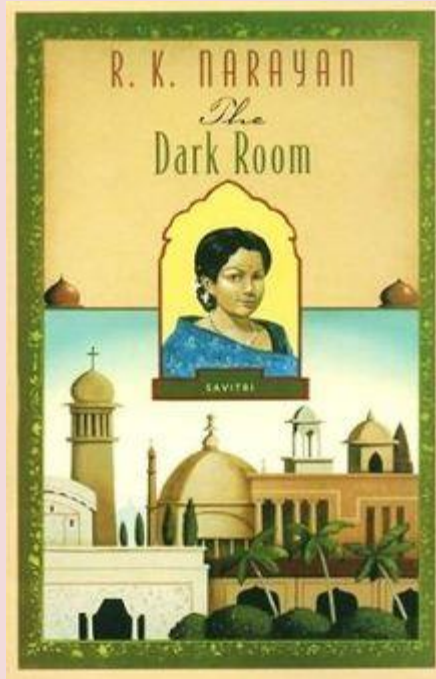


Images of Women in R. K. Narayan's *The Dark Room*

C. Malathi, M.A., M.Phil., NET, Ph.D. Candidate

malskrish@gmail.com



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Abstract

This short monograph presents a critical analysis women characters in R. K. Narayan's *The Dark Room*. R.K. Narayan portrays with sympathy the sufferings of women and shows the readers how important are their roles both in family and in social life. My purpose is to highlight R.K. Narayan's sympathetic portrayal of women in many facets of their life. Through his simple yet elegant way of telling stories, R.K. Narayan creates in us awareness for the need to change and work for the uplift of women.

Key words: women characters, *The Dark Room*, R. K. Narayan

Preface

Indian novelists writing in English occupy a prominent place. Apart from female writers, male writers seem to echo the concerns of the Indian women. In this book, I try to capture the descriptions of the images of women in R.K. Narayan's novel *The Dark Room*. This novel was originally published in UK by Macmillan Publishers in 1938. The novel is set in Malgudi.

Although R.K. Narayan may not be described as a feminist writer, his sympathetic portrayal of the suffering of women from all social classes in India indirectly contributed to the awakening of the consciousness of both men and women in relation to the oppressed and suppressed conditions women were and are placed in.

The year 1930 is an important period in the history of India. Importance of women's place and family was readily recognized as evidenced by larger participation of women in the

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freedom movement, in the declarations of leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Rabindranath Tagore, Annie Besant, and others. Voting rights were granted to women in certain categories. More schools and colleges for women were emerging. It is significant to note that R.K. Narayan's *The Dark Room* was written and published during this decade.

R.K. Narayan portrays with sympathy the sufferings of women and shows the readers how important are their roles both in family and in social life. My purpose is to highlight R.K. Narayan's sympathetic portrayal of women in many facets of their life. Through his simple yet elegant way of telling stories, R.K. Narayan creates in us awareness for the need to change and work for the uplift of women.

I took up *The Dark Room* for my Master's Project and wrote a report on the women of this novel. A revised version of this report is now presented in a monograph format. Many of the ideas developed in this study have been treated more or less exhaustively in the articles and reviews listed in the bibliography. I take this opportunity to thank Professor Mrs. Ranjitham M.A., M.Phil for her support and supervision. I take pleasure in expressing my thanks to my mother Mrs. C. Lakshmi, my husband K. Krishnamurthi, and my two loving daughters K. Abinila and K. Eniyamathi who loved to see me through this monograph's completion.

C. Malathi, M.A., M.Phil., NET Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of English
N.G.M. College (Autonomous)
Palakkad Road
Pollachi – 642 001
Tamilnadu
India malskrish@gmail.com

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C. Malathi, M.A., M.Phil., NET, Ph.D. Candidate

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