still other times they seek refuge in the philosophy of life" (13). Chandran experiences a change both in his soul, as "[w]hile one part of him suffered acutely, another part derived a satisfaction in watching it writhe" (240), and in his appearance as "[h]is cheek bones stood out; the dust of the highway was on him; his limbs had become horny; his complexion had turned from brown to a dark tan. His looks said nothing; they did not even seem to conceal a mystery; they looked dead. His lips rarely smiled" (241). He feels that his renunciation of the material world is like a suicide: "He was a sanyasi because it pleased him to mortify his flesh. His renunciation was a revenge on society, circumstances, and perhaps, too, on destiny" (241). So, Chandran's following the steps

of spiritual enlightenment can be taken as an important reference to his ideas about the holy man in their garden who has stolen their flowers in Malgudi. He thinks cynically about the holy man when his mind has been under the control of reason. However, as Mishra states, Chandran eventually starts to sympathise with the custom that he criticises: "Every Indian, however Westernised, has in him something of a holy man's attitude to life: viewing worldly things as an illusion (maya) and seeking peace in renouncing private belongings. Chandran might have failed to turn into a holy man, but in his attitude he has a strong affinity with the holy man whom he caught as a trespasser in his garden" (171).

Furthermore, after eight months, he reaches Koopal village where he is highly affected by the hospitality and blessings of the people who are "innocent and unsophisticated in most matters," because they have not met with a *sanyasi* for a long time (243). The people start to bring food and gifts to Chandran in order to show their gratefulness, yet this situation causes Chandran feel like a trickster because he eats the food that he does not deserve and he is not a real holy man who is worth pleasing (243). Chandran's being ashamed of his fake image and deceiving the people in Koopal leads to a higher level of realisation of the self on his part:

> He sought an answer to the question why he had come to this degradation. He was in no mood for self-deception, and so he found the answer in the words 'Malathi' and 'Love'. The former had brought him to this state. He had deserted his parents, who had spent on him all their love, care and savings. He told himself that he had surely done this to spite his parents, who probably died of anxiety by now. This was all his return for their love and for that they had done for him. The more he reflected on this, the greater his anger with Malathi. It was a silly infatuation […] Women were like that, they enjoyed torturing people. (244)

Chandran accuses the feeling of love and the nature of women for his deserting his family. After his journey to find his true self, he reaches a conclusion which is completely different from his thoughts before he starts his journey. The difference in his thoughts can also be attributed to the effects of changing places and having necessary experience for self-realisation as explained by Fernando: "Just as Koopal is the physical opposite of Madras (and to a some extent Malgudi), so the life of a *sanyasin* is the psychosocial reverse of both the Westernized life that Chandran wanted to lead in Malgudi and the lifestyle of an unorthodox urbanite that Kailas tried his best to make

him adopt in Madras" (83). Also, after a long journey as a *sanyasi*, Chandran undervalues material concerns of life and he begins to think that "people married because their sexual appetite had to be satisfied and there must be somebody to manage the house" (255). Also, Chandran considers his experience with Malathi as "only a brain affection" (257) and his friendship with an unfaithful friend, Ramu as "another illusion like Love" (251). Chandran realises that friendship is a meaningless word because people become friends as they share the same environment for common purposes: "People pretended that they were friends, when the fact was they were brought together by force of circumstances. The classroom or the club or the office created friendships" (251).

With regard to the radical evaluations of Chandran about life and feelings, his self-exploration comes to a state of a decisive revolution in his understanding of life. Related to his self-quest journey, Chandran finds peace in rejecting all the imposed identities as an individual and his liberation which can also be considered as his salvation comes when he has the balance of custom and reason in his mind. He explains the destruction in feelings and relationships by referring to the "callousness of Time" (252). It can be concluded that by referring to "callousness of Time" in the novel, Narayan comments on the perceived reality of Chandran, as an individual, experiencing the hardships and impacts of colonial India along with his reaching to a self-realisation.

In *The Bachelor of Arts,* the integration of Chandran into Malgudian society is significant in terms of relating the result of Chandran's quest for freedom to his sense of belonging in the conservative Hindu society. Chandran has reached a full awareness of the quality of the Malgudian life and he has enough courage to free himself from "illusions and hysterics" (256). His first responsibility is to get a successful career in life and he starts to consider going to England, which he has considered before. However, he has some doubts about going to England to have a master's degree and coming back to Malgudi and searching for a job. From Chandran's perspective, the move to England brings with it the risk of causing him to waste his time before he can start a business. Also, Chandran's mother agrees with him and she thinks that it is not necessary to go to England to have a good career: "What do our boys, who go to England, specially achieve? They only learn to smoke cigarettes, drink wine, and dance with white girls?"

(260). Chandran's mother, as the representative of Hindu conservatism in the novel, protects his son from Western culture. Finally, Chandran meets with his uncle in Madras to get the agency of the *Daily Messenger* in Malgudi and he chooses a career in India rather than going to England. So, Chandran's not going to England and staying in Malgudi can reveal and explicate that he does not make the same mistake of quitting his hometown, as he has done before by going to Madras. On the contrary, Narayan emphasises Chandran's internalisation of Indian culture.

The process of Chandran's integration into Malgudian society can be considered significant to reveal that Chandran has become a part of Indian society. In Madras, Chandran's uncle takes him to his close friend Murugesem who is the General Manager of Engladia and he arranges a proper working position for Chandran in *Daily Messenger* (264). Chandran's uncle orders his friend as "[y]ou have got to fix him up…He has even cancelled his trip to England for the sake of this paper" (264). Murugesem also requests a man from a higher position to accept Chandran in *Daily Messenger* by saying "[y]ou can break the rule occasionally and dictate. Just for my sake" (267). The realities of the working life are disturbing for Chandran and he also faces the reality that the decision of his fate is in the hands of these strangers (267). However, Chandran admires the working atmosphere in Murugesem's room and he starts to inquire about him in his mind: "How did he pick up so much business knowledge? What did he earn? Ten thousand? What did he do with so much money? When would he find time to spend the money and enjoy life with so many demands on his attention?" (265). His inquiries show that Chandran begins to focus on the materialistic realities of life. His getting a job as a newspaper agent is also important as "Chandran, who had been branding Malgudi for its conservatism and tradition, who left Malgudi in order to see the world, now as an experienced traveller, brings the world to Malgudi through the newspapers" (Beatina 56).

Chandran makes a careful plan to increase the number of subscriptions to the *Daily Messenger* and he prepares types of bulletins each of which appeals to different parts of the society. The bulletins are significant in terms of revealing Chandran's integration into the psychology of Malgudian society. They are prepared in a commercial tone and tempting the people to buy the newspaper because of different purposes:

> The mark of culture is wide information; and the *D.M.* will give you politics, economics, sports, literature; and its magazine supplement covers all the other branches of human knowledge. Even in mere bulk you will be getting your anna's worth; if you find the contents uninteresting you can sell away your copy to the grocer at a rupee per mound. Bulletin Three said: 'As a son of the Motherland it is your duty to subscribe to the *D.M.* With every anna that you pay, you support the anaemic child, Indian Industry. You must contribute your mite for the economic and political salvation of our country. (270)

As it can be observed from the account above, Chandran refers to the readers as "a son of the Motherland" and he expresses that by buying the *Daily Messenger* they will support "Indian Industry" because he wants to touch the nationalistic feelings of the people to make profit in his job. Fortunately, as a salesman, he acts according to the requirements of his job and in order to be successful he needs to manage his energy by attracting the people who are really interested in reading papers. He divides the people into four categories as stated in the novel: "humanity fell into four types: (1) Persons who cared for latest news and could afford an anna a day. (2) Persons who were satisfied with stale news in old papers which could be borrowed from neighbours. (3) Persons who read newspapers in reading-rooms. (4) Persons who could be coerced by repeated visits" (271). Evidently, Chandran first analyses the society in which he lives and then he starts to take advantage of people's weaknesses. He gets used to the working life and its materialistic motivations. Chandran's commitment to his work can be commented as an inevitable result of his integration to Indian society, because life, or Malgudi in the novel, has its own cycle and Chandran has to obey the rules of life if he wants to have a place in society. So, Chandran's refusal to go to England and staying in Malgudi for a career can be considered as a decision which opens the way of his integration into the Indian society.

Moreover, Chandran is also integrated into Indian traditions in terms of his marriage arrangement. His mother suggests a girl for Chandran to marry and he needs advice from his friend, Mohan about this situation (282). According to Mohan, people should think about their needs realistically and challenges Chandran's mind as "[y]ou get a fat three thousand, and get a good-looking companion, who will sew on your buttons, mend your clothes, and dust your furniture while you are distributing newspapers, and who will bring the coffee to your room" (283). As time passes, Mohan is also integrated into the Indian traditions and he thinks that marriage, money and comforts are all necessities

of life and people should accept this "Callous Realism" (284). Here Narayan refers to callousness to express the realities of life and how people have to accept the reality's hegemony without any challenge. After Chandran and his mother meet the girl's family in the girl's house as a typical and traditional routine of an Indian marriage arrangement, Chandran feels very excited on the way back home. He keeps on telling her name and he thinks that Malathi "was a tongue-twister" (289). From this incident of Chandran's accepting the proposal of marriage it can be concluded that "[Chandran] is emancipated and lives by the Western values but in fact, deep within himself, he does finally accept the values of his society, succumbing finally to an arranged marriage" (Nazareth 129). Even Chandran starts to feel pity for Malathi and "[f]or the first time he was able to view her as a sister in a distant town" (291). Finally, Chandran and Susila have a happy relationship, which can be considered as praise for Chandran because he has obeyed the rules of tradition:

> Their relationship not only provides the story with a 'happy ending', but implies that it is possible to establish emotionally satisfying relationships within the framework of the 'arranged marriage', and thereby vindicates traditional approach to relations between sexes and to marriage. The problems that were generated early in the novel by the clash between modernism and tradition are thus finally resolved when Chandran trims his radical views and learns to respect the traditional values and procedures that he had earlier impetuously rejected. (Fernando 84)

Chandran and Susila frequently write love letters to each other and they eventually decide to marry. However, after a while Chandran does not receive a letter from Susila for six days and he feels so worried that he leaves everything aside in the office and decides to go to Talapur where Susila lives (292). His worrying about Susila and not considering his serious responsibilities at work but running to Talapur may be taken as a strong indication of Chandran's genuine love. In other words, as it is evident in Chandran's journey as a *sanyasi*, he has started to think that love is an illusion of life. However, Narayan stresses that Chandran finds his true love in the end by following the arrangements of the Indian custom. Gaur expresses this situation by referring to the "Indian traditional view of love" as dominating the whole plot of the novel as follows:

> This incident shows the depth of mutual feelings of attachment that each has for the other. Chandran's matrimonial alliance with Susila marks his redemption from the last vestiges of memories of the unreal world of Malathi's love-affair. Conclusively, the Indian traditional view of love in marriage rather than preceding it also gets asserted keeping in consideration the whole plot of the novel. (29)

This kind of liberation through embracing Indianness also appears in *The English Teacher* along with the resolution of the conflict between Western rationalism and Eastern spiritualism. In the novel, the rejection of the colonial system in education and Krishna's purifying his life from the impositions of the Western culture can be considered in relation to the theme of reaching liberation in an Indian way as explained by Makodia: "The protagonist's rejection of Western educational system and acceptance of a comparatively lower position as a teacher in kindergarten school is an affirmation of the Indian philosophical ideals that had taken a backseat during the times of imperialistic rule in India" (74). Throughout the novel, Krishna is portrayed as a character that lives to fulfil the requirements of his career and find peace in life. At the very beginning of the novel, his sweating about getting used to domestic life and sacrificing his individualism are revealed in relation to his dilemmas with the traditional structure of the family life. Narayan comments on this conflict through displaying the realities of Westernisation in India and its effects on the family structure. First of all, Krishna has a Western education and he teaches English Literature at the missionary college. Therefore, his outlook towards life cannot be explained as exclusively Indian. On the contrary, he mostly appreciates reason over custom. Before Susila and Leela arrive in Malgudi to live with Krishna, he has led a lonely life which is common for married men in India when they get married at young ages. Noel Gist explains this practice by stating that "in view of the early age of marriage in India, it is likely that the majority of them had wives and perhaps children. It is a common practice in South India for married man to migrate to cities unaccompanied by their families" (69). Also, Krishna is not sure about dealing with the responsibilities of being a husband and a father properly. As it is pointed out in the novel, Krishna is not "prepared to accept it totally" and he understands that he has considered his "plans and determinations" as "the utmost importance to others" (437). His Western education and life style unconsciously make him self-centred and individualistic and he does not know how to feel about uniting with his family. Therefore, because of the conflict he experiences about domesticity and independency, Krishna sometimes reacts against the restrictions of living together in the same house. To illustrate, he quarrels with his wife when she sells an old clock that belongs to him and to which he has attached a lot of importance, and the exam papers he has been archiving for four years (464). As Susila considers the

economy of the house, she sells them to get a profit. However, Krishna thinks that Susila has misbehaved because it is not her business to "tamper" with his things. Also, Krishna thinks that his study table looks "savage" when it is tidied and without the old clock on it. Krishna considers Susila's behaviour as an invasion of his private life and he experiences the conflict of being a part of the family and preserving his private life. Nevertheless, through the end of the novel, Krishna is integrated into his marriage in order to heal his wife's illness and acts like a responsible husband and father of his family, which can be considered as a resolution for his conflict about domestic life as regulated by Indian culture and customs.

Another conflict that Krishna experiences in the novel is Krishna's helplessness in appreciating the weird treatment of Dr. Shankar whom Krishna visits to consult Susila's illness. In the novel, Dr. Shankar's office is depicted like the office of a commercial firm. The doctor does not have a proper scientific way of curing his patients because he has structured a system of delivering the same medicine to the same symptoms which does not require the physical treatment of the patients most of the time (490). A clerk and an accountant sit in front of the doctor's room and they deal with taking the money and giving the medicine to the patients. The clerk himself examines the patients and gives suggestions about the treatment of common cases:

> 'It is for me,' said a feeble man wrapped in a shawl with a woollen muffler over his ears. The dispenser handed him the bottle with the brief remark: 'Three doses before meals,' and went in. This sufferer had some further question to ask, and opened his mouth to say something, but the dispenser was gone. The man clutched his bottle and looked about helplessly, turned to the clerk and asked: 'Can I take buttermilk?'
> 'Yes,' replied the clerk.
> 'Should I take this immediately after or a few minutes before food?'
> 'Say five minutes before food,' replied the clerk and added: 'Six annas, please.' The patient put down the change with a sad look, still feeling that he hadn't received his money's worth of doctor's advice. (490)

Furthermore, the patients use the mixture for three days first and then they come to the office if they do not get well. As Dr. Shankar arrives at the office, he starts reading the names on the bottles of mixtures and calls the patients to be checked if necessary. Krishna understands that the patients do not get proper explanations from the office employees and he has doubts about the results of this treatment. Even though he gets his bottle of mixture and learns how to use the medicine from the clerk; he feels that it is

not appropriate to use the medicine before asking some other questions to the doctor. He addresses to him:

> 'When is to be given?' I asked, guiltily looking at the clerk.
> 'Didn't he tell you?' he [the doctor] asked pointing at the clerk. 'Yes, yes, he did,' I replied hastily. I now realized the need for this red-tape arrangement- everyone wanted to ask the same set of questions.
> 'But what I want to know is…Don't you have to see the patient?'
> 'Oh no, it is just malaria. I have fifty cases like this on hand, no need to see her. I'll tell you if necessary. You can bring her down sometime if necessary.'
> 'But she can't move, she is rather weak…'
> 'Put her in a *jutka* and bring her along, nothing will happen…' (492)

As portrayed above, the doctor does not seem to be interested in his patients individually and he makes generalisations about the cures of the illnesses. Even when Krishna expresses that Susila cannot move, the doctor thinks that it is just malaria and he does not take it seriously. The superficial treatment of the doctor confuses Krishna's mind. Nevertheless, he follows his instructions and accepts to be a part of the system that he criticises. His criticism of the primitive system of treatment in Dr. Shankar's office is directly related to the dominance of reason in Krishna's outlook of life. However, Narayan portrays the inevitable victory of the common order in Malgudi which is also a truth of life. Consequently, Narayan can be considered as underlining the fact that customs, traditions and common behaviours cannot be altered or challenged by individual trials and the individuals are compelled to follow the rules of tradition.

Another example of Krishna's conflict about Western notions and Indian custom is his reaction to the existence of a *Swamiji* in his house who has been invited by his mother-in-law to perform Hindu rituals to cure Susila. Krishna is in "fury," because feels nervous about the possible wrong impression that this may create in Dr. Shankar's eyes who visits the house as the *Swamiji* is still there:

> Meanwhile, the doctor's car stopped before the house, and I heard his steps approaching. I felt ashamed and wished I could spirit away this mystic. The doctor came in, and saw him and smiled to himself. The mystic sat without noticing him, though looking at him. 'My mother-in-law's idea of treatment,' I said apologetically'. (503)

As it is clear from his expression that he is "ashamed" of the situation, he does not want to be associated with a man who trusts in mysticism rather than science. In order to recover his image in the eyes of the doctor, he explains that it is his mother-in-law's

idea to deal with mystical healing. However, this severe rationalism of Krishna against religious concerns is defeated by his experience of the psychic contact with Susila at the end of the novel. Accordingly, the high tone of spiritualism in the novel can be considered as a challenge for the dominance of Western notions in Krishna's perception of the world.

However, the breaking point in Krishna's life is triggered by the Headmaster who is a significant character both in terms of Narayan's depiction of the indigenous Indian identity in the novel and how Krishna frees himself from the Western impositions and finds his inner peace by following the Headmaster's way. So, the portrayal of the Headmaster and his friendship with Krishna are necessary in terms of revealing Krishna's journey for reaching salvation. His materialism is seriously challenged by the Headmaster's idealism after he has met him. Krishna is shocked by the Headmaster's enthusiasm for working also on Sundays at the children's school. His school is different from the other schools in Malgudi in that the students are free to make drawings and put them on the walls and everything in the school is bought with very little money. As a daily routine at school, the Headmaster makes up stories for the children and plays with them in the garden. He thinks that the people should spend their lives working in a job that they are happy without thinking about the money they earn. Also, according to the Headmaster establishing a school does not need to cost a lot of money because the necessities are also created by the materialistic demands of life and he criticises the majority who surrender to this materialism as follows:

> We are a poor country, and we can do without luxuries. Why do we want anything more than a shed and a few mats and open air? This is not a cold country for all the heavy furniture and elaborate buildings. This has cost me just fifty rupees, and I had three such built. But we have not much use for them, most of our time being spent outside, under the tree …'
> 'Many people think,' I [Krishna] said, 'that you can't have a school unless you have invested few thousand in building and furniture.'
> 'It is all mere copying,' he replied. Multiply your expenses, and look to the Government for support, and sell your soul to the Government for the grant. This is the history of our educational movement.' (557)

This strong anti-materialism challenges Krishna's ideas and the Headmaster proves himself as a man of values in the novel. Moreover, the system of instruction that the Headmaster gives in his school is based on experimentation and invention. It is completely different from Krishna's college in terms of its ethics and environment.

Unlike Krishna, the Headmaster does not consider the rules of the education system or Western impositions; on the contrary, he applies his own method in his school. He likes to break the effects of a proper authority in education and makes the students decide for their choices. As a common way of his instruction at school, he invents stories, writes them with their illustrations which are mostly the pictures cut from journals and reads these stories aloud to the students. The students can ask any question they like and think about the story. The Headmaster considers that the children can discuss about the stories he tells in class better than the adults without mixing their emotions with their ideas, which can be considered as a criticism of the world of the adults: "The most enchanting thing among children is their quarrels. How they carry it on for its own sake, without the slightest bitterness or any memory of it later. This is how we were once, God help us: this too is what we have turned out to be!" (559). Also, he thinks that the "most balanced and joyous condition of life" is ended when people start to attend the school because the teacher make them "take a wrong turn" (569). Therefore, he operates "The Leave Alone System" in his school to retain the original version of the mankind (570). So, Narayan creates the Headmaster as a character of ideals who is fond of his job more than anything. His devotion to his job and not caring of the otherworldly responsibilities challenge Krishna's mind and he starts to be interested in the Headmaster's ways and lifestyle day by day.

Furthermore, the Headmaster is also represented as a character in the novel that does not prioritise the necessities of the society. Unlike Krishna, his attitude towards life is shaped by personal interests, not by social concerns which make people behave within some restrictive rules. The Headmaster's modest vision about people's relationships and his naturalness in his communication and attitudes stimulate Krishna's point of view about life. The Headmaster's individuality in one of his visits to Krishna's house can be given as an example of this situation. As they meet in Krishna's house after school, they have dinner together. Before the dinner, the Headmaster washes his hands and does not dry them with towel because he has a habit of letting the water naturally evaporate from his body without a towel, even when he takes a shower. In Krishna's house he acts as if he were in his own house; he meditates for fifteen minutes before the dinner, he confesses that he does not like fried *brinjals* and he does not eat them although they are served on the table and he sleeps on a mat after the meal. To justify his individualism,

he asks Krishna: “Don’t you think we have evolved some silly customs” and he achieves to make Krishna come to a conclusion that being “strictly truthful” is better than “being formal” (562). Through such a portrayal of the Headmaster as a man of individual freedom, Krishna is deeply affected by the idea of freedom and finding inner peace. Also, he is challenged by the idea of saving his soul from the materialistic impositions.

Another point to be taken into consideration in terms of the difference between the lives of the Headmaster and Krishna is that the Headmaster does not have a happy family life and he concentrates on his own life. The children of the Headmaster are “wild,” they have “mud” on their hair and their dresses are “torn and dirty” (565). He does not know where they go and play on the streets because he confesses that the children are “their mother’s special care” (565). Also, they do not attend the Headmaster’s school because their mother thinks that the Headmaster’s school is not appropriate for education. His wife is “a fat woman of about thirty-five, with sparse hair tied into a knot at the back of her head, her face shining with oil and perspiration” (566) and most of the time she quarrels with her husband. The Headmaster and his wife do not have a relationship based on love as Krishna and Susila do. His wife often creates problems because of a materialistic reason, namely, the Headmaster’s not claiming the heritage of a house from his father. The Headmaster states that he does not need that house to enjoy life. He thinks that even if he gets the house and makes the living conditions better for his family, his wife will stay the same and nothing will get better in their marriage (569). Gaur states about their relationship that “[t]heir marriage is an example of the two thoroughly incompatible partners tied into a matrimonial knot. The Headmaster is a visionary. He is above the lure of money. […] This idealism of the Headmaster is not appreciated or understood by his wife” (60). Contrary to what Krishna thinks and offers to him about changing the place they live, the Headmaster thinks that it is not necessary because he thinks that it not the place that determines the people’s happiness: “[i]t is where God resides. It is where we should live. And if we have any worth in us the place will change through our presence” (569).

Narayan’s engagement to Krishna’s enlightenment through the Headmaster’s vision of life comes to a conclusion as Krishna decides to resign from the college and starts to

work in the Headmaster's kindergarten. In other words, the aim of life becomes more pathetic for Krishna after he experiences self-realisation which is carried to a further point by the thoughts of the Headmaster and he decides to get pleasure from his life as a teacher in the Headmaster's school which prioritises freedom over responsibility. For Krishna, he has strong reasons for a resignation and one of them is that he does not get pleasure from life as a college teacher teaching old ideas to new brains, which he expresses openly in one of the drafts of the resignation letters:

> In it I was going to attack a whole century of false education. I was going to explain why I could no longer stuff Shakespeare and Elizabethan metre and Romantic poetry for the hundredth time into young minds and feed them on the dead mutton of literary analysis and theories and histories, while what they need was lessons in the fullest use of the mind. This education had reduced us to a nation of morons; we were strangers to our own culture and camp followers of other culture, feeding on leaving and garbage. (602)

It is clear in Krishna's determined thoughts that he is strongly opposed to the education system that causes an alienation for the students from their own roots and also he considers the teachers in the missionary colleges as "efficient clerks" (603). However, Krishna decides to find something "far deeper" (603) to write in a resignation letter. Also, he does not appear in the novel as a character who fully opposes the literary canon of English literature. He states: "I was like a rabid attack on all English writers, which was hardly my purpose. What fool could be insensible to Shakespeare's sonnets or *The Ode to the West Wind* or "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever?"" (602). Related to this, Dennis Walder offers the following evaluation:

> Narayan does not even attempt to tell the reader what that something 'far deeper' is that his narrator wishes to tell, but, ironically, his English teacher goes on to use that same functional register the imperial masters have thought the cultural 'morons' of India as a way of resolving his dilemma, while avoiding the oppositional cliches of the local 'educationists.' (26)

Furthermore, Knippling refers to Krishna's dualism about rejecting or accepting the effects of English literature as "Krishna simply cannot distinguish the literature's colonial, ideological traces in his liberal reception of it" (176). Then, Krishna prepares a formal letter informing about his resignation and goes to Professor Brown's room to talk about the issue face to face. This time, Krishna's way of liberating himself from the necessities of being a servant of the colonial system is challenged by Professor Brown's evaluations; nevertheless, Krishna succeeds in following the path of his enlightenment.

As Krishna confesses that he resigns to get a position in a children's school, Professor Brown does not reply before his "Western brain" finishes the process of "classifying, labelling, departmentalizing" the issue (604). He suggests that Krishna can think about that issue as an "extra interest" or "a hobby;" nevertheless, Krishna confesses that he comes to work just for earning a hundred rupees a month and he cannot please his "inner self" as a college teacher (604). Upon his confession Professor Brown expresses that Krishna can get pleasure from literature as a teacher too and questions Krishna if he means that "all the poets and dramatists" are nonsense for him (604). Krishna confesses that he does not think that way and that he hopes "to give them to these children for their delight and enlightenment, but in a different measure and in a different manner" (604), which proves Krishna's basic reason for quitting his job. It is evidently shown in Krishna's confession that quitting his job is mainly because of his rejection of his positioning in a missionary college, not because of a blind enmity towards Western culture. Upon his resignation, there is a farewell meeting at the college for the honour of Krishna, which can be considered as a final reference to Krishna's coping up with the system of social order. Professor Brown praises Krishna in the farewell meeting as follows: "few men would have the courage to throw up a lucrative income and adopt one very much lower" (606), which can be considered as an evidence of Krishna's getting rid of materialistic needs of life. Also, in this scene an Honours boy expresses that "[t]he national Regeneration is in his hands" (607), which can again be considered as Narayan's integration of humorousness into the novel while depicting the reception of Krishna's decision. However, Krishna is highly disturbed by their praising of him and he makes a final speech expressing that his resignation is not motivated by "National Regeneration," and that he in fact wants to leave the adults' world to feel the joys of the children's world. He explains that the world of the children is "a vast store house of peace and harmony. I have not had in mind anything more than that" (607). After the resignation, what he feels is a "superb, noble intoxication" and his mind becomes "clean and bare and a mere chamber of fragrance" (608) that is a direct reference for his reaching to a resolution stage.

Krishna's resignation is the beginning of his self-recognition, because only after he frees himself from the responsibilities of his job, he achieves to communicate with Susila spiritually by emptying his soul from any worldly concern and getting his soul

ready for the union. Finally, as Gideon N. M'Marete relates, Krishna is able to see the spiritual form of his wife and even smell the "jasmine" of her hair which is also associated with "the romance of married love" in an "exotic manner" (37). Susila's appearing on Krishna's bed and the continuation of the jasmine smell are also commented on by M'Marete in the following: "In a rapturous intoxication, as a result of his new childlike acceptance of spiritual presences, Krishnan is finally initiated by a hypnotic melody into the other world where Susila is sitting on his bed, 'still jasmine-scented'" (43). At the end of the novel, Krishna and Susila's spiritual forms go near the window and they watch the "dawn" which can refer to the new life of Krishna and his union with Susila. Krishna expresses the revolution in his soul as a final remark of the novel which refers to a complete resolution stage: "The boundaries of our personalities suddenly dissolved. It was a moment of rare, immutable joy- a moment for which one feels grateful to Life and Death" (609). Also, his union with Susila can be likened to the union of India's past and future in terms of liberation from colonial subjectivity as Sarkar explains below:

> Krishnan's reunion with Susila affirms India's religious heritage. During their separations, his soul-searching parallels India's quest to preserve a national identity that has incessantly been eclipsed by Colonial regimes of foreign empires. In the end, a divine manifestation reveals to Krishna that he has succeeded in resurrecting his marriage to Susila, surmounting barriers separating life from death, the future from the past. (4)

In other words, the novel suggests that "literature, philosophy and rationalism" are no use to Krishna; only Indian concept of self-realisation brings him happiness and Krishna's finding his true-self in life is achieved through leaving the imposed identities and values behind. Through his salvation, Krishna's conflict of finding inner peace and reaching a meaning for life is completed. Consequently, the theme of reaching liberation through embracing Indianness is once again treated in this novel as Narayan's final response to the conflict between Western rationalism and Eastern spiritualism.

As a conclusion for the discussion in this chapter, it may be maintained that Narayan establishes a growing tone of self-realisation from Swami to Krishna. That is to say, Narayan gradually focuses on the impacts of reaching liberation through the trilogy: in *Swami and Friends* it is discussed within the framework of Swami's naive nature and the element of *dharma* which is strictly established in the Hindu culture; in *The*

Bachelor of Arts the liberation is achieved by Chandran's personal attempts to integrate himself into the society; and finally in *The English Teacher*, Krishna reaches salvation and liberation by rejecting the materialistic impositions and nurtures his soul with psychic communication which can be considered as the last stage of spiritual enlightenment. As Jothilakshmi comments, *The English Teacher* can be considered to have a significant role in Narayan's own enlightenment because "the novels which follow *The English Teacher* show a maturity of mind, art and tightness in structure" (5). Hence, each of the protagonists in the trilogy experiences the difficulties of moving on in their lives in Westernised India; however, they are eventually absorbed in Indianness and the liberation it brings, which can be considered as the victory of Indian customs and traditions over Western reason.

CONCLUSION

By adopting a passive anti-colonial attitude towards colonialism in India, Narayan establishes his *Swami and Friends*, *The Bachelor of Arts* and *The English Teacher* on the grounds of the depiction of colonial Malgudi and how life in Malgudi is commented upon by his characters. Narayan's trilogy, in a general sense, expresses the encounter of the East and the West in the fictional town of Malgudi, which, despite its fictitious nature, precisely represents colonial India, as well as its authenticity and spirituality. Malgudi is as real as a South Indian town can be in the first half of the twentieth century as a result of Narayan's vivid and detailed depiction of authentic Indian identity, traditionalism, mythification, and social and cultural dilemmas resulting from the perceived superiority of Western culture. Manisha Basu points out that "Narayan has been consistently praised both by Western and Indian commentators for the authentic Indianness of his works and for his presentation of an essential, timeless, unchanging reality" (228).

In addition to the depiction of the ordinary Indian experience in Malgudi, Narayan also preserves his status as a detached observer in his portrayal of the colonial times in India. As Trimurthy states, his trilogy contains "neither didacticism nor propaganda," because Narayan "interprets Indian life purely on the basis of aesthetic sense with unbiased objectivity" (426). This attitude of Narayan enables him to carry his trilogy beyond a chaotic atmosphere and serious conclusions. Like Gandhi, Narayan resists colonialism in a passive way which means that he does not adopt an ardent and a revolutionary way in his response to colonisation. His detachment can even be interpreted as an Indian quality. By responding such a way against colonisation, Narayan prefers to portray the colonial experience in Malgudi by ironic interpretations and humorousness of the situations. In that sense, Narayan's theme of decolonisation is interwoven into his detachment from chaos.

In his unique way of responding to colonisation, Narayan mainly comments that liberation from the British can be won in Malgudi through internalising Indianness and realising the quality of the Indian life. The indigenous Indian identity and the authentic

Indian experience stand for the main reference points of the depiction of Malgudi and the Malgudians. Throughout the trilogy, Narayan shapes the theme of Indianness and traditionalism according to the lives of his protagonists and represent their experiences in their natural circumstances. As a schoolboy, Swami's attachment to the Indianness is depicted by his naïve praying to the Hindu gods and his taking refuge behind his belief in the dark forest in *Swami and Friends*. As the protagonist of the novel is a child, the portrayal of Indianness can be read within the framework of Swami's conceptualisation of Indianness and traditions. In *The Bachelor of Arts*, Narayan increases his emphasis on Indianness by integrating a stronger element of traditionalism in his depiction of Malgudi. The account of a detailed calculation of the matching of the horoscopes before an Indian marriage which strictly prevents the arrangement, and the portrayal of the respected status of the holy men who are treated unquestioningly as the messengers of the gods in society can be considered Narayan's portrayal of the conservative Malgudi in an authentic Eastern atmosphere. The theme of Indianness and traditionalism becomes even more intensive through the depiction of the cremation scene and the idealised roles of Hindu women in Malgudian society in *The English Teacher*. So, Narayan's trilogy presents the theme of Indianness and traditionalism from different perspectives of the protagonists and within it, there is a gradually increasing tone of Indianness and traditionalism. Therefore, Narayan mainly paces the ways of Hindu morals and customs in reflecting the Malgudian world.

Narayan's reflections of the Indian identity and the quality of Malgudian life in each novel are taken to a higher level of realisation of Indianness by reaching liberation through turning face to the Indian morals. The conflicts of the protagonists and their sufferings come to an end by the help of indigenous Indian experiences. The Western reason that causes most of the conflicts in the trilogy is portrayed as a passive element as compared to the strength of Indian traditions. Likewise, the Western characters or the representatives of the Western culture do not reveal big challenges to the lives of the Indian characters and they are presented as ineffective details of the Westernised life of Malgudi. Throughout the trilogy, by portraying the unchangeable results of Hindu morals such as the *dharma* and *karma*, the full integration of the Indian characters to the Malgudian society after their experiencing the dilemmas of belonging to the Western rationalism or Indian traditionalism, and decolonising their souls from the Western

impositions, Narayan evidently conveys the message of preserving the Indian culture which is the only way for the enlightenment and liberation of India. Moreover, as it has been illustrated and discussed in this study, Narayan's response to British colonisation of India does not come in the form of an aggressive discourse that advocates for fighting against the British or the Western Other. Instead, his main emphasis is on embracing the Indian or the Eastern Self. As a matter of fact, Narayan's tone is such that he does not seem even to acknowledge the existence of the concepts of the Other or the West, which indicates his complete rejection of thinking and conceiving the world in terms of binary oppositions. With reference to the fact that such binary thinking is a distinctive quality of Western rationalism, it may be concluded that Narayan's most significant and powerful response to British colonisation of India is this rejection of this core component of the West, simply by focusing on the depiction of Indian experience and Indian characters. Based on this point, and contrary to criticisms directed at him for his silence about colonisation, Narayan can be considered one of the most powerful anti-colonialist voices in Indian-English Literature in the first half of the twentieth century.

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APPENDIX 1

ORIGINALITY REPORTS

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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YÜKSEK LİSANS/DOKTORA TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORJİNALLİK RAPORU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 12/10/2015

Tez Başlığı / Konusu: R.K. Narayan'ın *Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts* ve *The English Teacher* Adlı Romanlarındaki Karakterlerin Özgürleşme Arayışı

Yukarıda başlığı/konusu gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 109 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 12/10/2015 tarihinde tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda belirtilen filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı % 1'dir.

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Tarih ve İmza

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Statüsü:	X Y.Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐ Bütünleşik Dr.

DANIŞMAN ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.

Yrd. Doç. Dr. Sinan Akıllı

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
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THESIS/DISSERTATION ORIGINALITY REPORT

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
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Date: 12/10/2015

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Department:	English Language and Literature
Program:	English Language and Literature
Status:	X Masters ☐ Ph.D. ☐ Integrated Ph.D.

ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Sinan Akıllı

APPENDIX 2

ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORM FOR THESIS WORK

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ETİK KURUL İZİN MUAFİYETİ FORMU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 12/10/2015

Tez Başlığı / Konusu: R.K. Narayan'ın *Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts* ve *The English Teacher* Adlı Romanlarındaki Karakterlerin Özgürleşme Arayışı

Yukarıda başlığı/konusu gösterilen tez çalışmam:

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12.10.2015

Tarih ve İmza

Adı Soyadı:	Sinem SAATLI
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Anabilim Dalı:	İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
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HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
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ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE TO THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENCY

Date: 12/10/2015

Thesis Title / Topic: Characters Seeking Liberation in R.K. Narayan's *Swami and Friends, The Bachelor of Arts,* and *The English Teacher*
My thesis work related to the title/topic above:

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2. Does not necessitate the use of biological material (blood, urine, biological fluids and samples, etc.).
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12.10.2015

Date and Signature

Name Surname: Sinem SAATLI
Student No: N08123120
Department: English Language and Literature
Program: English Language and Literature
Status: X Masters ☐ Ph.D. ☐ Integrated Ph.D.

ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL

APPROVED.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Sinan Akıllı

CHARACTERS SEEKING LIBERATION IN R. K. NARAYAN'S SWAMI AND FRIENDS, THE BACHELOR OF ARTS AND THE ENGLISH TEACHER

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