

# R.K. Narayan's Approach to Familial Relationships in *The Financial Expert*

## Abstract

*R.K. Narayan started writing under the influence of events happenings in his milieu. He was concerned with the Indian middle – class society and tradition. His novel "The Financial Expert" deals with the theme of avarice. In is the story of the protagonist Margayya who is over ambitious and a shrewd financial expert. It is also a psychological study of the growth of the only child of the hero. The novel depicts the sweet relationship between husband and wife. It delineates the sufferings of middle class wives. Narayan has furnished his novel with treasures of Indian epic literature and myths. In his treatment of the transitional and fast changing Indian life Narayan comes before us as a true founder of the tradition of Indian English fiction.*

## Introduction

R.K. Narayan began to write under the influence of events happening in his milieu. He was mainly centred on the small part of the Indian middle-class society and its tradition incorporated in his town Malgudi. C.D. Narasimhaiah maintains:

He has scarcely stirred out of Malgudi nor have his characters; and if by ill-luck they did stray out of the Municipal limits of Malgudi they invariably came back, sadder and wiser-such is the spirit of place, Malgudi the microcosm of traditional Indian society.<sup>1</sup>

Narayan wrote his *The Financial Expert* in 1952 which deals with the theme of avarice. The novel revolves around its protagonist Margayya who is the high priest of Mammon. It describes the tale of an over ambitious and shrewd financial expert. His success and failure have been vividly delineated in the story. His real name is Krishna but he is famous as Margayya meaning "one who shows the way."<sup>2</sup> The name of the novel bears many ironic echoes. M.K. Naik remarks, "Margayya at once is and is not a financial expert."<sup>3</sup>

Margayya, a small money lender, runs his business under a banyan tree in Malgudi. *The Financial Expert* is a compact and well-knit novel. The incidents strikingly capture the attention of the reader. The narrative skill of Narayan is showed through Margayya's journey from one end of the novel to the other. His conduct in the end resembles his conduct in the beginning of the novel. His lust for money and undue affection for son lend the story a tragic face.

*The Financial Expert* deals with the greed of man. Clearly, Margayya is obsessed with the power of money and everything is judged in terms of money by him. One day he went to a house and what he found is described in these words:

... at one corner they had put up a small wooden pedestal on which a couple of figures of gods and one or two frame pictures were hanging... His friend priest sat before the pedestal, with his eyes shut, muttering something. The master of the house with his wife and children stood devoutly at a distance.<sup>4</sup>

Each trifle insult recalls Margayya of his awful penury. He takes interest in hoarding money. The experiences of ups and downs change him into a philosopher. He happens to be an specialist in money. Next to money his problem is his son Balu.

Despite a number of facilities Balu fails in matriculation. He despises examination and loves to smoke cigarettes. The relationships in the novels of Narayan are about the family. He delineates relations between wife and husband, father and son, and brother and brother in Indian context.

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