

PARALLELISM BETWEEN R. K. NARAYAN AND R. K. LAXMAN: A STUDY

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Abstract

In this paper, I made a parallel study of two brothers, one is Creative writer, R.K.Narayan and another is a Cartoonist, R. K. Laxman. Their arts make me to study their books, R.K.Narayan's 'My Days' and R. K. Laxman's 'The Tunnel of Time.' We found parallel lines in them in their art-form, that is, Fiction and Cartoon.

Key Words: Comment,caption, caricature, cartoon, humour, malice, parallel, wink and Yoga.

Introduction:

Rasipuram Krishnaswamy Iyer Narayanaswami alias R. K. Narayan (1906-2001) and his brother Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Laxman alias R. K. Laxman(1921-2015) are renowned brothers who made bench mark in the field of their choice. They were born to R.V. Krishnaswami Iyer and Gnanambal at Puraswalkam, Madras. Narayan himself was the third of eight children of his parents. Laxman was the seventh of eight children of his parents. The large family of Iyers included several uncles, brothers, sisters and cousins. R. K. Narayan is known as a distinguished cartoonist.

Although they chose different fields, it appears that they are on parallel lines. Having been brothers, both of them had the same family backgrounds. Their father was a strict head master. But he was a lovable and liber father at home. Both the brothers had never been the targets of their father's anger though their performance in the examination was poor.

Autobiographies:

R.K.Narayan's autobiography 'My Days' (1979) and R. K. Laxman's autobiography 'The Tunnel of Time: An Autobiography' (1998) reveal their family concerns, professional matters, aspirations, struggles, joyous and bitter experiences. Undoubted, there existed an emotional bond between R.K.Narayan and R. K. Laxman. In his biography 'The Tunnel of Time: AN Autobiography' writes, 'R.K.Narayan turned attention to my personal appearance and habits. Of

all my brothers, somehow Narayan appointed himself as my mentor'. Despite this reference to Narayan, R. K. Laxman does not write profusely about his brother, nor does R. K. Narayan about his brother, Laxman. The reason is that there is a gap of 14 years between R. K. Narayan and R. K. Laxman. Naturally, they did not influence each other in their childhood days.

Chosen fields of brothers:

As for their outstanding achievement in their chosen fields, R. K. Narayan and R. K. Laxman are on parallel lines. Narayan's creative writing comprises of Fifteen Novels, Five Collection of Short Stories, Two books of essays and two books of travelogues. All are published by Indian Thought Publication, Mysore. R. K. Laxman excelled in their field of Cartoon-drawing. Penguin India published his cartoons in the series of the Best of Laxman". The Times of India also published a collection of Cartoons entitled "50 years of independence through the eyes of R. K. Laxman.

Caricatures and Cartoons:

It is very interesting to note the caricature in R.K.Narayan's stories and novels and the cartoons by Laxman invite comparison. This factor brings parallel lines between these brothers. In R.K. Narayan's fiction, in his short stories in particular, the characters are almost caricatures. In his story, "Reluctant Guru", Americans are portrayed as caricatures as they are abnormally crazy about learning Yoga. In the story, "Lawley Road", there is a chairman of the Municipality of Malgudi who is so careless and stupid that he makes a resolution to change the names of all streets, lanes, by-lanes when India becomes Independent. In the story, "Antidote" Gopal, a film star to enact the scene of dying and when the director shouts 'Action', Gopal, while enacting dying scene, opens the right eye and winks at the camera mischievously.

Despite the differences in the nature of art-forms, a cartoon as a drawing and a caricature as a type of character have some common characteristics. Both forms are basically humours, satirical. In fact, satire and humour are the two significant factors that play a significant role in making these two art-forms appealing to the viewers and to the readers of cartoons and caricatures. A cartoon, as a matter of fact, is to be viewer and also to be read out, as a caption or a comment related to it. It is as important as the drawing of a cartoon. R. K. Laxman's cartoons are as interesting as R. K. Narayan's Caricatures.

Subjects of Caricatures and Cartoons:

R. K. Narayan caricatures are oddities and idiosyncrasies in human nature. The characters in his stories and novels belong to the middle class and his satire is never high or biting one. Laxman's favourite subjects of Cartoons are incongruities in human nature, corruption in public sector, selfishness of politicians. Most of his cartoons are satires on politicians.

Absence of bias:

Despite of its satirical nature, Laxman's Cartoons have never been a subject of controversy. Even the politicians appreciated his Cartoons. He never hurt religious feelings nor did he resort to obscenity through his cartoons. As for Narayan's Writing, it, too, is devoid of any kind of malice. Hence, it is delightful, though satirical. It reflects human nature that never becomes

outdated. The subjects of Cartoons can have local and incidental context. So in due course of time, they become out of context. Hence they are outdated ones. R. K. Narayan's some of the Cartoons belong to this class.

Talkative man and Common man:

It is possible to draw parallelism between R. K. Narayan's Talkative Man and R. K. Laxman's Common Man. In Most of R.K.Narayan's short stories, Talkative Man (T.M.) narrates a story. He is just a narrator and is not directly involved in any event, he narrates. In the course of his narration, he makes comments which are very apt and sometimes, ironical and satirical ones. A Common Man (C.M.) appears in R. K. Laxman's Cartoons. He is a man with a striped coat, moustache and spectacles. The gesture and the facial expressions of a Common Man reflect surprise, wonder and confusion. R. K. Laxman's Common Man represents a man in the street who is an observer and also a silent sufferer.

Conclusion:

It is surprising that R.K.Narayan as a Caricaturist and R. K. Laxman as a Cartoonist stand parallel to each other as Creative Writing and Drawing on Sister Arts and can be supplementary to each other.

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