



THE MORAL IMAGINATION OF R.K. NARAYAN: A
STUDY OF THE INFLUENCES OF THE
UPANISHADS

BY

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ABSTRACT

Some significant research has already been carried out upon selected works of Narayan in the realm of holiness, religion and its symbols, Indian mythology and *moksha* (liberation). Therefore it is fitting to look at the novels of this writer in the dominion of the Hindu religious philosophy of the *Upanishads*. The basic elements in this author's writing indicate straightforwardness, honesty, freedom, transmigration, ethics and traditional practices, which can be analysed in the sphere of the *Upanishads*. This study aims to elucidate some elements pertaining to the spirituality of the *Upanishads* in the works of the Indian novelist in English, R.K. Narayan. It argues that the unique quality of Narayan's writings, his plot and characterisation indicate the simplicity imbibed from the teachings of the *Upanishads*. The study highlights different areas of concern to Narayan and some of them are the search for truth and purity, spirituality, integration and liberation. This study uses the *Upanishads* as a philosophical framework of analysis. The *Upanishads* advocate a monistic religion; it equates the *Atman* in mankind as a spark of *Brahman* (the supersoul) and it desires humans to strive to be perfect, to realise that they are on a quest towards realising God. The indication is that as a writer, Narayan subsumes to the principles of the Indian philosophy of the *Upanishads* in the thematic ideals of his novels. This study investigates seven of his fifteen novels as subscribing to the tenets of the *Upanishads* in the realm of disposition and gravity. The study also strives to demonstrate that Narayan's key themes, characterisation and stratagem all points towards a spiritual propensity of the *Upanishads*. This study analyses the novels pertaining to the major themes running through them. The chapters of the thesis will be divided into the novels to be investigated. The most relevant novels of Narayan will be investigated and appropriated into the corresponding chapters, chronologically. The novels of Narayan examined in this study indicate that the characters are not only simple or basic in the mode of their lives, but are also positive about life no matter if the world seems to be crumbling around them. They also have an infallible way of falling back into track and to keep on looking forward towards the end of their lives, akin to the person for whom the way (*sadhana*) is as important as the end (*moksha*).

خلاصة البحث

لقد أجريت بعض الدراسات المهمة حول أعمال مختارة من مؤلفات نارايان Narayan في مجال القداسة، والدين ورموزه، والأساطير الهندية، والموكشا Moksha (التحرير). ولذلك فإنه من المناسب أن ننظر إلى روايات هذا الكاتب في ملكوت الفلسفة الدينية الهندوسية من الأوبنشاد Upanishads، وتُشير العناصر الأساسية في كتابات هذا المؤلف إلى الاستقامة، والصدق، والحرية، والتَّهجير، والأخلاق، والممارسات التقليدية التي يمكن تحليلها في فلسفة الأوبنشاد Upanishads. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى توضيح بعض العناصر الروحانية في الأوبنشاد التي ظهرت بدورها في الأعمال الروائية للروائي الهندي ر. ك. نارايان التي كتبت باللغة الإنجليزية. وتشير الدراسة إلى أن كتابات نارايان تدلُّ على البساطة المستوحاة من تعاليم الأوبنشاد. وتبرز الدراسة مجالات مختلفة هي من اهتمامات نارايان، وتشمل تلك المجالات البحث عن الحقيقة، والنقاء، والروحانية، والتَّكامل، والتَّحرير. اتخذت هذه الدراسة الأوبنشاد بوصفها إطاراً فلسفياً للتحليل، وتدعو الأوبنشاد إلى فكرة الدين الأحادي، وتحتُّ الإنسان على تحقيق الكمال، والسَّعي إلى معرفة الإله. وفي ذلك إشارة إلى أن نارايان قد استوعب مبادئ الفلسفة الهندية الكامنة في الأوبنشاد Upanishads وقد ظهر ذلك في الأفكار الموضوعية من رواياته. وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص ودراسة 7 من أصل 15 رواية للكاتب نارايان والتي تشترك مع الأوبنشاد في نزعاتها ومبادئها. كما تسعى الدراسة -أيضاً- إلى إثبات أن كافة مواضيع نارايان الرئيسة وشخصياته الروائية تتجه نحو النزعة الروحية المتمثلة في الأوبنشاد. تمَّ تحليل الروايات بناءً على الموضوعات المتمثلة فيها، لتضمينها في فصول الدراسة وفقاً لتسلسلها الزماني. إنَّ روايات نارايان التي تناولتها هذه الدراسة تحتوي على شخصيات ليست بسيطة في طريقة حياتها فحسب، بل هي إيجابية أيضاً في نظرتها للحياة دون التأثر بالعالم الخارجي، وتمتاز هذه الشخصيات بقدرتها على مواصلة طريقها في الحياة وتحدي الصَّعاب، والتَّطلع إلى نهاية حياتها حيث إنَّ الطريق Sudhana لا يقلُّ أهميَّة عن النِّهاية .Moksha

APPROVAL PAGE

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degree at IIUM or other institutions.

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**THE MORAL IMAGINATION OF R.K. NARAYAN:
AN UPANISHADIC STUDY**

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WITH LOVE
TO
GOVIN
IESHWAR & THANOOHJA

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The intention of this research is to elucidate some elements pertaining to the *Upanishads* as found in the fiction of the Indian novelist in English, R.K. Narayan (1906-2001). Even if this writer may have other important rudiments that figure well in his writing, for example, Postcolonialism and tragic-humour, the *Upanishadic* themes seem to be one significant and compelling premise in it too. Narayan wrote in English in India around the same time as Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao that is in the early twentieth century. Whereas Anand is a politically predisposed writer who writes against the rigid caste system of India, Raja Rao is a metaphysical writer who stresses the philosophical questions and stance of the land.¹

According to Riemenschneider, Narayan seems to be the most well known of the three writers aforementioned, based on the number of works done upon his writings (p. 89). In the past six decades, he states, there has been a vast body of research upon Narayan, which by far exceeds research upon any other Anglophone writer from India (p. 89). As for Narayan's approach, he seems to give importance to the relationship of human beings and the role of each of his characters in the social and individual realm.

He is a prolific author with fifteen novels, numerous short stories, travel writings, translation of epics and non-fictional essays to his credit. As earlier mentioned, considerable research has been carried out on this writer as one who

¹ All theological references in the thesis especially the concept of God, soul and creation pertains to Hinduism.

makes use of tragic-comedy, myths and other theories, even as he shies away from academic labels and categorisations. Yet, while a visiting professor in the United States, he recorded in “*My Dateless Diary*” that a serious theme is always prevalent in any type of writing. While lecturing to a class of students there, he mentioned:

I elaborated the theory that there could be no such thing as *absolute* fiction; any fiction must have its source (even if it is not visible at first sight to the naked eye), in some pattern of life, whether you call it fable, allegory, ballad, or cock-and-bull story” (Krishnan, *A Town Called Malgudi*, 379).

Therefore, there is a clear indication that Narayan admits to a grave theme, an underlying torch, which guides even his own writing as that of all others, even though he prefers to claim he is “not out to enlighten the world or improve it” (Krishnan, p. 517).

My argument in this research will be that the foundation of Narayan’s novels is the general underlying themes prevalent in the *Upanishads*, which he uses to indicate the condition of the human being in modern times. I would also argue that Narayan’s root is the themes of the *Upanishads*, which is as far as some of them were reiterated in the later dated Indian epics Narayan mentions.

In his autobiography, *My Dateless Diary*, Narayan implies that for the Indian, a crucial aspect of his search in life will include those pertaining to the afterlife (Krishnan, p. 113). In the same book, he declares to a reporter that “Meditation and withdrawal - for about fifteen minutes a day” (p. 128) is the source of the Indian’s “calm view of existence” (p. 128). The need of quiet serenity and to withdraw to experience the beatitude of the Infinite pregnant calm is an aspect induced in the *Upanishadic* search for truth, which seems to apply well to Narayan’s character as well as his characterisation.

My purpose in this research is to indicate that the unique quality of Narayan's writings indicate the philosophical ease imbibed from the teachings of the *Upanishads*. I intend to highlight his novels as thematically falling into some subdivisions, for instance, as a search for the Ultimate reality which in Indian philosophy is *Brahman* or God, the coming to terms with *Maya* or Illusion, the nature of God, the realisation of the higher and lower truth, the perfection of the ideal, the states of the soul, unity or integration in the philosophy of non-duality, transmigration of the soul, self realisation as well as actualisation of the self, ethics, *karma* or the accumulation of good and bad deeds in multiple rebirths and liberation or *moksha*.

Among others, Narayan has been studied as a comic, mythic and even as a postcolonial writer. But in this research, I will attempt to reveal that in his novels, Narayan is predisposed to the philosophy evident in the *Upanishads*. Additionally, I will endeavour to divulge that the characters in this writer's novels live by the *Upanishadic* theories in their day to day life. That is, they treat the others in the society with respect and live according to the Indian tradition in their nook in Malgudi. Or conversely, they deviate in their lives and then change for the better (Raju in *The Guide* as well as Raja and the Tiger Hermit in *A Tiger for Malgudi*), or if otherwise, they become excluded from Narayan's Malgudi (Vasu in *The Man Eater of Malgudi* and Daisy in *The Painter of Signs*).

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In this section I will develop on the motivation that prompted this research, and the reasons include the life and lifestyle of Narayan as well as his writing. I have selected to write on Narayan as I observe that he has potential to be seen in a new and more enlightening attribute. Narayan's novels testify that his writings possess a magical feel-

good quality that is difficult to explain, and which portrays the life, existence and the way of the Indian in minute accuracy.

The initial observation that this writer can be analysed from an *Upanishadic* view point is made on the basis of his personal background, as belonging to an upper caste, middle class Hindu family that is steeped in the profound tradition of India, and as one who is nourished on the classical ancient texts of India.

Secondly, I have made the assumption that even if Narayan would not admit it, yet his non-fiction, for instance, his essays, “The Reluctant Guru” and “The Storyteller,” are proof enough that he is deeply entrenched in the religious tenets of the mystical *Upanishads*. Examples from both essays will be outlined shortly. Even though he chooses to subsume the depth of the *Upanishadic* teachings in the everyday life of the simple characters of his novels in Malgudi, as the modern man of India, or rather South India, yet the qualities of an *Upanishadic* worldview is perceptible in Narayan’s story telling as well as in his apparently non-didactic entertainment for his audience.

Thirdly, Narayan makes direct references to the *Upanishads* through his characters in his later novels, one instance being Srinivas in *Mr. Sampath* as well as Nagaraj in *The World of Nagaraj*. In *The Vendor of Sweets*, the *Bhagavadgita* is cited. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the *Gita* actually uses similar symbolisms as found in the *Katha Upanishad*, that had appeared earlier in time to the *Bhagavatham*. This will be detailed further in the section that deals with the theoretical framework. The *Bhagavad Gita* appears too in the *Mahabharata* that is allocated to 600 B.C.E. whereas the *Upanishads* had been recorded in about 850 B.C.E.

Narayan’s essay, “The World of the Storyteller” appears in his book *The Indian Epics Retold: The Ramayana, Mahabharata, Gods, Demons and Others*. In it,

he states his belief that the *Vedas*, created out of God's breath "contain within them all that a man needs for his salvation at every level" (p. 382). The *Vedas* were recorded around 3500 B.C.E. However, the philosophical treatises found in the *Vedas*, those that deal with human beings and their relationship to God and the Universe have been reiterated in the *Upanishads*, and this is a direct hint by the author himself that he consciously accepts as true the reality of the religious sphere in mankind.

It is expected that Narayan subscribes thematically to the philosophies apparent in the major *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* are deeply philosophical writings, the essence of which was later reiterated in the legends and the myths of India. Even if he uses the ancient myths to relay the stories that he expects will be informative to his readers, yet Narayan simultaneously entertains his audience even if indirectly, while he relays too the major arguments of the *Upanishads* as they apply to the modern personage. For instance, freedom of the individual, discovery of the authentic Self, a continued calm existence of the individual even in the face of the calamitous world and the eternal quest of mankind for the truth and reality of *Brahman* or God, in a materialistically affirmative world is stressed in the *Upanishads* and also depicted by Narayan in his novels.

Narayan uses the above aspects to relay the development of his characters and their advancement to apprehend their authentic Self. In this way, Narayan uses the themes and teachings inherent in the *Upanishads* in mostly an unconscious and spontaneous manner, even as he utilizes the myths deliberately as a mode to relay his deeper message. However, the significance or the main theme of his narrative stand tied to the philosophical values relayed in the *Upanishads*.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In this section, I wish to highlight that Narayan had been researched on massively yet there is direly lacking an analysis of his works in the spiritual aspect, using the *Upanishads* as a theoretical framework for the investigation. Some mention has been made to an *Upanishadic* bearing by S.C. Harrex in his *The Fire and the Offering* (p. 100), in respect to the character of Srinivas in *Mr. Sampath*. Riemenschneider too mentions that from *The Guide*, one investigator, “Ram did drop Rosie somewhere on the way to her realisation of Self - as does the author: a relapse from psychoanalysis into *Advaita Vedanta*” (p. 93). This statement deals with the *Atman* that is fully realised in Raju but only partially realised in Rosie. Rosie therefore lives a life of art, a subsidiary of the beauty of *Brahman*, whereas Raju lives the last portion of his life for the villagers of Mangala, a sacrifice that consumes his life and connects him to the unity of *Brahman*.

Riemenschneider says too that in his “own comprehensive Narayan bibliography (2005) contains 858 publications, including 134 reviews, written by approximately 600 authors and thirty anonymous reviewers” (p. 89). This in itself states the popularity of Narayan and the vast body of research conducted upon him thus far. Nonetheless, in this massive body of work, most are repetitive says Riemenschneider (p. 89).

However, straightforward thematic analysis has yet to be carried out in this respect, by using the themes in the *Upanishads* to analyse the novels of Narayan. Consequently, in my analysis, I intend to investigate the relevance of some of the major *Upanishads* in the writings of Narayan, specifically in his selected novels. I will like to indicate that even if some of the novels may be autobiographical in nature, they still subscribe to the quality of peace and calm of the *Upanishad*, as is portrayed in the

typically Narayan way of storytelling when all ends well and life is continued positively by the characters of his novels. At the very least, in the denouement his characters will resolve the climax on an unperturbed note, which is an indication of human tenacity and perseverance despite the arising of any catastrophes. This tenacity and perseverance are traits lauded in the *Katha Upanishad*.

Conversely, if any of his creations or characterisations fails to fall in with the simple basics of humanity in Narayan's world, they are as a consequence eliminated from his Malgudi. While most members of Malgudi reappear again in the author's later works, those who are misfits are forever expelled; cases in reference being Rosie in *The Guide*, Daisy in *The Painter of Signs*, and Vasu in *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*. As such, a silent code of ethics is prevalent in Narayan's Malgudi and it seems to be none other than the gentle but persistent ones customary in the *Upanishads*. I wish to analyse Narayan's works not as a comparison of the East to the West, or the past to the present, nor as the individual versus the society. It will be done whilst keeping in mind a holistic view of mankind, as is true in the spiritual dominion.

Narayan's characters are relatively fortunate as they are met with the fundamental commodities of humankind, unlike the subhuman characters employed by Mulk Raj Anand, in *Untouchable*, where a lower caste stays eliminated from the main stream society forever and is treated inhumanly. Nor are Narayan's characters sticklers to tradition and antiquity, like those of Raja Rao's in *Kanthapura*, where excommunication from the upper caste circle is the worst possible imaginable condition for a human being. Comparatively, Narayan's characters are modern individuals of the twentieth century.

If some classify Narayan's writings as lacking in depth of emotion and intensity of plot, I will conversely argue that this peculiarity of avoiding the

unpleasant in Narayan is a prolongation of acceptance of fate by the characters of his novels. His characters fail to react strongly as they place themselves in a world that will have rebirths and they are nonchalant even in the face of emotional tragedy, as they have a chance to mend their ways in the next birth, and they are assured that all that happens to them and around them is in actuality the design of the Almighty.

This indicates the position of Narayan's characters, who are able to aspire to the summit of their existence through acceptance of fate, renunciation and forbearance. Hence, they are capable of self-realisation and self-actualisation. His characters question the metaphysical aspects of life and do not admit to a subhuman state. Nevertheless, Narayan's characters live authentically and are close to truth and reality, or conversely they are at loggerheads with it, therefore their avowal or disavowal of the *Upanishadic* theories is keenly perceived.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Riemenschneider states that there is the possibility of "Sanskrit aesthetics or feminist theory" (p. 93) as well as "trends of postmodernist or postcolonial theorising" (p. 93) in Narayan's work. I would like to add another dimension to the significant body of research done on the fiction of Narayan, which is, as subscribing to a serious theme that is religious in nature. I wish to particularly indicate Narayan as being both at times unconsciously and at others consciously influenced by the themes of the *Upanishads* in his fictional writing.

My argument in this research is that Narayan's fiction has as its basis the general underlying themes prevalent in the *Upanishads* that he uses to indicate the condition of mankind in modern times. Narayan's characters are in unique standing as they are realistic and eager to either abstain from or even reject the material world,

accordingly they must have inane qualities that set them apart from the common modern human being. Examples are Jagan in *The Vendor of Sweets* and Raju in *The Guide*.

The difference is apparent as his characters look upon the state of mind as a cause of bondage in human life. They may be misdirected but they are yet industrious in “this world” as much as for self realisation in the next world, for instance, Jagan in *The Vendor of Sweets* is intent on making as much money as possible before he withdraws from life. Nonetheless, his protagonists do finally achieve the crucial *Upanishadic* phase of freedom. This is true for the Tiger Hermit as well as the Tiger Raja in *A Tiger for Malgudi* as well as Krishna in *The English Teacher*.

Margayya from *The Financial Expert*, Chandran in *The Bachelor of Arts* and even the young Swami in *Swami and Friends*, are all life affirmative as they are still in the first and second stages of their lives as a student or a householder. This is not true for the characters that are in the third and fourth stages of their lives. Examples are Jagan in *The Vendor of Sweets*, Krishna in *The English Teacher* and the Tiger Hermit in *A Tiger for Malgudi*.

For these reasons, the objective of my study is to investigate the novels of Narayan in a new light that is as being influenced by the in-depth philosophical tenets of the ancient *Upanishads*. I propose to illustrate that this novelist is thematically inclined towards the teachings of the *Upanishads* while at the same time he unconsciously pledges to them in plot as well as characterisation in his fictional works.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study intends to throw fresh light upon the works of Narayan who had been perceived by a vast number of critics in various ways. Some *Upanishadic* influence, however, had been mentioned in passing by a few critics, like Harrex, Riemenschneider and Mohan Ramana. In this investigation, I will strive to see a deeper connotation to the message of the Malgudi novels. The author himself has mentioned the *Upanishads* directly in his later novels through his characterisation, for instance, in *Mr. Sampath* and *The World of Nagaraj*. He has also made clear in his non-fiction that he pledges to serious themes in his writing.

As a result, by bringing into the forefront the *Upanishadic* elements in the novels of Narayan, it will enable this researcher to establish that there is evidence in the Malgudi novels of a far greater depth and intensity. This will shed new light on the ability of Narayan as a noteworthy writer who is able to transmit a most complex issue which has to do with the spiritual *Upanishads*, to come into being in the story of the modern Indian human being, as well as his/her life and relationship in this world. In another instance, this study too may pave the way for the exploitation of serious theological and theosophical studies in the writings of Narayan. This research, therefore, will relay new significance in the analysis of the mind and thought of Narayan as well as that of the Malgudian.

Centrally, Narayan leaves untold the major ending of the novel that appears to be on another and higher level, which lies in the search of his characters in the pursuance of their lives. The untold ending is in veracity a new beginning for the protagonists. Riemenschneider says that one critic, Uma Parameswaran, mentions that the Malgudi stories break and jolt because of the different levels in the book.

Therefore, Riemenschneider states that Uma Parameswaran says 70% of Narayan's stories do not have a smooth progress or enduring ending (p. 92).

But this second level is the trail and the voyage of the individual is on another, far deeper and more spiritually momentous quest, thereby causing the jolt in the storyline. According to Riemenschneider, Vijay Misra sees the existence of "meta-text I" and "Text II" (p. 92) in the writings of Narayan, and this too is corroboration that there are two levels in the writings of this writer. In this way, I will demonstrate that the novels of Narayan may be more complex than they are taken to be and that they can be explored at differing levels. For that reason, this work will be significant to illustrate that the *Upanishads* are a major philosophy that can be effectively used to analyse the novels of Narayan in the deeper second level.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In this study I will make use of the translations of the *Upanishads* in English from the original in Sanskrit, or even retranslation from the Persian or German, as in the case of Paul Deussen. I will use the novels of Narayan primarily as my source, even if I may indirectly make use of his short stories as well as his non-fiction.

There are translations of the *Upanishads* into English by Indian philosophers, the examples being Sir Radhakrishnan, Ranade, Dasgupta and Hiriyana. There are also translations by enlightened and renowned Holy Men like, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Ranganathananda, Swami Nikhilananda, Sri Aurobindo and Swami Prabhavanantha. Apart from that, there are scholars from the West who have translated the *Upanishads*, for example Max Muller, Paul Deussen, Archibald Edward Gough, Cowell, Oliville, and Burnell, to mention a few.

I will attempt to utilize for my scrutiny as many versions as possible, giving special importance to Max Muller, Olivelle, Radhakrishnan, Hiriyana, Ranganathananda, and Aurobindo who are Orientalist, Indian philosophers and Holy Men respectively. This makes it possible to receive a fairly extensive scope from the three differing scrutinises or aspects of translation.

As for the works of Narayan, I will limit the actual analysis of the thesis to seven of his novels, though I will draw on his non-fiction to estimate his intention as a writer. I may also bring into play his short stories if they happen to be compelling. The main study will be upon the seven selected novels of Narayan that I estimate to be more spiritual in nature after the perusal of all his novels. They will consist of mainly Narayan's later novels, from the semi-autobiographical *The English Teacher*, written after the sudden demise of his wife Rajam, onwards. They contain too concrete *Upanishadic* sub-themes, for example, transmigration of the soul in *The English Teacher* and *A Tiger for Malgudi* and renunciation in *The Guide*, *The Vendor of Sweets* and *The World of Nagaraj*.

I will study the themes prevalent in the *Upanishads* and then relate them to seven of Narayan's selected novels. The novels of Narayan are: *Swami and Friends* (1935), *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937), *The Dark Room* (1938), *The English Teacher: Grateful to Life and Death* (1945), *Mr. Sampath: The Printer of Malgudi* (1949), *The Financial Expert* (1952), *Waiting for the Mahatma* (1955), *The Guide* (1958), *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* (1962), *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), *The Painter of Signs* (1976), *A Tiger for Malgudi* (1983), *Talkative Man* (1986), *The World of Nagaraj* (1990), and *The Grandmother's Tale* (1992). Each of the seven chosen books will be analyzed in a chapter from Chapters 4 up to 10, and they will be delineated in more detail in the end portion of this chapter.

The themes of the thirteen principle *Upanishads* to be employed in this analysis are from: *Brhadaranyaka*, *Chhandogya*, *Taittiriya*, *Mandukya*, *Prasna*, *Aitereya*, *Svetasvatara*, *Mundaka*, *Katha*, *Kena*, *Isa*, *Maitri* and *Kaushitaki*. I also use some minor *Upanishads* when they can be used convincingly for this research, for instance, *Sarvopanishad*, *Tejabindupanishad*, *Kaivalya*, *Paramahansa*, *Atma* and *Amirtabindu*. I will discuss the *Upanishadic* philosophy in a later section, in Chapter 3.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – THE *UPANISHADS*

In this section I will highlight some of the important themes of the *Upanishads* that are significant in the study of Narayan's novels. Each of the themes will be relevant to some of the chosen seven novels that will be analysed as the core of this research. A more in depth study of the theory will be done in Chapter 3.

The *Upanishads* are the most ancient philosophical treatise on the nature of God, the soul and the universe in India, and it propounds that the soul in mankind (*Atman*) can be equated to the super-soul of the Universe (*Brahman*). The *Upanishadic* doctrine conceptualises the Supreme Power as internal and it revolts against the idea that God is an external matter in nature; the fundamental nature of this *Upanishadic* argument rests in the concept of non-duality, liberation and *karma* (good and bad deeds).

The *Upanishads* also discuss wisdom as opposed to knowledge, the four states of mankind's consciousness (the waking stage, dreaming-sleep stage, dreamless-deep sleep stage and *turiya* or the fourth unknown stage of eternal bliss), creation (be it cosmic, world or life forms), as well as self-realisation, to name a few. The core

discussion of the early *Upanishads* centre on the individual and the Self found within the physical body.

The *Upanishads* state that it can be taken too that the created is the effervescence of the Creator. When the essence of “All” is the “One” or the Omniscient presence, there is essentially no duality. When taken to the extreme, there is not two and there is not even one but only a state of non-being. In other words, the Ultimate Reality is only “not two.” This is the conception of non-duality.

In the Indian philosophy, “Thou Art That” indicates that the essence in the living soul of mankind, the Self or the *Atman* is also the essence of the Ultimate Superpower, *Brahman*, or God. The *Atman* philosophy is a significant aspect of the *Upanishadic* theory. According to this theory, the *Atman* (Self) can be elevated to the level of *Brahman* (Creator).

The sublime message of the *Upanishads* is that *Brahman*, the Creator, is the utmost Reality and that it is none other than the deep core of the authentic person, the Self or the soul. This *Brahman* is the unifying factor in the *Upanishads* and *Brahma* in the Trinity of the gods is a much later aspect that has become popular in the ritualistic Hindu religion. The *Brahman* of the *Upanishads* is “unqualified bliss, perpetual and infinite in its character,” (Chakravarti, p. 157). The bliss of *Brahman* eradicates fear of existence. *Brahman* is concurrently further than far and nearer than near as He is Infinite. The perception of *Brahman*, another fundamental idea in the *Upanishads*, is complex to describe. *Brahman* is the bliss and delight that occurs during “deep dreamless sleep” when there is no “distinction between subject and object, and therefore consciousness has ceased” (Chakravarti, p. 158).

In the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad*, in the “Madhu Vidya” or the section on the “Honey Doctrine.” “Honey” is understood as the state of “perception” when the soul