

Godmen in Fiction, Nonfiction and Spiritual Discourse

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Abstract

The increase in the number of godmen is due to the support they received from people, the devotees and followers, in the society. Naturally, godmen as a theme attracted writers and scholars, leading to the increasing number of fiction and non-fiction. In addition, the godmen themselves showed great interest in promoting a saintly image themselves through media. The present project attempts to study these different modes of representations of godmen - Nonfiction, Fiction, and in the Spiritual Discourse – which form a good corpus of Indian writing. The introduction talks about the increase in the emergence of god men, the devotion to godmen, a trend that can be linked to the increasing need for spiritual guidance. This chapter tries to read “The Grand Inquisitor”, a section of the novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*, by Fyodor Dostoevsky and use it as a method of approaching the function of these different modes of godmen in Indian Writing. Chapter II analyses two nonfiction works, namely Richard Dawkins' *God Delusion* and Khushwant Singh's *Gods and Godmen of India* to highlight the nonfictional mode which allows a direct and critical depictions wherein the writers could afford to completely denounce religion and godmen. Richard Dawkins goes to an extent of debunking the very basis of devotion and Faith. Khushwant Singh confronts issues related to religion, faith, blind faith and the rise of new cults in India. Chapter III focuses on the fictions of R.K. Narayan and G. V. Desani, who while condemning godmen, implicitly discuss the faith of the devotees and their continuous support. R. K Narayan adopts a passive approach to highlight the blind faith of devotees despite the controversies. Desani brilliantly posits his attack in an indirect manner and takes a jab at the spiritual gurus. Chapter IV discusses godmen's self-representation through their spiritual discourse and the impact it creates on the devotees. A focus on the performative nature of these discourses reveals the godmen's conscious creation of their self-image. The Conclusion sums up the arguments of the previous chapters. It will also show how Dostoevsky's “Grand Inquisitor” acts as a cornerstone to understand the rampant rise in the number of godmen in the Indian society. It also shows how the modes of representation decide the image of godmen in fiction, non-fiction and in spiritual discourse.

Keywords: Representation, genre, Discourse, rhetorics, godmen. Grand inquisitor

1. Who are the Godmen?

The tradition-bound Indian society proffers prime importance to religion. Several social and cultural phrases established in the Indian society are entrenched in the lore of several religious groups, their rituals, cults, as well the sacraments, morals and philosophies.

In the contemporary times, religion is regarded cynically by several people who are influenced in one way or another by westernization, secularization and intellectual currents such as Marxism. Such beliefs give rise to the possibility of challenging, if not totally eliminating, the significance of religion in modern, principally, post-independence India. However, on the flip side of the implication or belief, India has observed a huge increase in several religious-mystical cults of

saints, gurus and godmen since the British colonial times, e.g., Ramakrishna (1836 - 1886), Vivekananda (1863 - 1902), Aurobindo (1872 - 1950), Ramana Maharshi (1879 - 1950), Shivananda (1887 - 1963), Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati (1894 - 1994), Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada (1896 - 1977), Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (born 1911), Satchidananda (born 1914), Sathya Sai Baba (born 1926-2010), Rajneesh (1931 - 1990), etc. (Charpentier 101)

From time immemorial, India has been acclaimed as the land of spirituality. Spirituality is a form of expression, which coerces us to search for answers about the infinite, through our relationship with something greater. Many psychologists believe spirituality to be an intrinsic property of the human being (Helminiak, 1996; Newberg, D'Aquili, & Rause, 2001). From this, it can be estimated that human spirituality is an effort to recognize and unite with the unknowns of the universe or explore the meaning of one's life (Adler, 1932/1980; Frankl, 1959). Further, being spiritual does not necessitate religiousness; for instance, a searcher of a connection with the creator without being a part of the particular exercise of that relationship.

In the contemporary times, Godmen and Godwomen, who significantly differ from the gurus of ancient Indian tradition, occupy an unprecedented space in arbitrating spiritual involvements of the individuals. They often pose themselves as tutors, teachers or guides, who assist in eliminating the mental and spiritual gloom with their wisdoms. They facilitate reverence, faith, and power among their supporters. Their fondness to create a mass of devotees distances them from the gurus of ancient society.

These godmen, through their supporters or themselves, avow that they unequivocally have special powers and such powers are for the Hindus who are attached to spirituality. These human-cults operate at several levels; few of these cults function at the local, district and regional levels, while the others have positioned themselves at the national and international level. The cults, as in the case of Sai Baba's, come almost exclusively from the urban middle classes. He attracts devotees from a wide range of modern occupations—from low grade clerical jobs to top civil servants, professional people, businessmen and politicians—men and women who are all affected by the changes that have shaken the structure of Indian society.

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India is now a secular nation, committed to the ideals of democracy and egalitarianism. It is often extremely difficult to maintain the cycle of religious observance or to maintain a network of caste families. Traditional patterns of authority are threatened (Swallow 152–3).

The guidance and direct leadership of these gurus and godmen have led to the emergence of several new religious movements in India. “Most of the new religious movements are guided by the motive of introducing change in traditional religions” (Mehta V). Srinivas (138) highlights that the recently appeared godmen are the mediators of the attempt to revive Hinduism; also, they claim to disregard the variance between caste, class and religion.

Numerous religious cults/groups have surfaced primarily in several modern secular nations, such as America, following these godmen. Though the word ‘sect’ signifies breaking away from the typical place of worship, ‘cult’ denotes the new and diverse religious groups. A few examples of the cults that emerged in America in the late twentieth century include the Unification Church, Scientology, the Children of God, Branch Davidians, and ISKCON.

In the context of India, the existence of godmen has been acknowledged unsuspectingly by various segments of the society. Over the years, the presence of godmen has multiplied, along with their hold over people’s lives. The belief of some people in the godmen is to the extent that the charges of atrocious crimes such as corruption, rape and murder, fail to waver that belief. Thus, the worship that started as an intervention between gods and people through ‘spiritual guidance’ to direct them towards self-realisation, began to convert the spiritual humaneness in the society into a full-time occupation that takes advantage of people’s fears, anxieties, uncertainties and problems.

This thesis focuses on the depiction of godmen in three genres: nonfiction, fiction, and godmen’s spiritual discourse. The nonfictions are related to direct and critical representations by the authors such as Dawkins and Khushwant Singh in which they expose godmen. In fictional representation, the authors such as R.K. Narayan and G. V. Desani provide a subtle critique, where they criticize godmen in their fictional works and yet account for the faith of devotees.

Influence of Godmen on People and Politics

India is a secular nation with a population of more than 1.3 billion people. In India, religion is central to people’s life; also, it moulds the national politics to a great extent (Gavankar 159). Swallow presents the godmen, as somewhat ostentatious, and explains how they are presented in the media:

their travels, by air, road or rail, are widely reported in the press, and their followings are known to include numerous high ranking and well known figures in the worlds of politics, business, the professions and academia. Courted and feted, they preside over anniversary functions...their pictures and books are to be found on bookstalls... (128)

For instance, the spiritual guru Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, a movie star, singer and cult lead with a fondness for all things, directs the backing of numerous, mostly poor, people in India. His conviction for raping two women led to protests by his followers, which killed 38 people;

this demonstrates the power and hullabaloo of the so-called “godmen” whose standing is increasing in modern-day India (Kumar and Wilkes).

As published by Reuters (para 1), “Baba’s blessings have changed my life. I used to drink daily, fight with my wife and spend a lot of money on health,” said a local farmer and follower of Singh. At his expansive 700-odd acre compound, Singh provides medical treatment and education at no cost; also, he showcases his new movies and offers organic food items from his own brand MSG, or ‘Messenger of God’. His sermons attract tens of thousands. The sports heroes from several fields visit such gurus to pay their respects, and so do the opulent businessmen; media persons wait for him to appear from his underground residences.

In part, the popularity of the gurus and godmen of India shows the increasing insecurity among people, leading to the popular interest and Western followers. These gurus are actually said to have distinctive healing powers, and are prevalent among those whose economic uncertainties are overtaking the state’s capability to deliver. As India develops and becomes wealthier, more number of people feel left behind; they then approach these godmen for spiritual and material sustenance. Poor people search for an escape route and they consider this route. They give people solace and hope. In his lectures named *Cosmologies of Capitalism*, Marshall Sahlins says that

Western capitalism has loosed on the world enormous forces of production, coercion and destruction. Yet precisely because they cannot be resisted, the goods of the larger system take on meaningful places in the local scheme of things. (Sahlins 34)

Sathya Sai Baba is another example of the rise of spiritual leaders, gurus and divine embodiments, with a mass following and often very complex relations with both “capitalist big business and Indian national politics” (McKean 17). The godmen since long time, have shared close relations with political parties and have been allegedly legalizing money of politicians and political parties.

Modern capitalism arose in the early nineteenth century in Western Europe and slowly spread from Europe, across political and cultural frontiers, to the rest of the world. This prompted Sen to write, “The first principle of Economics is that every agent is actuated only by self-interest.” This view of man has been a persistent one in economic models, and the nature of economic theory seems to have been much influenced by this basic premise. (Sen 317)

This supposition about human nature suggests that proprietors of the means of production are not believed to make products and hire workers for the social good, but this is done to make profit and gather capital for their self-interest. Here, the labourers also behave in their self-interest by giving their time, energy and skills only for higher wages.

With more number of men or women having the above-mentioned ideology, and the power they have over political leaders, their followers become the voters during election. This undying backing of their followers and control over them finally results in the godmen getting privileged treatment from the government with special powers.

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This influence, and “not their closeness to god or of being gods themselves, is the source of the ability to wield their 'unholy' and at times illegal power, over other mere mortals and citizens of India, allowing them leeway when it comes to government actions and sanctions that few others will ever enjoy” (Prabhpreet para 1). In addition, if the political parties, accountable for the social and economic growth of society, encourage the belief in godmen, the future of scientific and rational thinking may get eroded in the darkness of blind faith.

It is seen that people who follow godmen or people propagating religious or spiritual ideas to large masses are seeking for a person who can give them a sense of security in reality. People generally do not tend to follow godmen to gain a sense of freedom through revelations provided by such spiritual speeches, instead these religious speeches provide them with a sense of security. Instead of making use of their own psychological mechanisms to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong, individuals tend to follow whatever they see or hear. This points towards the fact that religious or spiritual speeches do not make a person want to have freedom of choice, rather it makes them feel secure as they give all the responsibilities of making decisions to the people whom they follow.

The increase in the number of godmen also led to an increase in the study of godmen in the literary and intellectual circle. Rana, in a study entitled *Trend of Spiritual Godman in India: Implications for the modern Indian society*, mulls over the influence of modernity on the conventional religion and believes that it has led to the emergence of self-styled godmen. The godmen produce an enchantment and allurement among their followers and promise the followers immediate relief from all their pain and stress. Further, the study highlights that the commodification of religious sentiments has enabled the entry of spiritual godmen in India (Rana 1186).

In *Gods, God-men and the Gullible*, Mathur explains that the godmen cash the helplessness and uncertainty of people which has developed out of the faulty social organizations. Moreover, the study also depicts that through the financial aid received in the name of Ashrams and associated institutions like hospitals, schools and other rehabilitation centres, the Babas have gathered an empire of wealth and social capital (Mathur 24).

Gudavarthy, in the study *Modernity and God-men* done in 2014, acclaims that a godman offers comfort to those inspired by and promised with gaining their due. Merely believing in him is believed to be an elevating experience.

Jonjua, in the study *Role of Social Media in Creating Godmen's Public Image*, compares the varied godmen-wise impact pointers to realize the role of people analytics. The paper also discourses the aspects behind the initiation of self-styled Godmen in India, the place where Gurus of unimpeachable character had originated, along with the influence of these divine i-Godmen on contemporary Indian society (452).

Choudhary and Mahapatra in their study *Winning Hearts to Manipulating Minds: Godmen and their Followers*, shed light on the inspiration behind believing in the godmen. They conducted in-depth interviews of the family members of the subject followed by two real case analyses (295).

These studies and media reports primarily attempt to understand the religious sentiments of the people, the factors which led to the rise of the godmen, along with disclosing the realities of these gurus and godmen. The operations of the Indian cults and their impact on the people are a huge matter of concern for the students of sociology not only in India but all over the world. However, these studies and articles fail to understand the true sentiment and psychology of these people which make them devout followers of the cults/groups.

Competition and corruption are the two primary orientations of the society, which constantly disturb the inner peace of individuals. This has made social economic conditions poor, resulting in a majority of the population being marginalised, dispossessed and disadvantaged. So, visiting the godmen provides almost everything free of cost. Further, in India, people prefer approaching godmen rather than a psychologist, as approaching a psychologist has bad implications on one's personality, while seeking god is always seen in a good light.

It is in this light that this project tries to read the admiration of and addiction to godmen by reflecting upon the following questions and tries to discuss how these questions were addressed in different ways in fiction and non-fiction:

- Why are the devotees attracted to the godmen?
- What are the reasons/factors for the continuous support of these godmen?
- Why are the socio-economically challenged classes desperately in need of their miraculous power?

The study chooses to analyse two non-fiction books, Khushwant Singh's *Gods and Godmen of India* and Richard Dawkins' *The God Delusion*, and two fictions, G.V Desani's *All about H Hatter* and R K Narayan's *The Guide*.

In *Gods and Godmen of India*, Khushwant Singh confronts issues related to religion, faith, blind faith, new cults, and new movements. He attacks the widespread gods and godmen that have taken over the nation in modern times. This book will help in providing a background to godmen and their emergence.

In *The God Delusion* (2006), Richard Dawkins contends that a supernatural being almost certainly does not exist and that belief in a personal god qualifies as a delusion, which he defines as a persistent false belief held in the face of strong contradictory evidence. The book advocates that the God Misbelief is not only a resistance to atheism, but also goes on the offensive against religion. This book will provide a different perspective of God and Godmen; while the other books give an idea of belief, this book will focus on disbelief and atheism, and why the people go after godmen.

All About H. Hatter (1948) is one of the most flawlessly unconventional and strangely engrossing works modern English has produced. H. Hatter's story focuses on his hunt for illumination; in the course of visiting seven Oriental cities, he consults seven sages, each of whom focuses on a varied aspect of "Living." This book is significant as it highlights the

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aristocrats' and god-men's propensity to legitimize their political/religious position by stating a long line of ancestry from royal/holy forebears.

The Guide (1958) emphasizes the journey of a man of limited means, from a mere tourist guide and a railway stall keeper to a godman. The book traces through several Indian traditions, myths and customs that many refuse to let go even today. The story will help in highlighting the way godmen are created in India through Railway Raju's journey. So, the present study will not focus on the godmen, but rather on the representation of the godmen with a thrust upon faith of the followers.

It is apt here to view the relevance of Fyodor Dostoevsky's "The Grand Inquisitor" a chapter that appeared in the novel *The Brothers Karamazov* to undertake this kind of study. This chapter in particular showcases the battle between Jesus and the Inquisitor who wanted to control humans through his delusionary power. The chapter that claims to have been written as a 'poem' shows how the Inquisitor wanted Jesus to follow his orders when he asked Jesus to turn stone into bread. According to the Inquisitor, Jesus should have agreed to what he asked for which is in comparison with how people nowadays bow to those whom they feel inferior from. The 'poem' showcases that even though people have forgotten that they have been given the freedom to make decisions and choices for themselves, Jesus has complete faith in humanity that someday people will become wise enough to understand that they do not need to be controlled by some other individual but themselves.

In this chapter of the novel, it is the psychology of the devotees that decides the position of the Inquisitor and the Christ. The primary predicament that concerns the characters is that, if it is practical for man, to follow the laws of religion. The other questions that stay on the minds of these people are whether they should be the God for themselves, and disregard the religious traditions. "The Grand Inquisitor" observes that people should be self-centred, and through this, the society will grow.

By using "The Grand Inquisitor" as a methodology, this thesis is trying to shed light on the popularity of godmen and their position in the modern world. The fact that this descriptive episode is claimed as a 'poem' acts as a basis to understand the growing number of the representations of godmen. A direct and harsh attack on faith and religion especially on the church found in "The Grand Inquisitor" is fruitful to study the non-fictional representation in Chapter II. This dilemma that runs throughout the 'poem' symbolises Dostoevsky's contrasting and contradictory views of religion and God. Dostoevsky wants to explain that the church provides security to people and not freedom and there is a lack of freedom in the world. The battle between people's consciousness reflects the juxtaposition of the characters' views and the kiss that is given by Christ to "The Grand Inquisitor". God (Christ) has faith in mankind and this is symbolised through this kiss. The kiss by acting as a symbol for unconditional love stands for the eternal love of God for mankind without any disparities of caste, creed, gender, colour or religion. The importance of freedom is highlighted in the poem and moreover, there is no need to control the minds of the humans through several institutions that are developed in the name of God. The unity between God and devotees can be done with true devotion and

love for Him. The supreme God is the centre and the Grand Inquisitor makes this achievable by raising the faith of devotees through mystery, miracle and authority.

The subtlety involved in the encounter between the Grand Inquisitor and the Christ offers the possibility of studying the fictional mode of representing godmen in Chapter III. The pathetic self-claim of the God before the Inquisitor gives scope for studying the egotistic self-image created by the godmen in their spiritual discourses. This is discussed in Chapter IV through an analysis of the performative nature of the spiritual discourses of the godmen.

2.GODMEN AS CULPRITS

This chapter attempts an analysis of Dawkins' *The God Delusion* and Khushwant Singh's *Gods and Godmen of India* with a view to highlight what are the various functions of godmen other than their spiritual goals. This kind of reading suggests that such a direct attack on godmen involves a little bit of fieldwork and reporting of the facts in a non-fictional mode. The meticulous presentation of facts with carefully crafted argument makes these non-fictional works a major intervention in the unquestionable authority and the political links maintained by the godmen.

Dawkins' literature, especially *The God Delusion* debates the traditional criticism between atheism and theism. Dawkins revokes every single theistic claim on the grounds that theistic belief is the premise of evil in the society and further contends theism to be instead of belief in higher powers, guaranteeing the previous is a superior other option. Dawkins says that God presents a limitless relapse that he cannot help us with getting away and exposes the evidence that some noticeable theologians delivered over the centuries asserting that these theories and proofs from the olden days are marred by gaps. The writer aims to raise cognizance with the goal that the reader can quit religion and be an atheist who is cheerful, adjusted, moral, and mentally satisfied. Dawkins proposes that Darwinian evolution has given a more sound theory of life and origin than has religion and that a comparative metatheory might be not too far off in physics. Further, Dawkins differentiates the logical way to deal with comprehension with the theologian's view that the methods of science are not amiable to the study of God. However, Dawkins has not fulfilled the sensible epistemological test of confidence in the logical strategy as the pith of showing up at the information.

Dawkins composes with knowledge and refinement on issues of evolutionary science. However, there is criticism on the writer's representation of careful evidence-based reasoning on debunking religion, stating that it is dislodged by rather exaggerations, spiced up with some striking distortions, and in excess of a periodic deception to make some hastily conceivable points. Most in a general sense, Dawkins neglects to show the logical need of atheism.

Critics point out that, incomprehensibly, atheism itself emerges as a point of faith, which in turn contradicts the assertion of the author. Dawkins' ideologies rooted in the proof-based system of science debunk religious beliefs and claims by pointing out the lack of physical

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proof in the case of the latter. This, researchers point out, can be viewed as the use of scientific evidence to solidify the arguments against the existence of God. The constant criticism of Dawkins' literature can be attributed to the fact that the text links the presence of evil in the society with that of religion, which critics have dissected to be the result of human perceptions and not simply religion.

Problematizing the Conflation of Religion and Sublimity

Dawkins' idea of religious belief asserts that it is not the same as that of one believing in 'religion.' For him, the elements of religion and religious beliefs are two different concepts from within where religious belief is the belief in something that is experienced with the understanding the divinity of it in one's life and it is not the same as that of the belief in the supernatural, which the author accords to be the root of religion. Dawkins proceeds to state that he wishes that physicists would abstain from this figurative utilization of the word 'God', given the likelihood that it might be mistaken for the God of the Bible.

The metaphorical or pantheistic God of the physicists is light years away from the interventionist, miracle wrecking, thought-reading, sin-punishing, prayer-answering God of the Bible, of priests, mullahs and rabbis, and of ordinary language. Deliberately to confuse the two is, in my opinion, an act of intellectual high treason." (*The God Delusion* 19).

The core of Dawkins' contention in *The God Delusion* is that religionists have secured the non-existence of God with a deception suspected to demonstrate the presence of an interventionist God nonsensically. This mixed-up conviction has caused an off-base impression of reality among strict disciples to the degree that they do unethical practices in society. Accordingly, Dawkins infers that buying into the silly conviction that an interventionist God exists is the reason for social evil. Dawkins considers religion as a bundle of insane views and actions that perceives man towards a reality that is more delusion than real. Furthermore, the claims by Darwin are selectively centred around the problems such as the mass killing of people and unlawful sexual maltreatment of children and women, by avoiding to view the possible positive aspects of religion entails.

"Strong opponents of abortion are almost all deeply religious" (*The God Delusion* 298). Here, one could view the selective discrimination, which most critics view as a vehement attack on religion without the use of relevant proofs, often seeming to be a pushy need to ascertain that religion is indeed the root cause of all evil in the society. Conceding the credibility of Dawkins' statement against religion, one ponders whether atheism could endure a similar contention. History bears witness to a few cases of massacre executed by individuals who did not share the belief of God, debilitating Dawkins' affirmation that only theism leads to evil, such as that of Stalin, Hitler, etc. It has been brought up that Dawkins' activist position against religion depends on the external proof of religion, orthopraxy instead of the interior components of religion, universality, and its internal psychological operations.

Dawkins stands tall on his claim that science indeed has an upper hand to religion due to the presence of physical proof. The author further states that had God existed, he would naturally become indispensable to the inherent reality, which would consequently make him an object

of scientific study. The views adhered by the author goes on to shed light on the understanding that Dawkins perceives science not to be omniscient but still states that, in a scenario, it will be science that holds the power to answer the question and not religion. Dawkins ridicules the ancient scriptures of the theologians by suggesting that it may have been considered by 'real scientists' due to their good nature and politeness and not because the theories had substantial proof accorded to it.

But if science cannot answer some ultimate question, what makes anybody think that religion can? I suspect that neither the Cambridge nor the Oxford astronomer really believed that theologians have any expertise that enables them to answer questions that are too deep for science. I suspect that both astronomers were, yet again, bending over backwards to be polite: theologians have nothing worthwhile to say about anything else; let's throw them a sop and let them worry away at a couple of questions that nobody can answer and maybe never will. (*The God Delusion* 57)

In religion, God is the eternal being who creates and preserves all things, one who is both transcendent and immanent, that is, someone who is present within the world, without being physically present in it. That is, he is someone who cannot be limited to the mere explanations of words, but whose presence is felt through certain events, something one terms as 'miracles.' If the explanation of God's reality rests on the shoulders of only the scientists, the understanding of 'God' may be weakened or demystified. As critics point out, the belief in God and religion is a way for the larger section of the society to feel a sense of comfort and safety amidst the chaos, and when someone attempts to point out the fault, or moreover question the authenticity of the belief system, it tends to affect the emotional and spiritual well-being of an individual, for whom the beliefs may have been acting as a form of support system.

"What expertise can theologians bring to deep cosmological questions that scientists cannot?..... It is a tedious cliché (and, unlike many clichés, it isn't even true) that science concerns itself with how questions, but only theology is equipped to answer why questions." (*The God Delusion*, 56)

Is Faith a Figment of Imagination?

Dawkins rejects the religious view that 'there exists a super-human, supernatural intelligence who deliberately designed and created the universe and everything in it, including us'. He imagines that religion is a delusion, in any event as in it is 'persistent false belief held in the face of contradictory evidence. He is a freethinker about God 'only to the extent that [he] is agnostic about fairies' (5). To delineate his point, Dawkins refers to Bertrand Russell's illustration of the heavenly tea kettle. Russell recommended that, albeit nobody can negate the case that there is a tea kettle circling the sun, this is no motivation to trust it. Thus, in spite of the fact that one cannot discredit God's presence, his reality is unrealistic to the point that one can sensibly accept that he does not exist. In light of the recommendation that "science and religion are non-overlapping magisterial", (59) that is, they are worried about various domains, science with what the universe is made of and why it works along these lines,

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religion with inquiries of extreme significance and virtue. Dawkins claims that inquiries concerning the presence or in any case of an innovative genius are, actually, scientific inquiries regarding which theologians have nothing advantageous to point out.

He depicts religion as whimsical, involving at least two individuals caused by maladaptive considerations and personal conduct standards. On Dawkins' view, there is no proof or contention which can even help confidence in God, not to mention offer definitive verification of God's presence, the devotee must depend on faith alone. This is viewed as temperance, for which the adherent will be compensated. Be that as it may, Dawkins thinks, it is "one of the truly bad effects of religion...that it teaches us that it is a virtue to be satisfied with not understanding." The author further argues that there is no truth in faith, only in science, as he continues to assert that the idea of faith is nothing but an extended version of imagination. In the metaphysical senses, there is a need to have physical proof for the absolute belief in something. Dawkins overthrows the idea of something as similar to delusion. Certain critics have stated that simply because man fails to understand the depth of an idea, it does not ascertain the thing to be ambiguous or lacking value, which applies to Dawkins' claim that religion and faith are equivalent delusions that make man believe that there is a power, up in the sky, without actually being aware of it.

Use of 'God' to Meet Political Ends

The historical backdrop of religion, similar to that of any ideological phenomenon, is perplexing. Religious ideology takes on a semi-autonomous presence, with its own interior rationale. There is likewise a pattern in strict development. As people come to comprehend the normal world through the procedure of logical clarification, the idea of God has in general gotten progressively unique, increasingly expelled from everyday occasions. Religion will, in general, involve the domains of human experience that logical information still can't seem to enter, however, this isn't a completely direct direction. All in all, nonetheless, social advancement has been related to the development of science and the retreat of religion. However, the assertions by Darwin in the text completely dismiss this understanding.

"Nor are Darwinians satisfied by political explanations, such as 'religion is a tool used by the ruling class to subjugate the underclass' (*The God Delusion* 169). The issue Dawkins and others defy in clarifying strict and ideological change lie at last in their refusal to take up the Marxist hypothesis. Dawkins alludes to Marx just a single time in passing and manages class hypothesis just in the section cited previously. For Dawkins, religion has no social or political hugeness. He treats it simply as a thought with no genuine associations with the more material states of life. Darwin refers to the Afghan Taliban and the American Taliban and talks about the instance of the anti-Islamic cartoons distributed in the Danish paper *Jyllands-Posten*, which created protests. Press and governments around the globe condemned the fights as assaults on free speech and protected the individuals who chose to distribute the narrow-minded kid's shows as defenders of free speech "The Afghan Taliban and the American Taliban [Christian fundamentalism in the United States] are good examples of what happens when people take their scriptures literally and seriously." (*The God Delusion* 288).

There is a propensity among the promoters of atheism, who Dawkins likewise cites favourably on a few events—to receive a scornful disposition toward the religiously-minded population, which is as yet a larger part of the common labourers around the globe. Since religion is thought about just as an ideological aspect, it is, at last, the populace itself that is at fault for faith in religion and whatever strategies are defended for the sake of religion. Not exclusively does this regularly prompt conservative political positions, it likewise fails completely in offering a recommendation for how the impact of religion can be reduced. Marxists also show the need to subvert the impact of religious movements, in the Middle East, in the United States, and around the globe. Religion is innately hostile to logic. It shrouds the genuine idea of society and suppression, and it frequently fills in as an ideological brace for social response and militarism. Likewise, for Dawkins, religion has no social or political hugeness. He treats it only as a thought with no genuine associations with the more material states of life.

Prejudice Pervading the Narrative of Dawkins

Dawkins is driven by a desire to debunk faith by all possible means. However, what he suggests as a substitute to religion can itself be challenged and questioned. When hitting out at the roots of religion at the level of morality, he directs his attention almost exclusively to fundamentalist, intolerant, fanatical, legalistic, totalitarian and oppressive examples.

Instead of treating these as ideological, scientifically uninformed, self-seeking or pathological forms of religion, he sees them as constituting religion, which in turn invariably problematizes his own argument and brings his prejudice to the foreground. Richard Dawkins has included himself in a portion of these women who advocate against inappropriate behaviour approaches, a similar way the creator excuses the religious convictions and contemplations of people. There's no denying that Dawkins assumed a developmental job in the agnostic development, however, it has developed past just him. As both a nonbeliever and a researcher, he ought to be the first to shield the rule that nobody is above analysis, and that any thought can be tested, particularly a thought as per mainstream preferences. Rather, with no perceptible feeling of incongruity, Dawkins is freely reusing the terrible contentions so regularly utilized against him as a nonbeliever: blaming his faultfinders and the individuals who do not have a similar conceptual framework or its absence, as him.

Critics assert that Dawkins' open antagonism towards the individuals who accentuate the significance of assorted variety, who need to make the network more extensive and all the more inviting, and who contradict lewd behaviour and misogynist language, is hurting the reason he himself professes to care about. Religious faith is expected by Dawkins to be an unevenced belief. Be that as it may, Christian confidence is grounded on a combination of proof, including that drawn from history, individual experience, and the world around. The defence for such conviction is in the idea of a total case. Like the pieces of information in an analyst story, no single thing of proof might be thoroughly convincing all alone, yet together they may develop a persuading case, adequate for trust and activity. On every one of these three issues of God, wonders, and confidence, Dawkins deceives a misconception of essential Christian religious philosophy which even a superficial perusing of the source records could have maintained a strategic distance from. Dawkins continually expects that, since material

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items have beginnings, God would likewise have needed to have had a starting point and asks 'who designed the divine creator?' But he eagerly dismisses the comparable contention from the similarity that, since ordinary articles have planners, the universe must have a designer. These gaps in the arguments made by Dawkins often lead to the disconcertion towards his own claims, which can rather seem like a rant than a piece of literature grounded in ethical proof. Quite a bit of Dawkins' worldview relies upon his odd case that 'religion is a scientific theory'. An attempt to legitimize such a quarrelsome case is long past due if Dawkins' position is to be paid attention to.

Religion and Indoctrination

Dawkins' attack on religion and religious beliefs link religion to indoctrination when in fact, the latter is a form of misappropriated religion and not a religion; as indoctrination is the process of teaching a person to accept a set of beliefs uncritically. Dawkins says that telling kids there is damnation is mental abuse. This misapplication of the moniker child abuse to instructing that with which atheists happen to dissent isn't just an abuse of the term yet, in addition, an affront to all individuals who have persevered through genuine kid maltreatment since the beginning.

Dawkins claims that kids should be instructed about religions so they can get writing, yet that we ought to debilitate them from really grasping any conviction. There is an incentive in showing kids religion. One cannot generally value a ton of writing without thinking about religion. In any case, one should not teach our youngsters. What a kid ought to be instructed is that religion exists; that a few people accept this and a few people accept that. While Dawkins spreads a wide net to envelop all religions, aside from obviously the religion of agnosticism, a considerable lot of his comments here and somewhere else clarify that Christianity is his essential objective.

Dawkins considers it "indoctrination" to teach children that God is real, that God created them, and that Jesus Christ adores them, and that Jesus died for them with the goal that they won't need to languish unceasing discipline over their wrongdoings in damnation. Besides, scriptural Christianity is worried about undeniably more than maintaining a strategic distance from hell, state critics. Religious people, however, would contend that propelling Dawkins' perspectives on advancement and the absence of a god would likewise comprise a type of indoctrination, particularly if these components are bested as 'reason' and held above philosophical standing.

Some contend that Dawkins isn't at all contradicted to instilling kids insofar as they are inculcated to accept as he does. In truth, even the agnostic conviction that there is no God is a religion. Atheists guarantee they are non-religious, yet they utilize their allowance of faith-based expectations as an approach to clarify existence without God, they love and serve the creation instead of the Creator.

Religion as a Capitalist Practice

India has produced more godmen than any other country in the world yet it is still struggling to develop at a faster rate. The arguments of Khushwant Singh, unlike that of Dawkins, do not tell anyone not to believe in religion but leaves it to their discretion to reach an informed

decision. Khushwant Singh rises as a pragmatic essayist in his nonfictional composition. He is sufficiently striking to pronounce that he is sceptic not to announce whether God is or isn't. He wouldn't like to make a fuss over his reality where he is or not. He is of no outcome to the happenings in the lives of good people. He considers it fundamentally as conviction developed among the agnostics. So is his pondering on the godmen who lecture about the presence of God and endeavour the individuals for their materialistic solaces and extravagances. Singh's perspectives about religion for one were unpalatable for some.

He is a sceptic and strongly composed against the regular strictness and the clique of supposed god-man. The writings of Singh are constantly guided by the explanation and rationale in his considerations and this makes him a vociferous critic of separation and selectively based on station, religion, or nationality predominant in any general public. He respects decency of heart as the highest calibre of an individual where one is liberated from a wide range of authoritative opinions that capture the free reasoning and visually impaired individuals to the real world. Khushwant Singh's generous soul puts stock in honourable human issues and his adoration for humankind, for his brethren regardless of the network, had a place with or the religion they loved are for the most part obvious in his relations and compositions. In any case, at the smallest trace of predisposition or narrow mindedness in one's conduct puts him off forever towards such an enthusiast.

While reading Khushwant Singh's *Gods and Godmen of India*, the intense dislike the author has towards the godmen is clearly visible. By adopting a language that is direct and stern, Singh does not stray away from the critique of the godmen, pointing out that even after meeting them and practising the way of life that they give out, he did not gain anything positive out of it. Singh attacks the godmen, from their educational qualifications to their knowledge of the world, pointing out that most of these so-called godmen lack even the basic knowledge of, even the most minor things in the world. The narrating style of Singh is a clear indication that he, as a critic of the manipulators, does not intend to hold back or spare anyone's feelings. It is clear from the narrative style and the words used by the writer that he is entirely against the ideology of human Gods. Some of the most notable points made by Singh in his piece against the human Gods are that he openly questions, "if God is there why earthquakes take place and kill the innocent people, not the tyrants." While some may take offence to the blatant use of tragedies to point out the follies or to attack a specific section of the society, Singh stands by his arguments throughout his narration. Some of the questions Singh raises in the text, such as "God will not cast away the blameless, nor will He uphold the evil-doers?" and "why the innocent people suffer" (p. 13).

The dramatization in the narrative technique of Khushwant Singh gives a certain sense of effectiveness to the descriptions, where Singh's expose on the self-made godmen is more of a common criticism of the social structure that promotes the growth of these manipulative godmen. However, the substantial effect is more on the godmen than the society that keeps giving towards the continual growth of these apparent scams. One such example from the text is Singh's representation of the time he spent with Sai Baba of Puttaparthi. Singh goes on to explain the wonders performed by the Baba and openly states that he doesn't believe in the

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spiritual and magical powers of the guru and continues to state that "Guru is the Indian version of a psychoanalyst." Continually mocking the belief systems and the acts of these godmen and godwomen, the criticism received by Singh for his work, leading to him taking asylum outside India shows the hold or the effect these manipulative spiritual men have in the society. He continues to criticize the teachings of these godmen, who ask their followers to dwell in the simplicity of the world, and do not practise what they preach, that is, while they ask their followers to live a simple life, they are surrounded by the exquisite luxuries of life, often ranging from money, drugs to women. After all, news reports and articles that expose these spiritual institutions are nothing but a page of the same book Singh has penned.

Capitalism and Spirituality

The embodiment of capitalism is credit creation driven by the portability of capital; the substance of religion is sanitizing confidence. A proposition doing the rounds generally recommends that private enterprise has supplanted conventional religion as the confidence of numerous individuals around the world. Against the presumption that capitalist matters is in some sense a 'science', the individuals who recommend that capitalism is a kind of religion need to sabotage the logical case. Individuals at last settle on balanced decisions about what is best for them. What is more, it additionally accepts an exceptionally maverick thought of how people work on the planet. It ought not to amaze us that this methodology has been utilized to contend for the financial judiciousness of Christian predominance.

The idea that religion would cease to exist in the cutting edge world is credulous. Genuine spread of the country state framework, and the triumph of industrialist states holding fast to mainstream standards, lifting up and rivalry in political and monetary life over Communist states, has underestimated one type of religion and that is capitalism. Again, free enterprise, developing out of religion, has debilitated the impact of old religions in certain pieces of the world, eminently dissolving commitment to Christianity in Europe. Yet, it has scarcely annihilated it. In the purpose of certainty in certain pieces of the world, the protection from communism has fortified the hand of strict purifiers, picking up disciples to their confidence through perhaps the most established type of strict publicizing, an affliction.

The same scenario is reflected in Indian society as well, which is reflected through Singh's works. From the works of both Dawkins and Singh, it can be ascertained that religion provides a means to escape from a capitalist construct that has suppressed the individual from life's meaning, leading to isolation. This is why people need someone to hold on to; to break away from their own stifling alienation.

Thus, this chapter tries to argue that through his nonfiction literature, Dawkins takes a critical and direct approach in *The God Delusion* to exhibit his belief on God, religion, and gods. He condemns the concept of religion, god, and godliness that cannot be conclusively proven. Dawkins claims that it is worthwhile to examine religion as a collection of absurd attitudes and beliefs that recognise man towards an actuality that is utterly delusional than real. With the help of historical examples such as Hitler and Stalin, Dawkins in his work seeks to question the presence of God and the Godmen who act as angels sent by God and exposes the

faith of the society in them by proffering their extremist, narrow-minded, dogmatic, philosophical, repressive, and despotic examples.

Through his non-fiction, Khushwant Singh like Dawkins also endorses a critical and intuitive approach to present issues associated with religion, belief, blind faith, new cults, and particularly the Godmen and God women in India. Singh condemns the self-styled Godmen and uncovers the political leanings of these institutions; denouncing the godmen for their exploitation, criticising the multitude of human gods that are prevalent in the world. In confronting the godmen, Khushwant Singh uses a challenging narrative style by labelling them as extremely corrupt and asserting their activity as unethical by talking about many godmen, such as the Dalai Lama, Sri Satya Sai Baba, Dheerendra Brahmachari, and others. Most of these men and women are critiqued by Singh, not holding back on referring out the idiocies of these highly respected individuals. From their academic qualifications to their understanding of the natural world and its evolution, Khushwant Singh targets the godmen, merely trying to point out that many of these godmen have little or no understanding of, even the world's most insignificant issues.

Therefore, one can see a direct attack on godmen in both of these non-fictional works by Dawkins and Khushwant Singh. This chapter tries to argue that this kind of direct attack is possible only through non-fiction. In other words, it is the mode of non-fiction that allows this kind of direct attack on godmen in Dawkins and Khushwant Singh. This naturally brings a contrast in the treatment of godmen in fictional writing where such an attack becomes impossible. It shall be seen in the next chapter.

3. GODMEN AS CHARACTER

This chapter attempts an analysis of R.K.Narayan's *The Guide* and *All About H. Hatter* by G.V Desani. The treatment of godmen in these two novels significantly differ from the non-fictions. Unlike the direct attack of godmen in the non-fiction, where the writers almost assume a journalistic tone and attempt to expose the falsity of godmen, these novelistic representations show the irony involved in the life of godmen in Indian society. The godmen in these novels are deeply self-conscious about their dubiousness and at the same time are ought to continue their life style as a duty they owe to the devotees. In this sense, the devotees play a crucial role in the fictional representation of the godmen unlike the individualistic function of godmen in the non-fiction. This chapter will highlight this peculiar function of godmen in R.K.Narayan's and Desani's fictional representations.

R.K. Narayan's famous novel, *The Guide* (1958), is centred around an imaginary place in Southern India, called Malgudi. This Malgudi is an invisible town and functions as an imaginary space of Narayan's fictional universe. Narayan's finest success lies in the creation of an illusionary immortal small town. Like any other village, Malgudi has schools where the central characters of the novel studied. There are extraordinary teachers like Ebenezer who taught students with utmost pride. There are characters like Peon and Krishan who stand extremely opposite. Furthermore, Malgudi has a town hall where people gather. Apart from

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these, there are other landmarks that make *The Guide* unique in terms of narration and presentation.

From the very beginning, Malgudi personifies as a real hero for numerous short stories and novels. Keeping apart all the human drama, the place transforms to a soul that confronts or embodies all changes exultantly and is unchanged in itself. Leaving out the old landmarks such as the jungles, the hills, the Sarayu, and the groves, many others alter and pass. Therefore, it can be understood that Narayan is well attached to Indian traditions where at most of the time he reflects himself, his outlooks, his experiences, and his beliefs. For this reason, Narayan's novels depict 'common man' as protagonists rather than 'typical heroes'.

The Guide is Narayan's eighth novel which stands for identity search. The theme of the novel is search for identity. The novel depicts the inner transformation of Raju, the protagonist, from a tour guide to spiritual guide. Later, Raju's transfiguration to one of the greatest saints of India is also narrated in the story. Raju turns out to be 'The Guide' towards the end of the novel by serving the whole mankind. Thus the title of the novel is named after 'Raju' – the holy man of India. Raju plays the role of a tourist guide for Rosie and as a spiritual guide to the society. Just like every common man, Raju starts his career by fitting into all the possible roles that comes his way. For instance, Raju takes up the petty shop of his father and later when Malgudi station is set up he runs a bookstall, and then becomes the hosts to all those tourist guides who arrive at Malgudi Railway Station. Raju's encounter with Rosie, who has extreme craving for dancing career, makes him a champion of dancer. Gradually he becomes the manager of Rosie's dance career. In the course of the journey, slowly and steadily, Raju seems to transform from a fake swami into a spiritual guide (true sanyasi) taking refuge of the abandoned. The opening lines of the novel clearly state that Spiritual Raju meets a villager named Velan, to whom he recounts his story of transformation from a tourist guide to spiritual guide: "Raju welcomed the intrusion – something to relive the loneliness of the place" (21). On the other hand, Velan stood gazing at Raju as though he were a Godman. The following lines state Velan admired Raju as a Godman:

Raju felt amused and embarrassed. "Sit down if you like," Raju said, to break the spell. The other accepted the suggestion with a grateful nod and went down the river steps to wash his feet and face, came up wiping himself dry with the end of a checkered yellow towel on his shoulder, and took his seat two steps below the granite slab on which Raju was sitting cross-legged as if it were a throne, beside an ancient shrine. (*The Guide*, 21)

As a tourist guide, Raju embraced dishonest attitudes and misled tourists intentionally. Although he never had adequate knowledge on art and history, Raju possessed the skill set of reading a person. With this skill set, he served his family after his father's demise. Raju is a deceiver and corrupt guide who always misleads the tourists intentionally which foretells his relationship with Rosie. His duties as a guide kept on changing based on his mood. Raju himself says:

It depended upon the circumstances and the types of people I was escorting. I generally specified ten rupees as the minimum for the pleasure of my company, and a little more if I had to escort them far; over all this Gaffur, the photo stores, the hotel manager, and whomever I

introduced a customer to express their appreciation, according to a certain schedule. I learned while I taught and earned while I learned, and the whole thing was most enjoyable. (*The Guide*, 78)

It is important to analyse the role of Raju to understand the complex, greedy and dishonest nature of human beings. As a normal human being, the protagonist of the novel had different types of needs such as physiological, safety, social, esteem, self-actualization, and spirituality. Each stage of Raju's life dealt with the need based hierarchical transformation or metamorphosis, which reflect the social context and project an everyday life feel for his protagonists. The physiological needs of Raju were fulfilled when he closed his father's hut-shop and set up a new book stall at Malgudi Railway Station to meet the basic needs of a family. Safety needs of Raju were fulfilled when he became a seasonal guide in Malgudi. With the aim of protecting his life, Raju becomes a part-time shopkeeper and full-time tourist guide. Social need of being loved and accepted by people and society around is fulfilled when Raju meets Rosie. The following statements relatively exhibit the extremism of Raju's confession, "I will do anything for you. I will give my life to see you dance..." (136) Rosie came to Raju's home. Raju comforted her and said, "You are in the right place. Forget all your past..." (167) Raju falls in love with Rosie who is much interested in Bharatanatyam. Raju was looking for affection, love and belongingness from the others and these needs were fulfilled when he met with Marco and Rosie. It is nothing but a desire for satisfying interpersonal kinship.

Slowly, Raju started his new life with the public dancer, Rosie. He starts considering himself as the manager of Rosie and business like impresario. Raju earns recognition in the society and becomes a man of status. Later, Raju appoints staff to accomplish the tasks and on the other hand he becomes a proprietor-cum-manager. Thus, Raju becomes a prosperous and wealthy man. Abraham Maslow, a clinical psychologist, claimed that an individual develops a spiritual motivation within himself after fulfilling all the other needs discussed above. This seems to be true in the case of Raju. Finally, Raju transforms himself from a fake saint to a true sanyasi.

There are several instances in the novel where Raju takes resolutions like "For the next ten days I shall eradicate all thoughts of tongue and stomach from my mind." (252); "If by avoiding food I should help the trees bloom, and the grass grow, why not do it thoroughly?" (252); "For the first time in his life he was making an earnest effort" (252) ; for the first time he was learning the thrill of full application, outside money and love; for the first time he was doing a thing in which he was not personally interested" (252). Raju almost lost all sensations. He stepped into his basin of water, shut his eyes, and turned towards the mountains, muttering the prayer. The headman of the village is Velan who regards Raju as a saint. All the villagers believed in Velan and Raju became 'Swami' for them, a true saint. Therefore, this section emphasizes on the journey of everyman's growth from an ordinary human to a guru or a railway guide to a spiritual guide.

Interweaving the Past with the Present

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R. K. Narayan's novel *The Guide*, is narrated two-fold, i.e., a mixture of past and present. It shows the convergence of past and present in several ways. The past is narrated in first-person narrative and the present is narrated in third person. In the first person narration, Raju unfolds the past of his life to the villagers who considered him as a saint. Being a fatherless child, he had to raise his family earning a stable income from the bookstall. He was popularly known as Railway Raju. Then, he became a tourist guide and hence people called him 'The Guide'. So here, there is a railway station which changed travel, communication, and jobs of every ordinary man. This profession offered him a wide range of opportunities in his career within a short period of time. He came in contact with Macro and Rosie who became the reason for his fake fame and fame within the society. His relationship with Rosie demanded a few days of his life in jail.

Although, Rosie had interest in classical dance, she carries conditions of modernity that helped her fame to spread across evenly. Rosie, despite having her MA, "comes from a family of devadasis, temple dancers who, she says, are viewed as public women" (08). Macro failed to impose her restrictions of forbidding dance on Rosie, she was not ready to leave it. "Rosie does have the training, and wants to use it" (08) not only in the temples but also professionally. At this juncture, Raju supports in achieving her dreams, for which, she leaves Macro. Rosie's dance, though classical in theme, juxtaposes Macro's "dead and decaying things that seemed to loosen his tongue" (97). The independent nature and sexuality of Rosie completely represent modern times while Macro's "dead and decaying things" stand for patronizing attitude of the past. Being a keen lover, he welcomes Rosie which was strongly disliked by his mother. On leaving the house, Rosie and Raju get complete freedom to practice dance and in a while Raju shows up as the manager of Rosie. Rosie's devotion, commitment and passion brought success, fame and name to her and Raju as well. At this point of time, Raju starts living his life lavishly. But then, like an ordinary man, he tends to commit a mistake. He forges the signature of Rosie to retrieve jewels from the bank account. For this reason, Raju is sent to jail while Rosie leaves to Madras. The relationship of Raju and Rosie did not flourish from there. In this sense, Raju's childhood, guideship, love affair and imprisonment is revealed in the past. The readers can see Raju himself narrating the story to his faithful follower, Velan. Another significant moment of past-present intersection is identified in the paragraph below:

"Someone else came with the news that the fast-drying lake bed in a nearby village was showing up an old temple which had been submerged a century ago, when the lake was formed. The image of God was still intact in the inner shrine, none the worse for having lain underwater so long; the four coconut trees around the temple were still there And so on and so forth." (*The Guide*, 118)

This old temple stands as a metonym for the notion of an archeologically layered India. The significance of ancient infrastructure is brought out concurrently on the surface. It peculiarly stands as an exemplification of past-present confluence. In the third person narration, Raju is represented as a saint who is offered with vegetables. Velan, an ordinary man from Mangal starts worshipping Raju and considers him as Mahatma upon solving his family issues by mere coincidence. In this way, Raju enjoys sainthood and transforms himself into a true saint at the end of the novel.

Juxtaposing Traditional Beliefs with Modernity

The most predominant disagreement existing in the fictional writings of Narayan has always been with tradition and modernity. In this conflict, tradition always stands on the fringe more than modernity. While modernity touches only the outer fringe of the society, however, it perforates the inner circles. Malgudi is thoroughly endangered with several discrepancies caused by traditional beliefs, culture, and superstitions. At the same time, it attracts the modern lifestyle and civilization. Narayan had always been successful in pinpointing the difference between Indian sensibility and Western sensibility.

In the novel *The Guide*, one of the characters Gaffur is introduced as the taxi-driver and friend of the protagonist. Here, Gaffur represents the features of the Malgudi Town. He collected all the vehicles in the small town, and “he breathed new life into them and ran them on the mountain roads and into the forests” (28). He usually sits on the “parapet of the fountain, while his car basked on the roadside beside the gutter” (28). In Gaffur, one can identify the features of small town which had a new life that ran on the mountains.

Narayan has his roots in religion and family which has value both in tradition and modern. All the characters of Narayan are born Hindus, and Brahmins lead it. Hindu view of religion is represented in works of Narayan, which still acts as a strong pillar in South India till date. A constant conflict between the two sects – Hindus and Christians existed in most of Narayan’s works. One such instance from *The Guide* is given below where Raju’s father reveals his notions on Albert Mission School that is recollected by Raju in future:

“I’d have felt proud to call myself an Albert Mission boy. But I often heard my father declare, I don’t want to send my boy there; it seems they try to convert our boys into Christians and are all the time insulting our gods. I don’t know how he got the notion; anyway, he was firmly convinced that the school where I was sent was the best under the sun. He was known to boast. Many students who have passed through the hands of this ancient master are now big officials at Madras, collectors and men like that” (*The Guide*, 41)

It is a clear juxtaposition of tradition and modernity as Raju’s father though was not content with Christianity as a religion, he was happy to send his son to the Albert Mission School.

Human life is essentially religious to the core. Raju’s mother serves as the best example where she “picked up several small prayer-books, which she read every day of her life before her midday meal, sitting before the pictures of the god, in meditation” (189). She is a typical Indian housewife, who suppresses feelings and sacrifices dreams for her loved ones. Living in this modern world, people yet carry superstitions with respect to performing rituals. Velan from Mangal village remarks: “I have consulted the astrologer already, and he says that this is an auspicious time. I do not want to delay even for a second the happy event” (28). From these statements it can be understood that Narayan though follows traditions at the core of heart, he inscribes characters like Rosie who purely stands for modernity. The opening section of the novel represents Raju as a saint in a village named Mangal. People of Mangal still carry the

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concept of swamis, godmen in this post-modern world. In other words, conflicts with regard to rural life, love affairs, attitude towards tradition and modernity are evidently depicted in the novel. From this section it is understood that Malgudi is a westernized projection of the Indian society and Mangal is the spiritual land where swamis, godmen, gurus, traditional beliefs and rituals continue to exist. The modern with the tradition is also juxtaposed by Raju's mother and uncle with the character of Raju and Rosie.

Fate and Faith as the drivers of life

R.K Narayan's *The Guide*, shows the intricacies of ordinary humans and the role of fate in their lives turns the faults into extraordinary and appears like a miracle. The characters of the novel accept their fate with extreme serenity and invest their faith in God. Raju seems to curse his fate for joining his father's company. However, he accepts his fate putting his faith in god. As an answer to his silent prayer, God let him choose a different path in his latter career (29). People of Malang believed that only a saint can help them with the food scarcity and vested their complete faith in Raju, who by then was called a spiritual guide. At this moment, Raju "feels really sorry to be shattering his faith; but it was the only way in which he could hope to escape the ordeal" (127). Raju reveals to Velan that he is an ordinary man just like anyone else and he was "not a saint" (127). Velan accepted everything Raju revealed without any sting of surprise and indeed showed up "lines of care on his face" (127).

Rosie is another prominent character who carried an "unquestioning faith" on Raju who promised to support and cherish her career in dancing. Rosie "ignored everything else completely" which portrays tremendous faith she had in Raju. Likewise, Raju's mother also accepts her fate when they lose the earning member of the family. These instances substantiate the fact that fate and faith take the seat of drivers in the life of a human being.

Hypocrisy of Indian Society

Although the novel *The Guide* identifies multiple themes such as search for identity, dishonesty, materialism, transformation, feminism, and karma, hypocrisy is also an added and valuable theme forecasted in the novel. In other words, hypocrisy is undoubtedly a major theme of the novel. Firstly, the protagonist, Raju is identified as a hypocritical character from the beginning of the novel. Though Raju has been born and brought up with traditional values of Indian society, he questions them as soon as he sets out to fulfill his aspirations. Indian society does not encourage females to have an external marital affair which Raju does not adhere to in the case of Rosie. Rosie is the wife of Macro, who exhibits patriarchy. Raju on the other hand, violated this conventional structure. Raju never had a sense of right and wrong since his childhood. He always pleased tourists by providing irrelevant information. As per Hindu principle of Karma, Raju gets punishments for all his misdeeds. He loses all his money, power and fame earned in the society.

Towards the end of the novel he even has to fast and put his life in danger from which Raju learns that hypocrisy morally destroys the person. Through Raju, Narayan tries to present the hypocritical situation of Indian society and thereby analyses the concept of godmen.

Quest for Enlightenment and Upanishad Traditions

All About H. Hatter is the novel by G.V Desani that discusses the life of Hatter who confronts five men of wisdom, three women and an ordinary man. Desani tries to explore the adventures of Hatter, who calls himself an Anglo-Malayan man. Hatter throughout the novel is in quest for the self. In the quest, he visits seven places and meets seven sages. These seven sages are known for specialising each different aspect of living. The most significant part of the novel is that it is written in seven chapters, each of them dealing with the saints. From the saints, Hatter learns to ignore many things with the help of wise men. The protagonist of the novel is in continuous struggle to find out the meaning of life and redefine the meaning of life in a different context.

Hatter introduces himself as “biologically 50-50 species” as his ancestors “belong to Europe and Peninsular region” (32). Thus, by birth and upbringing, Hatter belongs to a hybrid entity that shapes his future. Throughout the novel, Hatter’s quest is behind three things – firstly “wisdom from the seven sages or the illustrious grey-beards of India”, “the elusive charms of certain females” and “some money” (33). In other words, Hatter relentlessly is in search of wisdom, capital and platonic knowledge.

Apart from Hatter's quest for enlightenment, Upanishad tradition stands as a major and popular theme both in Indian English Literature and vernacular literature as well. Desani tries to portray the Upanishad tradition undermining the notions received and permeated in Indian life since time immemorial. Upanishad traditions are represented as an outmoded and old-fashioned notion of tradition. One of the examples where Upanishad Tradition’s subversive attitude lies is in the naming of the sages with cities of colonial India. From this it can be understood that the Vedic Tradition followed in India stands insurgent and is also sacred. *All About H. Hatter* introduces the wise-follower relationship in all the seven sections and sabotages the equivalent. The disruption is sanctioned by mocking the morals and standards for which the custom stands. The sages incorporate an impostor, a forger, a homosexual, an impersonator and a charlatan, all a comical representation of the many godmen in our society. Desani does not wage war against the godmen but indirectly makes fun of them for lacking any abilities or skills that could make one a spiritual being. Here too, the representation of these manipulative institutions is viewed as nothing but scams aimed at looting the general public. Desani additionally questions the beliefs of the Upanishadic convention, for example, austerity, self-control, brahmacharya, renunciation, and so forth and shows how they are not satisfactorily honoured by either the sage or the devotee, uncovering that all the sages are misleading. Similarly, as it questions the Upanishadic beliefs, it likewise doubts the Upanishadic rehearses utilized by scoundrels to fix individuals’ sickness. Desani is of the sentiment that the solution of Yogic practices for relieving infections is a fabrication.

The Seven Sages: The spirituality adherents

The first sage is named after Calcutta who stands as a Sage of Bitterness. This sage lives with his disciple in a hut. The protagonist of the novel meets the sage after getting drunk which is considered to be forbidden in the Upanishad Tradition. The main purpose of Desani is to bring

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in the satirist approach of Sadhudom. This sage is known for his simplicity, clothing, food, and meditative posture (58). In the second chapter, a sage is introduced as the Sage of Rangoon in the following manner: “The Sage of Rangoon (now resident in India) had finished his toilette. He had had Ganges Bath, and, presently, had refined his body by besmearing it with ash” (62). This sage helps Hatterr in understanding that the root cause of all problems in the world is women and hence suggests for biological elimination. In other words, this sage stands contradictory to Hatterr’s sermon. In the third chapter, a sage is introduced as the Sage of Madras who points out that eating beef is impure and it is fully forbidden in Indian culture. The irony of this sage is that, before becoming a sage, he was a beef-eater and a person with such a background became the sage after years. Later, Hatterr approaches Sheik who teaches the traditions for 1000 rupees. The greatest irony here is that Sheikh says “As all affluent men, I need money at all times, and I need it sore!” (72). The Upanishad tradition, which is known as the mouth of God, has turned into a sheer business. The next sage, the Sage of Bombay teaches direct lessons to his disciples.

In the novel *The Guide*, Raju, the protagonist is presented as a godman by Velan who treats him as a saint. One such instance where the irony of the relationship between Raju and Velan is revealed is when Raju reveals to Velan that he is an ordinary man just like anyone else and he was “not a saint” (127). Velan accepted everything Raju revealed without any sting of surprise and indeed showed up “lines of care on his face” (127). From the instances cited it can be affirmed that unlike non-fiction, the two selected novels tried to present the relationship between Gurus and devotees in a subtle, precise, and ironic way. The title of the novel “The Guide” itself is ironic as Raju, the protagonist in his whole life, fails to succeed the different roles he plays as a tour guide, guide of Rosie in her dancing career, and finally a spiritual guide. The irony is brought out when Velan, Raju’s true devotee, believes in him and transforms Raju into a true saint. The relationship between guru and devotee is expressed through the subtle use of words and irony. Although Raju reveals his past life to Velan, the other seems to be unshaken and unmoved. It is understood that Velan refuses to believe that Raju is a fake saint, instead accepts and transforms him into a true saint. This unwavering faith of Mangal villagers transformed Raju into a godman who decided to fast for the sake of the villagers. Raju puts his life in danger for the well-being of the village people. Thus, the relationship between a godman and his devotee explains the fulfilment. Velan’s faithful devotion towards his guru stands as a triumph.

In the novel *All About H Hatterr*, Desani employs different techniques, styles, and language in order to bring out the ironical relationship between gurus and devotees. At the same time, Desani tried to attach the godmen using his narrative style and techniques. The best narrative techniques used include, the seven sages named after seven cities. This particular style describes the significance of the number 7 across all cultures and religions. The chosen instance where the protagonist of the novel gets to learn life-lessons after meeting the seven sages. In the Chapter I, Hatterr encounters the first sage who teaches him the need for unclothed money, clothes and job where the sage himself reveals himself as a dealer of all those. Hatterr understands that:

‘For no dam’ reason, and *without malice*, I wanted to assault him, and to act in the retributive. Which observation sums up the *antithesis* school: it is, above all, *retributive! compensatory!* This desire for retributing, though without malice, satisfies the fellers who have had a mean deal from life. (*All About H. Hatterr*, 60-61)

The intellectual use of language introduces the ironical relationship between sages and devotees. Moreover, religion is showcased just as an enterprise through the sages. With the subtle use of English grammar, coinage, syntax, figures of speech, Desani tries to explore the true nature of holy men prefaced with central questions which answers the actions of sages in the respective chapters:

The following raises the questions: Can fellers reclaim blood from lice? Has a man a chance in the world, or is it the fate of an icicle in Hades? By St Mungo, is there any justice-giustizia in the Globe? Or is it survival of the fittest and yet another man gone West? If a feller can survive the kiss of a cobra, can he survive the kiss of an embittered woman? Has endurance any antiseptic influence on men and things? What say you of this secondhand goods dealer? Read on fellers... (39)

As the novel progresses, Hatterr decides to abandon the material world as suggested by the sages and take again to the spiritual. At this juncture, Hatterr observes,

Out in the Orient, if you wish to become an abbot, a curate feller, a deacon, a general soul-pilot, or even a bishop of a diocese, on the whole, there is no need to invest finance in a varsity education, pass exams, do the daily routine with St. Alban’s Clean Shave, or ballyhoo constantly in order to raise lucre for the broken church organ hold antimacassar sales, mock weddings, or organise homemade jam jamborees, garage sales, and junk bazaars In India, if you decide to go religious, be a semi-Benedictine, a sacred chicken, belong to the Cloth, no need to hullabaloo at all. You simply cast off clothing. You wear the minimum loin-cloth, walk freely on the plains of the country of Hindustan, and, if you are a genuine feller at all, you spend your life comforting, instructing, and teaching the populace. That’s the bush theologica-indica in a nut-shell for you. (117–18)

The narrator provides minute explanations of the concept of the Saint followed in India. In a nutshell, Desani with the narrative style and attitude mocks the concept of Guru-Devotee. At the same time, the self-style of the seven sages is also pictured in an indirect manner through characters, language, and style of writing.

Indians being in the land of cultures and traditions give utmost importance to gurus and swamis in their life. Just like Hatterr in Desani’s novel and Velan in Narayan’s novel people tend to blindly follow the teachings of sages. Thus, sages popularly acclaimed as godmen relatively earn respect in a country like India. Even though sages spread fake ideas, spiritual beliefs and spiritual speeches in the name of God, people in India accept it unquestioningly. In other words, sages claim themselves as the mouth of God and promulgate religious ideas to the ordinary. Gurus or sages are widely accepted according to Indian tradition. Characters like Velan, Hatterr

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serve as the best examples. Narayan's character Velan accepts and vests his faith in Raju who is acclaimed to be a saint by the village Mangal. Raju stands as a godman to the people of Mangal who came to resolve the issues of food scarcity, rain and so on. Raju, although a fake sanyasi, turns out to be a true saint when he fasts for the entire village. He puts his life in danger and prays to God for rain so that people of Mangal will have adequate rainfall to harvest the crops. Likewise, Hatterr in Desani's novel, though of hybrid entity tries to follow Upanishad tradition through the teachings preached by the different sages.

Along with living one's life the other major issue in the life of humans is the inter-cultural identity faced by all Indians who live a life of a hybrid culture by getting rooted in the traditional values on one hand and trying to adopt the western values on the other. These two issues are closely associated and remain throughout the life of Hatterr. Even though the novel is a mere sarcasm of Indian tradition, the protagonist at some point of time follows the fake, irrelevant ideas proposed by the seven sages. Thus both the protagonists exhibit their dual nature and hybrid existence with God in this contemporary world. Besides, both the novels have comic undertones and project the hypocrisy of religion in the modern world.

Through a thorough scrutinising of the two fictional novels it can be concluded that both Narayan and Desani attack godmen in an indirect and subtle manner. They leave the final judgment to their readers to decide whether to trust godmen and have faith in them. A passive approach is adopted by R.K Narayan to highlight the belief system and ideologies of the people towards the godmen, here, Raju in Mangal village. The author through various depictions represents the insecurity and lack of purpose amongst people to have faith in phoney and fake characters like Raju. It clearly indicates that by possessing the decision-making power and relying on godmen for a feeling of stability and security, folks do not want to enjoy freedom. In modern society, many such godmen are active who are not genuine and have committed serious crimes, but given such allegations and scandals, people are following the godmen to satisfy their need for security. People's religious belief encourages them to pursue the commands of gods who can transform their lives.

On the other hand, G.V. Desani also attacks the godmen by questioning the beliefs of the Upanishadic conventions that are related to self-control, asceticism, abandonment, and renunciation. Desani does not oppose the godmen directly, but inadvertently belittles them for sorely missing any knowledge or powers that could develop divine beings. Desani takes the lighter path, where the portrayal of these gurus is more oblique and maintains a connexion between political leaders, people in business, and the godmen and how economy and society as a whole are misled by claiming themselves as the 'servants of God'. Like Narayan, Desani also attacks the saints and godmen and their reliability in creating "human-like God figures". Thus, it can be conceded that in the fictional universe of both R.K. Narayan and G.V Desani godmen and their actions are partly motivated by the devotees, who have blind faith and yearn for a sense of security rather than freedom. It is this yearning that the Grand Inquisitor points out in his dialogue with Christ in Dostoevsky and hints at the possible rise of godmen in society.

4. GODMEN AS SAINTS

This chapter differs from the earlier chapters by focussing on the direct voice of the godmen as could be found in their religious/spiritual discourses. If the non-fiction offers the possibility of direct attack of godmen, the fictional representations highlight the ironical and even self-consciously dubious function of the godmen. Unlike these two modes of representations, the direct voice of the godmen found in their discourses reveal their use of verbal and non-verbal modes of communication to project a self-image that suits their function in the society. The chapter identifies the following features in these discourses: use of rhetorics ,use of analogy from every day, use of figures of speech ,use of parallelism, use of Repetition ,use of Allusions ,Use of Anecdotes, use of Parables ,use of Personal self ,use of Cultural knowledge, Use of Body language, Attack on materialistic life ,Rising and Falling intonation

In addition, they also assume the position of godmen and give warning, predict the future and give assurance for future. This chapter tries to argue that it is these features of verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication, which are performative in nature, and help the godmen to establish and retain their sacred position.

The Power of Rhetorics

Rhetoric is a highly significant part of one's way of communicating with their audience, whether it is through speech or through the textual medium. Rhetoric is considered as a critical tool, especially in the field of politics and religious institutions, where the focus is on the modification of the psychology of their audience through the use of their speech. Several different methods have been employed in this field to understand the impact of rhetoric on the minds of people and the extent to which it is able to modify the thought processes of individuals. Rhetorical and composition scholars have shown a growing interest in new quantitative and qualitative approaches in recent years, many of them supporting multimodal analysis capable of working with published sources as well as with anthropological spoken information (Huckin, Andrus, and Clary-Lemon 2012). This implies that researchers operate transdisciplinarily, from the analysis of elite discourse to non-elite discourses of scholars, even with a wide repository of texts covering hundreds of years.

Rhetoric is used to influence and persuade the audience or the listener into accepting the ideologies or beliefs that the speaker wants them to have. This is especially important in the field of religious institutions where the speaker attempts to influence the listener to accept the religious or spiritual beliefs that the former holds. Many religious speakers, commonly known as godmen, use this technique to have a deep impact on their followers which has both a positive and a negative impact. Religious and spiritual leaders, such as Nithyananda, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, and Jaggi Vasudev, have been witnessed to have used these speech techniques and rhetorical devices to motivate or convince their listeners into believing that what they preach is the ultimate truth of the universe. There are a number of rhetorical tools and devices that have different and distinct meanings and impacts on the listeners. Rhetoric is highly crucial when one is giving a face to face speech as it is believed that the manner of discourse is as crucial as the message which is being put forth to the audience.

Analogy and Comparisons

The concept of analogy, in both the field of studies of philosophy and theory, has been considered as a perennial theory. There is possible misunderstanding with the frequently varying viewpoints and terms used to address this issue scientifically. It is well known that analogy applies to some epistemological forms and relates in religion in many respects. The interrelations, both inner and outer, *analogia entis* and *analogia fidei*, however, need clarity in terms of the different ways of its distribution and proportionality (Nielsen Jr. 1974). The essence and qualities of God have long been discussed and examined in the field of analogical comparisons.

Religious sentences are commonly assumed to be subjected to religion; a religious pronunciation is the creation of the religious sentence in speech or in writing. In general a number of agents, circumstances or things—such as, Heaven, spirits, saints, miracles, redemptions, thanks-givers, holiness, sinfulness—might include religious subject matters. However, the bulk of emphasis was focused on the sense of what one thinks about nature and God. Analogy refers to the use of words both religiously and non-religiously. Richard Swinburne (1993) has given a detailed account of the contemporary analogy that the analogy of a word includes an amendment of its syntactic and/or semantic laws. In universal understanding, where verses and figures of speech provide a broad range of examples of their use, analogy is also important in science, philosophy, legal studies and arts. Analogy is closely linked with the theories of correlation, comparability, correspondence, statistical and morphological homology, contrasts, iconicity, isomorphism, metaphor, relation, and similarity. The logical metaphor may be similar to the principle of analogy in language studies. Analogy also forms the foundation of all comparative theories and tests that relay findings of objects not studied. It can be argued that analogy holds a significant position in the religious and spiritual institutions as they draw comparisons between the human entities and other beings which creates certain kinds of images in the minds of the audience and broadens their thinking abilities while still compelling their thoughts in a way that agrees with the ideologies of the speaker.

Use of Figures

Figurative language implies a word or a group of words which overrides or alters the standard definitions of words in the past. It helps to make the vocabulary or expression more meaningful, live and illustrate details when the addressee receives. In addition, it is targeted at contrasting things with another in order to illustrate and display more relevant and lively analogy. It is any vocabulary that goes beyond the terms to create new results or new perspectives on a concept or topic. The most fundamental and crucial figurative tool which is used in a language is simile, which refers to the use of words or phrases to define the qualities of another being or object in a manner of comparison. Through the use of similes and metaphors, speakers or writers are able to convey their thoughts and beliefs in a better way which is both figuratively beautiful and decorated, and has a strong impact on the imagination of the listener or reader. Thus, similes as well as metaphors are used to a great extent by

religious speakers or spiritual leaders who want to convey their message and ideologies to a wider mass of audience in order to have a lasting effect on the psychology of their listeners.

Metaphor

Religious language refers to the usual written and spoken vocabulary used only by religious leaders in the daily sense in which they speak about religious beliefs and religious experiences. The word also contains the vocabulary used in religious scriptures and in prayer and adoration. The use of the word “religious language” may mean that it has a specific ‘religious’, native language aspect that can be easily distinguished from a regular, secular one. However, this case is not at all true or authentic. When believers or followers use “religious language”, they do not use words which are completely different from those used by their nonreligious counterparts.

Metaphor is the most crucial figurative element that is used in a language to persuade people or followers of a certain faith or belief.

In recent studies and research, it has been observed that metaphorical symbols have been focused on to a great extent. The scholars have long understood the meaning of the metaphor with the largest treatment given by Sally McFague (1983). Since metaphors are normal in different fields of expression, problems of theological metaphor may appear to be subsumed by metaphor questions commonly posed in language theory. However, others suggested that God’s words are metaphorically unknowable. Tillich’s (1951) idea of a universal religious language seems to be an early term, and more contemporary adherents of this sort are Anthony Kenny and Sally McFague (for example, see, Jüngel 1974). The only way to describe realities about God is through theological metaphors, and the substance of a metaphorical expression about God, even partially, cannot be mentioned. Alston finds the IT supporter to be also seemingly literal, metaphorical statements about God. That being said, Alston’s wording can be unnecessarily cautious, as both Kenny and McFague tend to take the opinion that all the terms about Nature, whether real or fake, are inescapably metaphorical. Metaphors have thus been considered as an important and integral part of religious and spiritual speeches as they are seen to have a deep impact on the audience or listeners as they are able to connect to such direct comparisons.

Parallelism

Parallelism in discourse is often used to convince, inspire, and/or provoke psychological emotions in the audience. It has been affirmed that the balance between the usage of phrases and clauses makes it easier for the human mind to process their thoughts and emotions while attracting the attention of the audience at the same time. Parallelism refers to the figure of speech where two or more aspects of the same sentence have the same grammatical construction or arrangement. These elements are often used to create a rhythm in the language, to draw comparisons between certain objects or beings, to put emphasis on a certain point, or to exaggerate a thought or an idea. Parallelism is highly crucial in the speeches of spiritual or religious leaders as it creates a deep impact on the minds of their audience through its various functions.

Repetition

Repetition is considered as an essential element in language use as it is critical to repeat the same word in writing many times, or even in speech. There are numerous rhetorical techniques that authors or speakers use to explain and recall their argument. These tools can be found in both prose and poetry, however, it is also being significantly used in speeches by political and religious leaders nowadays. Repetition is considered as a literary tool that uses a word or sentence for effect deliberately for expression or written work two or more times. The words or sentences should be replicated in close relation to each other in order to be visible repeats. Repeating the same words or sentences in a poem or prose or in speeches will give the audience a simple picture, or make it unforgettable. In an international event, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar gave a motivational speech on the flourishing of the humankind, where he talks about gratefulness and inspiration. In his speech, Sri Sri repeatedly uses the word 'inspire' to shift the focus of his audience and emphasize on the importance of inspiration: when you are in the moment, when your mind is right now, here and now, then you are able to draw inspiration from everybody around. Anytime, anywhere, people can inspire you. Because it's an internal phenomenon where you are in the moment and you are willing to move on ... I find that inspiration is opening that source of energy within you... a child in the street can inspire you, a carpenter can inspire you, a gardener can inspire you, only you need to have the willingness to take that inspiration..." (Sri Sri Ravi Shankar)

Allusion

Allusion is deemed as an ingenuity and a literary technique that refers loosely and implicitly to a person, location, object or concept which gives the reader or author a cultural, historical, writing, or political context. An allusion is in passing a short expression that is translated and interpreted in the supposedly current audience's awareness. A sign of linkage and contrast of related concepts, characters, incidents and locations is commonly used in literary study. In daily conversation, allusions are widely used to convey thoughts and views to others.

Anecdotes

Anecdote is a really powerful figure of speech which refers to short tales filled with humour and which usually is a true story about someone's experiences. The anecdotes in one's speech will tell a lot about that individual as the speaker. The anecdotes are really short stories that can be amusing or fascinating, but most importantly, it is important for the speakers' subject. The anecdote's meaning is that it gives the author or speaker legitimacy as the writer or a leader respectively. The speaker's aim is to make their audience accept them as an authority in their profession regardless of whether they deliver an insightful or compelling speech or presentation. In addition to the fact that audiences have interesting anecdotes, the recreating of an encounter the speaker has acquired from their understanding of their subject and their skill in the particular sector.

Storytelling is a gateway to a successful audience. It keeps the viewer important, offers more information and mental views, which can otherwise bring to life crazy, distant or nuanced

subjects. Stories give speakers the chance to share personal stories that contribute to perceptions, processes of thinking or beliefs of the audience. In addition, it serves to remind the listeners of the comments or remarks in interpersonal correspondence and public speaking. It has been observed that stories have a deep impact on the memories of people which is why speakers use anecdotes and the method of storytelling to leave a significant impression on the minds of people. Stories are remembered by people for a long period of time and thus when speakers use anecdotes, people associate those anecdotes with the speakers who had introduced them.

Parable

A parable is a concise, discursive tale that reveals one or more insightful concepts or concepts in prose or verse. It varies from a fable from the fact that fables use characters such as animals, trees, inanimate objects or forces of nature, while parables have characters that have human characteristics. Parables are used by speakers or writers to gain focus of their audience's imagination which is considered to be a deciding factor of how their thought process works. Parables are used to create an entertaining environment by the speakers so that their audience is immersed in the moment so that it is easier for the former to get a hold on their thought processes. Also, parables help the audience to connect more with what the speaker is saying as they are more likely to understand stories which are focused on the characters that have human characteristics. It also shows that the speakers are able to connect the real world with the fictional one where they have an understanding of both the worlds.

Applying Personal Pronouns

The use of personal pronouns is deemed as a crucial element in the field of communication, especially in political and religious speeches, where it is observed to have a significant impact on the audience which leads to the manipulation of their minds. Personal pronouns such as 'I', 'We', 'Us', and 'Our' are used by speakers to create a connection with their audience as it makes people feel included by the speaker into the latter's world. Religious and spiritual speakers use personal pronouns, like the ones that have been already mentioned, to create a more inclusive environment around their audience so that they are comfortable and are able to let go of their thoughts easily in that particular situation. It is very critical for speakers to gain the attention of their audience so that they are able to manifest their own thoughts and beliefs in the thinking processes of their listeners, thus, speakers use personal pronouns to create a sense of trust among their followers which is a crucial factor when it comes to religious or spiritual institutions. Personal pronouns make the audience feel like they have established a personal or intimate relationship with the leader where they can convey their issues or problems in order for the latter to solve them. A lack of personal connection with the audience often leads to a sense of distrust.

Use of Cultural Knowledge

The studies and researches on cultural meaning concentrate on the orientations towards individualistic and collectivistic ideals and how people in different cultures represent these

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diverse orientations and implement them (Triandis 1990, 1993; Triandis and Gelfand 1998). The core determinants of the ideals that distinguish a given society have gained way too little consideration. It has been asserted that studying those religions offers insight into faith as a theoretically influential source of values that express themselves in values protected by cultural participants, values deemed acceptable by a given society and cultural attributions of value preferences. The main ways for individuals of each society to communicate with each other as well as with members of other cultures are contact, verbal and nonverbal. One or more value systems that affect behavioural decisions direct one's contact. The society has been tested by understanding of both the detrimental and constructive influence and power of religion on human livelihoods from the first acceptance of human thought to the modern one (Bradley 1963).

Cultures therefore have the ability to concurrently affect religious perception, values and comprehension. Religion and culture have all too much been analysed in isolation, lacking an interplay that aims to enhance both scientific and theoretical science. The knowledge about the cultural background of the audience is quite significant when it comes to religious and spiritual speeches as it strengthens the bond between the speaker and their listeners. Swami Nithyananda and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar have been able to connect to their audience on a spiritual level as they have a deep and intense knowledge about the kind of audience they are dealing with along with their culture. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar has often emphasized on the importance of faith and belief which can lead anyone towards the ultimate goal of life: "Have "eternal wait," infinite patience. When you have infinite patience, you will realize God belongs to you. Either through awareness or through practice you reach the same spot." (Sri Sri Ravi Shankar).

He asserts that having faith in one's culture and religion will help them in understanding the world around them and the way it acts. Such kinds of words can provide comfort to the audience which creates an indefinite bond between the speaker and the audience. Another instance of using cultural knowledge or emphasizing on the need to know and support one's culture is seen in one of the speeches of Sadhguru where he was interviewed by one of the actors of the bollywood industry, Kangana Ranaut, who asked him as to why Indians have the need to get anything approved from the Western people in order to accept the same themselves:

...they think you have to belong somewhere. You have to be this religion or that religion, or this party or that party, you gotta be something. Today if you look at the world, now that you mentioned America, and it is also beginning to happen in our country big time big way, in imitation of United States... in India also we are slowly moving into that direction, an unfortunate lane..." (Sadhguru)

When the speech was being made, the voices of the audience at the back implied that they could connect and relate what Sadhguru was saying. The knowledge about one's nation, its culture and the existing ideologies is imperative in establishing a kind of understanding with the audience. If one does not have adequate knowledge about the culture that they belong to

while preaching about the same, then the audience finds it difficult to accept it as they do not seem to build a passage of

trust with the speaker. Thus, having knowledge about the culture the speaker belongs to is considered to be highly crucial while making a stand.

A Comparison of their Ideologies with the Contemporary World

Unlike primitive and ancient religions, world religions are special in their focus on wide-ranging prosocial behavior, restrained sociosexuality, deferred fulfilment, and the faith in some sort of supernatural retribution. Religion is also correlated with a special normative viewpoint in modern cultures, which includes broad engagement, selective sociosexuality and personal development. Most believe that religiousness has been characterised across the centuries by a sequence of identical beliefs. However, it has been seen that it is not the case. Religious activity was mostly about trading items and commodities for hunter and collectors in the agro-pastoral tribal and Archaic chiefs with spiritual powers: ceremonies, commodities sacrifice and specific taboos to be gathered, healed, offspring or to defend against the enemy.

Religious and spiritual leaders have alerted their audience about the changing dynamics of the modern world. They have attempted to make people understand about the consequences of the lifestyle that they are living in the contemporary world and how it should be rectified. Jaggi Vasudev, also known as Sadhguru, has commented on the life we are living in his book *Encounter the Enlightened: Sadhguru, A Profound Mystic of Our Times*:

There are many ways to understand this. One simple way to know this is: today, if you lose your mental peace totally, you will go to a doctor. He will give you a pill. If you take this pill, your system will become peaceful. Maybe this will last just for a few hours, but you become peaceful. This pill is just a little bit of chemicals. These chemicals enter your system and make you peaceful. Or in other words, what you call peace is a certain kind of chemistry within you. Similarly, what you call joy, what you call love, what you call suffering, what you call misery, what you call fear, every human experience that you go through, has a chemical basis within you. Now the spiritual process is just to create the right kind of chemistry, where you are naturally peaceful, naturally joyous. When you are joyous by your own nature, when you don't have to do anything to be happy, then the very dimension of your life, the very way you perceive and express yourself in the world will change. The very way you experience your life will change. (Sadhguru)

These life based advice or speeches have been observed to have a great impact on how people lead their lives. After listening to religious or spiritual speakers, people have said that their course of life has changed in a good way as they now understand the value of life as described by these religious speakers.

Body Language and their Gestures

Body language is a kind of non-verbal communication in which physical action is used to communicate information, as opposed to words. Such activity requires face, stance,

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expressions, shifting of the eyes, touch and place. Both animals and humans are said to have a body language, but this article concentrates on human body language understanding. Although body language and body gestures are an essential part of communication, much of it is unconscious. It has been asserted that if one learns about this subject in depth then they become capable of understanding other people's body language and what it means as well. Body language should not be misunderstood with sign language, since sign languages are complete languages which are used as an alternative of spoken languages and have complex grammatical structures of their own, and they are capable of displaying essential characteristics of all languages.

The concept of body language and body gestures is highly important in the field of religious and spiritual speeches and institutions as it is witnessed to have a significant impact on the minds of the audience. Through the implementation of body gestures, the speaker is able to connect to the listener with hand movements and their facial expressions which is very important to establish a personal connection with their audience. Nithyananda is popular for his connection with his audience through his dance movements where he connects with his audience by dancing with them. This is considered to be highly effective and personal as the personal spaces of several people are intertwined. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar connects with his audience through the calmness of his voice and the way he takes long pauses between his words. It has been seen to be effective as the audience is able to understand that the speeches come naturally to the speakers, which is also believed to strengthen the connection between two souls through the medium of facial expressions and body gestures. In a speech given by Swami Nithyananda, he talks about the burden that students take when they are expected to study so much in such a short amount of time. It is observed that while giving the speech, Nithyananda takes long pauses, and makes an expression where he is deemed to be thinking about something, and then he continues to emphasize on a particular part of the speech: "... six months for just five to six 200 page book (a long pause)... extreme stupidity (putting stress on the phrase) ... (long pause) destroying human beings" (Swami Nithyananda).

Such kinds of expressions and long pauses used in a speech imply that the speaker is truly thinking at the spot and transmitting their thoughts to their audience. A lack of body gestures, which includes facial expressions and intonation and stress in a language, can mean that the speech is revised and will thus be incapable of building that connection with their audience.

Warning

While explaining the 'Speech of Act Theory,' Austin asserts that the speaker does something as well as says things whenever he utters a statement. Many linguistic theorists say that speech practises are behaviour executed by speakers by utterances and that there are a wide range of speaking acts, including 'guidance' (which is considered as a major concern) relating to the utterances which the addresser attempts to guide the addressee to behave (Parker and Riley 2005:12-13; Arnoff and Miller 2002:4). Searle (1979:13) asserts that the speaker invokes the directive verbs in order to accomplish successful acts or to avoid evil actions, and which include: recommending, preventing, alerting, directing, demanding, instructing, welcoming, directing, urging, requiring, implying, and so on.

The use of warnings has found a special significance in the field of rhetorical, political and religious speeches. Warnings have a deep impact on the psychology of the audience as the people of our nation are highly influenced by premonitions and spiritual aspects of the world. Religious or spiritual leaders use warnings as a way to alert their audience about the unknown which the former has a knowledge about. Spiritual or religious leaders use warnings to have a grip on the psychology of their audience where they put forth premonitions and warnings in the world which makes people believe that these speakers have an unknown and hidden knowledge about the world which is not known by the common audience. Thus, people are compelled into believing the beliefs and ideologies of these religious and spiritual leaders where the latter have led people to believe into things that have no authenticity.

Appreciating and Thanking

Praise and thanks are an important part in a human life and it is widely venerated by all. When a devotee is praised, he or she feels a sense of uniting with God even more. Humans always long for appreciation and even the godmen appreciate so as to motivate and attract their devotees towards the right path. Najim states that “thank you expressions are used to express gratitude for benefits and to improve relationships between speakers, and that this basic use is prolonged to the functions of conversational opening, stopping, changing, concluding, leave-taking, and contribution of positive reinforcement (Najim 2). Thus, through appreciating and thanking the godmen are building a relationship with the devotees. Spiritual leaders and scholars throughout history, have adorned the virtue of thankfulness and appreciation. Even in day to life, thanking and appreciation plays a crucial role in the society. Some of the scholars defined thankfulness as ‘social glue’ that reinforces connection between family, partners and it aids as the pillar of human culture. For instance, Michael and Richard Emmons explained thankfulness as a two-step process, first identifying that one has gained a positive outcome and the second knowing that there is an exterior source for this positive result (Allen 2). Since most of these positive aids come from exterior people, appreciations stand as an “other-oriented” emotion because people can also undergo thankfulness toward God, nature, etc. For example, a devotee of Swami Nithyananda points that “There are no words to express my gratitude to Swamiji, as each and every moment I feel the joy of being blessed by the Divine” (Avatar 154). It depicts that when a devotee is praised, he or she feels a sense of uniting with God even more. In Speech Act theory, “The responders may be seen as speaker-strategies, motivated by what the speaker wants to achieve” (Najim 13). Thus, in a way the devotees are fully motivated by the speech given by the godman. Various studies show that the connection between religion/spirituality and gratitude is greater and appreciation influences the devotee. For instance, a study shows that people allocated to pray for their companion, or pray in general continuously for four weeks testified higher thankfulness at the end of the study rather than individuals who are allocated to think about their everyday activities. This depicts the speech act that was carried out by the godmen and influenced the devotee. Even Vivekananda states that “I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions, and I thank you in the name of millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects”.

Intonation

Intonation plays a major role and it stresses on certain words, therefore those sentences of words are given more importance. Especially while listening to the speaker, the intonation plays a vital role for building a relationship between the godmen and the devotees. Intonation has various sides and elements included in it. It reproduces emotions and interests among the listeners. It is the intonation that plays a crucial role in speech or linguistics. As Lewis states intonation denotes a “combination of acoustic parameters, including duration, intensity, and pitch used to communicate discourse meaning”. Therefore, in the spiritual speeches by the godmen the intonation plays a vital role in enticing devotees’ interests. For instance, in *Living Enlightenment* Swami Nithyananda points that “It is a silent intonation of ‘ham...sah...., ham...sah’. Silent intonation of this hamsa mantra will suddenly take you into the awareness, the relaxation that never dies. Whatever can die will leave your system, your inner space” (Living 46). This depicts how godmen use such technique to allure devotees. The intonations and the different sounds created by the godmen while giving the speech also seek the attention of the devotees. Even it states that it can also be experienced at other times when humans are not faced by fear such as sitting, walking, talking, and eating. It shows that the intonations are used to create a bond with the godmen and at the same time it evokes the emotions of the devotees. Intonation has a major role in motivational speeches as the stress used on certain words or parts of a sentence lets the audience understand where the emphasis is being given. Through the understanding of that emphasis, the words become capable of having an imprint on the minds of its listeners which helps in the well-being of the listeners itself, the major factor hidden in intonations is that it evokes the emotions of the listeners. Thus, the listeners become an integral part of the speech because it connects with the listeners’ emotions.

Expressions

Facial expression is important for first impressions. Especially in a spiritual speech it also conveys the message appropriately to the devotees. The expressions used by the godman are different, facial, gestures and so on. The most crucial expression in a speech is the facial expression because it clearly states or conveys the message through various facial gestures. While giving the speech, the right expression should occur at the right time. For instance, a warning cannot be given with a smile because it will alter the impact on the listeners. Facial expression has been an emphasis or vital study of research in human behaviour for over the century. Facial expression gives signs about emotion, intention, pain, alertness, personality, controls interpersonal relations, and connects psychiatric status among other functions (Torre and Cohen 1). The expressions given by Nithyananda through his speeches have a vital effect on the devotees. The true essence of the speech is carried by those expressions. Even the facial expressions, hand signals evoke emotions in the devotees. For instance, Brunton on Face to Face with Sri Ramana Maharshi states that “On the contrary, his face, expression, figure is intense” (Brunton 23). This shows how the expressions have an impact on the devotees and at the same time the expressions also create an impression for the devotees about the godman. Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is observed to have a peaceful and calm facial expression at all times which further develops a sense of calmness in the minds of his audience. It has been observed through the analysis of many of his speeches that he never loses eye contact with his audience as it is

extremely crucial to develop and maintain a connection with his audience. In a speech, on an international platform, Sri Sri talked about the act of compassion and how it can be used to end wars and bring peace and harmony. In that particular speech, Sri Sri begins his speech by asking questions, "...tell me what do you want to know?...what is it you want?...because our wants keep changing right?...what is that something that you want that needs to be attended? Are you with me? As I'm speaking, are you noticing that you're saying yes or no?" (Sri Sri Ravishankar). While he was asking these questions to the audience, he was also observing how the audience was responding to them through the analysis of their facial expressions. Thus, it can be affirmed that expressions in a speech are not only important on the part of the speaker but also on the part of the listener as it lets the speaker know if a connection is being established. Sri Sri pauses after every question and smiles and looks at the audience to indicate that he is expecting an answer from the audience so that a bond is established between the two. These little expressions are important to deliver a message and to amplify the tone without verbally saying it.

Guarantee or Pledging

Pledging and giving guarantee would result in the listeners to have faith in the speaker and might appear that the saying has some base. For instance, in an article it pointed out that "Paramahansa Nithyananda pledged to bring great fame to Madurai Aadheenam and the four temples belonging to it". This shows how the godman uses pledging as a technique to have an impact on the devotees. Also, it gives guarantee to the listeners. Koessler states that "degree of social influence on pledge making is manipulated and its impact on the individuals (Koessler 1). Also, Koessler points that "a pledge in specific can prompt a change in beliefs, if it is understood as a credible signal of other players' intention to contribute (Koessler 11). Pledges have a great significance in the discourse of speech as devotees who are highly inspired by religious speakers tend to follow what the speaker pledges to do. Thus, when a religious speaker or motivational speaker pledges to do something good or effective, more and more people are inspired to follow the same. Thus, it has been considered as a significant and effective tool in the field of speech discourse. For example, an article on Baba Hardev Singh's spiritual leader's death, states that "his followers have promised to fulfill the pledge they made to their guru". Thus, the devotees also sometimes become the part of the pledge which is made by the godman. Vivekananda takes a pledge that "So, let us pledge to leave no stone unturned to integrate our youth in India's progress and ensure youth-led development across the Nation" (Kumar 1). Thus, it is observed that making pledges has a deep impact on the listeners where speakers tend to make pledges about changing the state of the world or make changes to become a better human being, which is religiously accepted and followed by their followers.

Predictions and Foretelling

By predicting the future a relation between the devotees and the godmen can be built. Even if one of his assertions turns into reality the listener starts believing in that godman even more. For instance, Vivekananda predicted that India would be facing problems, but there would be an abundance of economic activities and growth in science and technology, particularly

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defence technology. India would lead the world in spiritualism". This showcases that predictions have a way of creating invisible connections with the listeners or followers as they are able to trust the higher knowledge of the speaker. Predictions are often based on the ongoing state of being of the world or of individuals and are thus considered as practical. Thus, predicting about the future of the world makes the audience understand that the speaker has a strong sense of analysis of the world due to the existence of a wide range of intellectual knowledge. In the article prediction, Barret and Stanford state that "the vital element in prediction is not momentary but epistemic. To predict means, make a claim about matters that are not already known, or about the upcoming events" (Barrett and Stanford 1). It depicts how the predictions also have a long-term effect on the listeners. Thus, it can be asserted that the act of predicting the future is significant when it comes to the bond or relation between a speaker and their followers.

5. CONCLUSION

The prevalence and the rampant increase in the number of godmen is a reflection of the acceptance they have in society. Traditionally, there was no prevalence of godmen, the concept (godmen as different from gurus) emerged in the 20thst century with the rise of the individual is searching for 'self', and 'sense of security'. When people cannot find God, they search for the closest thing to God to meet their needs of purpose and security in the form of godmen. It has led to an increase in the popularity of the godmen in the form of ISKCON, the Children of God, the Unification Church, Branch Davidians, and Scientology which has spread roots among the western communities. The indispensable faith of certain people or devotees in the godmen shows the discontent with their life. It lures people towards the search for salvation through the rhetoric of godmen. However, the binding faith of a section of society has created a gap in the community foundation as other sections of the society who may be past followers of these godmen, condemn and debunk them owing to fake prophecies and panoptical control. This thesis discusses the differences in the representation of godmen in nonfictional, fictional, and godmen's own performative representations. The nonfiction is direct and critical as found in books of Dawkins and Khushwant Singh who debunk religion and godmen altogether. On the other hand, in fictional representation, the authors such as R.K. Narayan and G. V. Desani adopt a balanced viewpoint. They criticize godmen and yet address the blind faith of devotees and their constant support. These differences in the modes of representing godmen seem to invoke a parallel with the conversation between the Inquisitor and Jesus in Dostoevsky's novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*. The thesis thus argues for the possibility of developing a methodology of studying these modes of representations through a reading of the chapter in Dostoevsky's novel. In the godmen's discourse, rhetorical techniques, body gestures, and in their application in the delivery of the message to devotee, there lies certain amount of self-consciousness that foregrounds a self-image by the godmen.

Dawkins' *The God Delusion* and R.K. Narayan's famous novel *The Guide* (1958) are two such texts that are different but explore the culture of godmen in the Indian society. In *The God Delusion* Dawkins adopts a critical and direct approach through his nonfiction literature to present his views about God, religion, and godmen. He criticizes the concept of religion, god, and godmanship which cannot be scientifically proven. Dawkins asserts that religion can be

considered as a bundle of insane views and actions, which directs man towards a reality that is more a delusion than real. The narration of Dawkins is direct in which he specifies that science indeed has an upper hand to religion due to the presence of physical proof. Through historical examples such as Stalin, Hitler, Dawkins questions the authority of God and the individuals that are considered as godmen and debunk faith in them by presenting their fundamentalist, intolerant, fanatical, legalistic, totalitarian, and oppressive examples. Unlike this rationalistic attack, R.K. Narayan's famous novel *The Guide* (1958) can be considered as one of the finest literature that provides insights into the search of identity. Through his fictional representation Narayan adopts an indirect and subtle approach to present the views about godmen by using the character Raju. Narayan uses a passive approach to present the subtleties in the belief system of the people who move towards the godmen with the villagers in Mangal village and who believed in Raju as a spiritual leader. Narayan represents the lack of purpose and insecurity among people which forces them to believe in fake characters like Raju. It clearly defines that people do not want to experience freedom by having the decision making power and depend upon godmen for a sense of security. Narayan explains through the character of Raju that many such godmen are present in the modern society that are not real and have committed serious crimes, but despite such criticisms and controversies, people follow the godmen to meet their need of security. The blind faith of people urges them to follow the commands of godmen that could construct their lives. This emphasizes that people are not using the ability to think and make a differentiation between right and wrong. However, in the end of the novel, Raju becomes a true godman by sacrificing himself. This ironical end of the novel shows the impossibility of attacking the godmen as well as the devotees. In other words, the foolish devotees also have the power to push the fake godmen to become sacrificial godmen.

Khushwant Singh's *Gods and Godmen of India* and G. V. Desani's *All about H. Hatterr* are exclusive pieces of literature that provide deep insights about religion and practices of godmen. Khushwant Singh adopts a critical and direct approach through his nonfiction to present issues related to religion, faith, blind faith, rise of new cults in India. Attacking the plethora of human gods that are widespread in the country, Singh criticizes the self-styled godmen and exposes the political inclinations these institutions have; blasting the godmen for their manipulation. Singh uses a stimulating narrative style to confront the godmen by branding them as being highly corrupt and stating their actions to be illegal by discussing the many godmen, such as Sri Satya Sai Baba, Dheerendra Brahmachari, and others. Singh mocks most at these men and women, not holding back on pointing out the follies of these highly celebrated people. Singh attacks the godmen, from their educational qualifications to their knowledge of the world, pointing out that most of these so-called godmen lack even the basic knowledge of even the most minor things in the world. However, the secular writer does not mock the intellectual abilities of some of these godmen, citing that these individuals should be seen as teachers rather than godmen. G. V. Desani through his fictional representation subtly presents the follies and lack of substance of these godmen and their institutions through several incidents the protagonist, Hatterr, goes through, while in the search for spiritual elevation and bliss. Desani questions the beliefs of the Upanishadic conventions that are related to asceticism, self-control, abandonment, and renunciation. Desani does not wage war against the godmen but indirectly

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makes fun of them for lacking any abilities or skills that could make spiritual beings. Desani takes the lighter route, where the representation of these Gurus is more indirect and establishes a link between political leaders, people in business, and the godmen and how the society and economy as a whole are manipulated in the name of the Ultimate God - the higher power He indirectly targets the gurus and questions their credibility against the formation of human-like God figures. Desani asserted that the godmen are followed by devotees who have blind faith and longing for a sense of security in place of freedom.

Research Argument and Findings

By comparing the fictional and non-fictional modes of representing godmen, this thesis tries to find the role and function of the genres which decide the vision of the works. However, the way it is treated differs, reflecting on the personalities and experiences of the writers themselves. The criticism in the text is delivered from real-life experiences, trying to grasp an understanding of why the godmen are still so relevant in Indian society. The major influencing factor behind the increase of devotees is that the godmen also use rhetoric skills to impress the devotees. Several godmen like Nithyananda, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, and Jaggi Vasudev use rhetorics in their speeches to establish concord with the devotees. By making use of different rhetorical elements such as simile, metaphor, parallelism, repetition, allusion, anecdotes, and parable, the godmen make an effect on the devotees. It also involves their use of body language and body gestures as against their spiritual concern. Body gestures help to connect with the listener with hand movements and their facial expressions establish a personal connection with their audience. Thus, it can be said that there is an association between the devotee and the godmen in which the needs of both parties are met. The godmen receive support and high position from the devotees and the devotees get a sense of fulfillment and security from the godmen.

The self-claimed 'poem' "The Grand Inquisitor", a chapter in the novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky showcases this irony in the nature of and in the representation of godmen. Dostoevsky states that even though people believe in God, they do not have any solid visual evidence about the existence of God to support their belief system. It has created uncertainty among the individuals and led to the creation of godmen who represent a God-like figure. It clearly defines that the individuals are slavish and weak as they do not believe in themselves and seek faith in something superior. People reject the comforts and protections of the world and believe in the uncertainties of the religious faiths. People no longer seek freedom and want to be guided with some authority for a sense of security. Dostoevsky shows that there is a general belief among the public regarding the presence of some power such as Christ's faith in human beings resembles unconditional love. However, as per "Grand Inquisitor" it rests with the weaknesses of the people. It is also understood that these poor, insecure people may also turn violent at times for the sake of their faith.

Contribution of the study

By analysing the viewpoints of different authors (in different genres) such as Dawkins, Dostoevsky, Khushwant Singh, R.K. Narayan, and Desani, the thesis tries to suggest the mutual dependence of godmen and devotees. Focus on this enigmatic relationship lends itself to

different kinds of representations of godmen in literature. It also invokes a methodology to study this enigmatic relationship through a reading of “The Grand Inquisitor”.

Future Scope of Research

The present research was limited to study with the Hindu Gods and did not consider the other religious perspectives. Therefore, it is possible and essential to undertake a comparative religious perspective of godmen. Further research can also be made on the role of media and the representation of godmen by media personnel. The perception of media regarding godmen has to be analysed to understand the impact of media on the relation between godmen and the devotees.

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