

**THE DANCING WOMEN: A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY INTO R.K
NARAYAN'S *THE GUIDE* AND *THE MAN -EATER OF MALGUDI***

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ABSTRACT

In Indian sense dance, the most aesthetic and subtlest form of all human aesthetics is not only an exposition of gestures and bodily movements but also an art which is a recourse for spiritualism, a divine art. The first treatise on dance, *Natyashastra*, relates and glorifies dancers with their divine aspects like the *apsaras* because of the divine aspects of this art. Later, various mythological scriptures and our two great epics severally attest their supposed degeneration into baser instincts as the dancing women are being used more for personal interests by the authorities. Thus the very antithetical dualism becomes a core point into the structure and disposition of dancing woman. In Narayan's two novels *The Guide* and *The Man- Eater of Malgudi* we could glimpse that same dualism permeating and constructing the narrative structure of the text that remains unchanged throughout the ages. Thus the present essay attempts to see the very presentation of the dancing women in these two novels with their obvious dualism that Indian culture attests.

Keywords: art, natyashastra, dualism, dancing woman, culture.

The performance traditions of India, Farley Richmond noted very pertinently consists of many forms that cannot be included in the other groups that constitute the vast area of performative art forms of the world. Dance is an inseparable part of Indian culture from the ancient times. Dance, which has been regarded as one of the most complicated and sophisticated expression of human beings, is an unending treasure trove for the lovers of arts and simultaneously a rich subjective arts. Indian's cultural tradition of attributing it to the spiritual significations led it to another psychological texture that undoubtedly lends somewhat rich symbolism, variety as well as complexity to its enactments and production. The earliest treatise on this art is *Natyashastra* which is said to be communicated by Lord Brahman to sage *Bharata*, who is believed to write *Natyashastra* (The art of the Play). The noted critic, Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee in his introduction of *Indian Drama*, published in 1956, clearly refers its dating back to the 4th century AD at the latest. Chatterjee in the same discussion states that, "In south India, the Sanskrit tradition lingered, and it was dance rather than drama proper which attracted the

attention of creative artists there” (Chaterjee 13). This is very significant and relevant for the present context of our essay. However *Natyashastra* is the first documented text on Indian classical dance and where the significance of dance is described as which aims not to flatter any party but to represent the true and essential character of the world. The proclaimed aim is somewhat symbolic and tricky for it seeks to represent the true and essential character of the world. whether dance’s objective should be same or not that is another question, but on the very position of the structure of dancing and its associated characters throughout the evolution of Indian cultural history and its associated literature questions this very definition with some resultant ambiguity, that is undoubtedly one of the rich characteristic of any Indian classical text. Simultaneously Indian classical dance is inherently linked with different emotions. The perfect harmony between classical music and body movement is its ulterior motif and objective that create different moods in the mind of the beholder.

On the other hand there are two main doctrines or concepts in classical Indian dance. ‘*Nritta*’ comprises of the technology or technical aspects of dance and ‘*Abhinaya*’ is the emotional effects that it casts on the spectators. ‘*Nritta*’ in combination of ‘*Abhinaya*’ with gestures and expressions of face, represent the written part of script into performing dance. The contention of *Abhinaya* is to effectively present human emotions. One of the most notable characteristic of Indian classical dance is that devotion has a very formidable part in its delineation and like other ancient Indian arts it is also viewed as a deliberation to spirituality and thus it is supposed to be very natural that dancers could or would occupy a proximal place in the circle of divinity. The love relationship between two mortals is also seen in the graphic renderings of divine love, a desire for the unification with the god that will result into a perfect harmonious and blissful experience which is akin to ‘*Brahman*’ or the supreme spiritual bliss in *upnashadic* doctrines, as for example the *Taittiriya Upnishad* states that *Brahman* is akin to *rasa*, which is a divine experience and it is here that dance becomes a kind of yogic principle where human beings gets merge into the vast realm of the divinity, which is the ultimate aim of Indian spiritualism. Indian tradition also says that it was *Brahman* who presented *Natyashastra* to sage Bharata.

In myths and *purans* we have numerous examples of *apsaras* who were the court dancers of Indra, the king of the gods. They were revered as almost the gods, because they were born out of *sagar manthan*, the churning of sea, from where along with different materials they evolved and from where nectar evolved also. We can fairly ascribe the event of churning sea as a perfect metaphor for these *apsaras* or dancing women. As we know that along with other things this churning caused also *halahal* or *kalkut*, the crudest poison that the world ever seen. *Apsaras* or dancing women had the taste of the same fate; they had the privilege of being associated with the taste of both the nectar and the poison at the very same time. In our two greatest epics ‘*The Ramayana*’ and ‘*The Mahabharata*’, we have also numerous examples of these *apsaras* who are being used by Indra, the king of gods for his selfish interests either to distract the saints from their meditations or the *Asuras*, the mythical antagonists of gods, aspiring for more power. This is the seed of the very corruption of the structure and disposition of the *apsaras* that culminate into an negative antithetical dilemma over the Indian mind and as a result the original intention of dance as a divine art, a devotion to god become provocatively shadowed by the baser pattern of the structures of court dancers in the following ages. The erotic part or the *sringara rasa* of it becomes more and more prominent subsequently in the later expositions associated with the form. Rambha was molested by king Ravana, Menoka was used to distract the sage Viswamitra,

Urbashi was used more often to prey on saints and aspiring monarchs that *Indra* thought to be a threat to his throne. Even she was sent to Arjuna by Indra when Arjuna showed some inclinations towards her in a dance program at Indra's court. The subsequent refusal of Arjuna and Urbashi's curse to him further attest the less divine instincts of these dancing women, that becomes more and more prominent in the later projections. *Rigveda* describes Indra as a famed dancer delivering grandiose monologue being intoxicated by the *Somrasa*, the heavenly liquor in conversation with his wife Indrani and his pet monkey Vrishakapi. Lord *Vishnu* incarnates into Mohini, the dancer and lures Vhasmasura into death which certainly smells of eroticism that become more and more associated with the dancers.

The most famous dancer in all the time is Lord *Shiva*, who is referred as dancing in the cremation ground, besmearing with the ashes of burning pyre, wearing tiger skin and garland made of skulls. This concept of dancing *Shiva* is the basis of the doctrine of the construction of *natraja* or the king of dance in Hindu mythology and literature. Shiva's dance is conceptualized as *tandava* and is often been represented as a cosmic dance of the divine universe. He is thought to be responsible for creation, sustenance, destruction and recreation of the universe through this dance, the cosmic energy riveted thorough the cosmic ritual, represented through dance. The antithetical elements of nature and the broad universe are on the other hand represented by his consort *Parvati*, dancing the *lasya* mode, the feminine part of universe along with *Shiva's tandava*, the vigorous male part, conjoined to bring the much needed equilibrium. This very concept of a male divine entity powering and mastering over the universe along with the consort, is pointed out very pertinently by Anand Coomarswamy in his famed book *The Dance of Shiva* as the 'Eros Prognosis' of Lucian as he wrote,

"It would seem that dancing come into being at the beginnings of all things, and was brought to light together with Eros, that ancient one, for we see this primeval dancing clearly get forth in the choral dance of the constellations, and in the planet and fixed stars, their interweaving and interchange and orderly harmony" (Coomarswamy 56).

Coomarswamy also cites a very pertinent example from Bengal where the mother instead of the father aspect of *Shiva* is revered. *Kali*, the mother principle is here the omnipotent prototype of *Shiva*, the devotees need to purify their heart by the sacrificial fire and renunciation for her entrance, awakening spiritual consciousness. A Bengali hymn in the praise of goddess *Kali* is quoted by Coomarswamy in this context:

"Because thou lovest the burning ground,
 I have made a Burning-ground of my heart
 That thou, Dark one, hunter of the burning ground,
 Mayest dance Thy eternal dance
 Naught else is within my heart, O Mother.
 Day and night blazes the funeral pyre;
 The ashes of the dead, strewn all about,
 I have preserved against Thy coming,
 With death-conquering *Mahakala* neath Thy feet
 Do Thou enter in, dancing Thy rhythmic dance,
 That I may behold Thee with closed eyes." (Coomarswamy 62)

He also pointed out the *Sivajnana Siddhiyar*, *Supaksha Sutra* V, 5: "For the purpose of securing both kinds of fruit to the countless souls, our Lord, with actions five, dances his dance"

(Coomarswamy 62). Both kinds of fruit that is referred to here are 'Ilham' or reward in this world, and 'Param' or bliss in *mukti*. So dancing here ceases to be what is merely called dancing and comes to pose a well-connected and in depth theological meaning that Indian tradition is known to ascribe its associations. The point is that both the baser and intellectual side of is expressed, like a human soul, capable of determining its development even from its most derogated and degenerated state of being. The point also remains that this ambivalent duality that permeates dancing and its associated forms also stretch its shadows in literature and in the present context in Narayan's work it is very much evident as well as relevant for a sufficient and in depth study.

In this context we shall begin our discussion on Narayan's dancing women as presented in his two novels namely, *The Guide* (1958) and *The Man eater of Malgudi* (1962). Narayan's presentation of dancing women in his novels is the re-portrayal of hindu-mythic dancing girls with its obvious duality as well as the cultural role reversal ingrained in it that have all the structures, nuances, physic and the psyche of those dancers that we are accustomed to glimpse in our two great epics and several of theological texts, the conjoined configuration of the unmitigated amalgamation of nectar and poison. In *The Guide* we have Rosie, the dancing woman trying to build a space of her own through several role reversals and negations made up by society, customs and cultural inhibitions of worldly minds. In his narration of his life story Raju credited Rosie about everything that occurred to him "My troubles would not have started ...but for Rosie" (Narayan 9). It is symbolic and at once full of connotation that shows the two faces at once as Rosie is here not only a woman but also a dancer to whom the protagonist credits all his troubles and the novelist paints her not less as a dancer than as a woman and all her reciprocal identity is thoroughly submerged in the structure of a dancing woman and that also in the Indian sense of the term. One of the finest characteristic of Narayan's story telling art is that thus he simultaneously builds, creates, fashions and refashions the two simultaneous and even supposed opposite identities of Rosie and one of the enigmatic paradoxes of the novel is to determine where and how far these two identities are being able to shadow each other reciprocally in the continuation of the narration of Raju, the supposed guide, that is also a narration of a dancing woman. Raju thought that as she was Indian, she could have very easily assume such traditional names as Devi, Meena or Lalitha etc., and he added somewhat sarcastically, "She choose to call herself Rosie. Don't imagine on having hearing name that she wore a short shirt or cropped her hair. She looked just the orthodox dancer that she was" (Narayan 9). The point is that the names that Raju refers are all the very methodical and traditional Indian names and most of them are associated with the divinity and goddess that most apparently the name 'Rosie' blatantly lacks, which is somewhat obviously non-Indian and the question remains whether Narayan wants to project Rosie as a non-manifestation of Indian sensibilities as presented through her somewhat abrupt desertion of Marco, which is not very typical of Indian women and again regaining somewhat sympathetic attitude towards Marco, the legal husband when permeated in 'Nalini', the name which is given by Raju, who later turns to be a supposed saint. At the very first opportunity Raju praised her as a great dancer and that she fostered India's great cultural traditions without having a single chance to see her performance! This is because he has his own idea of dancers as he says, "Anyone likes to hear flattering sentiments, and more than others, I suppose, dancers." (Narayan 9) This satiric comment proves the cultural inhibitions playing in the subconscious in Raju's mind against the dancers whatever he might say afterwards about the dancers or about Rosie. Raju thus here represents the typical

antithetical Indian minds ever perfect and earnest in attaching ambiguity in any kind of cultural discourse.

In chapter five, we have brief conversation between Rosie and her husband Marco. Narayan's special treatment of narrative technique also lent a significant symbolical part into it, creating dimensions to the richness of the text. While describing in first person that is assumed to be Raju's reminiscences, looking back and forward constantly, using the flashback technique, he assumed the tone of an ancient sage or a grandmother concocting stories to children in the epic technique of narration as he says:

"There was a girl who has come all the way from Madras and who asked the moment she get foot in Malgudi, 'can you show me a cobra-a king cobra it must be –which can dance to the music of a flute?'" (Narayan 64), her husband interrupted this desire and clearly declared that, "I can't stand the sight of a snake; your interest are morbid" (Narayan 64). On the other hand, Raju's response to this taunt is equally equivocal as he ponders, "I disliked this man. He was taunting such a divine creature" (Narayan 64). Thus from the beginning the novelist prepares the readers for such cultural confrontation in the critical discourse of the dancers but the point is that one cannot safely harbor a definite conclusion from the context if we just consider the final outcome of the novel which ends in Raju's seemingly spiritual upliftment and somewhat spiritual awakening, that the possible coming rain symbolizes. It is Narayan's equivocal stance on the dancers, at once there is the present days ridicule and taunt preserved for them, that are presented by Marco, who is selfish, self-interested and self-absorbed, presumably representing a modern man looking at the universe at objective vision. On the other hand Raju's vision and demeanor represent the ancient sage's who at last tries to be turned into a saint after strives in worldly life and also speaking in an epic narration style like our great two epics. When Rosie first appeared at the station, the description of the narrator at the first glance also highlights this theme favorably, "... but she did have a figure, a slight and slender one, beautifully fashioned, eyes that sparkled, a complexion not white, but dusky, which made her only half visible-as if you saw her through a film of tender coconut juice" (Narayan 65). This is not only the character of Rosie only, but we have to remember that from the very first chapter of the novel, the author has introduced Rosie to the readers as dancer, this feature marks the dancers as whole as per Narayan because if we consider the structures of many of Narayan's novels, having a definite mythological allegory to be represented in the specific modernized version, this above quoted text shall certainly make us remember about the *apsaras*, who were born of water and like them Rosie is seen only "through a film of coconut juice".

In the occasion of cobra dance, as the man played his flute and the cobra raised itself and darted and swayed, Raju remembered, "the whole thing repelled me" (Narayan 68). In this occasion he seems to be quite akin with Marcos' thought, but at the very same time he records, "She stretched out her slightly and swayed it in imitation of the movement; she swayed her whole body to the rhythm for just a second, but that was sufficient to tell me what she was, the greatest dancer of the century" (Narayan 68). Raju's mother response is equally provocative, while she learnt about the cobra dance and Rosie's demeanor, she at once replied, "I had a cousin living in Burma once and he told me about the snake women there" (Narayan 69), and when Raju replied, "Don't talk nonsense, Mother. She is a good girl, not a snake-worshipper. She is a dancer, I think." (Narayan 69) She replies, "Oh, dancer! Maybe, but don't have anything to do with these dancing women. They are all a bad sort." (Narayan 69) In this chapter we could also see Raju's tongue of flattery like, "who could decorate a rainbow?" and "The way you danced,

your forward figure haunted me all night” etc., (Narayan 72) persuaded grunting Rosie to join Marco in his visit to cave paintings at *Mempi* hills which only extracted an amazement from Marco for Raju saying, “you are a wizard!”(73). When in a conversation Rosie related that they belong to a family traditionally dedicated to temples as dancers, her mother, grandmother, and before her, her mother and as a young girl she danced in her village temple and she also asked, “you know how our caste is viewed?” (84). Raju replied, “It is the noblest caste on earth” (84) and she said, “We are viewed as public women”(84) and the narrator records, “She said plainly, and I was thrilled to hear the words,” we are not considered respectable; we are not considered civilized.” (84) Raju though said, “All that narrow notion may be true of old days, but it’s different now. Things have changed. There is no caste or class today” (85). Though he managed to say this, there is obvious duality and ambiguity in his speech and thought that can clearly demonstrate the break in between as there is simultaneous gap between Rosie’s speaking ‘plainly’ and Raju’s getting ‘thrilled’.

Though the marriage of Marco and Rosie was a kind of arranged one, it did not benefit Rosie, because as Raju remarks “Unfortunately his choice was wrong-this girl herself was a dreamer if ever there was one. She would have greatly benefitted by as husband who would care for his career; it was here that a handy man like me proved invaluable” (113). So here another and probably an unprofitable quality for the worldly purpose at least is attached with the dancers, that they are dreamers also. Naryan’s hinting at this point is presumably clear that the dancing women ultimately prove nothing but the women and also perhaps a woman with baser qualities. Her ready submission to Raju’s crouching hand does not either mark her as traditional Indian women and Narayan has not portrayed Marco as out and out villain either to justify any of Rosie’s point against him. At the end of chapter five though she accuses about Marco, “He is interested only in painting and old art and things like that”, and Raju very promptly added, “But not one which can move its limbs, I suppose” (86), now these are not very sufficient provocation to push Rosie to Raju as Raju’s rushing flattery:

“I placed my hand on her shoulder and gently stroked it...I am really very unhappy to think of you, such a gem lost to the world. In his place I would have made you a queen of the world” and Raju remembers simultaneously, “She didn’t push away my hand. I let it travel and felt the softness of her ear and rushed my fingers through the locks of her hair” (86). With this we can put side by side their encounter at the last of chapter five at the hotel: “At the door of number 28 I hesitated. She opened the door, pushed in, and hesitated, leaving the door half open. She stood looking at me for a moment, as on the first day

“Shall I go away?” I asked in a whisper.

“Yes. Good night.” She said feebly.

“May I not come in?” I asked, trying to look my saddest.

“No, no. Go away.” She said. But on an impulse I gently pushed her at the way, and stepped in and locked the door on the world.” (Narayan 88-89)

This passage is famed for several reasons. At once it points out to Narayan’s archetypal attempt to tell a tale that tries to arrest the equivocal ambiguities of the human world and its seeming and supposed relations. The hesitations, whispers, febleness and impulsivity leave at once the door ‘half open’ and simultaneously ‘locked the door on the world’. Raju admits that on an impulse he gently pushed her out of the way, but the very undecidability of this pushing and stepping of where, whom, how and when made the passage a fabled philosopher’s stone to wreck havoc upon many more critics to come.

In chapter seven, Raju also admits, that he found it rather difficult to understand the girl. He found that she was gradually losing the free and easy manner of her former days. Though she still allowed Raju to make love to her of course but she was also beginning to show excessive consideration for her husband on the hill. Raju thinks that his knowledge of women being poor and restricted and he could not understand whether she was pretending and whether her present pose was a mere pretence or whether her account of all her husband's shortcomings was false, just to entice him. It is very complex and obscure and full of ambiguities. In chapter seven while Rosie was accompanying Marco in the cave which was to her a 'fierce, terrifying place', she says, "There may be cobra here," and Marco ignored her fears and says rather cynically, "You should feel at home, then" (Narayan147). The comment certainly attests Raju's mothers' fears and apprehension about Rosie. Marco manage to spell out the letter around the ancient paintings of various figures and takes them down as musical notations, but when Rosie said, "If these were about dancing, I could perhaps have tried-", (Narayan 147) he looked up sharply. The word 'dance' always stung him. Further Marco thinks dancing as 'street acrobatics' and there is no intelligence or creative in it and he also said to Rosie, "You are a woman who will go to bed with anyone that flatters your antics" (Narayan 152). Raju's mother objected Rosie staying in their house because they cannot have a dancing girl in their house and whispered to him, "She is a real snake woman, I tell you" (Narayan 154). His uncle also told in chapter eight to Rosie, "...after all, you are a dancing-girl. We do not admit them in our families" (Narayan 169). In this chapter we also see Raju's endeavor to change the name Rosie and he says, "The trouble with you is that although your people are a traditional dance family, they don't know how to call one. For our public purposes, your name must be changed" (Narayan175-176) and the present name is not a sober or sensitive name and further added that for a classical dancer she must have one name which is appealing and poetic. We have seen in this novel from the very first Raju's handling names as in case of Marco. Now Rosie the wife of Marco with whom he has made love and whom he has pushed out of her way and 'locked the door' on the world, should be a forgotten world after all the mishaps and confrontations with his mother and uncle. And thus the name should be changed and it was all to pose a more deliberate view to juxtapose somewhat authenticity and to draw a borderline between dancers of the first stage of theory at the outset and dancers of their practical steps and the narrator acknowledges that, "...with the attainment of a new name, Rosie entered a new phase of life" (Narayan176). The statement is equally equivocal as to question Narayan's ultimate purpose in transferring Rosie's water like identity that can take a shape as perhaps it pleases. But the question remains as to what purpose does it serve?

In chapter nine Rosie herself says about dancing, "Till the thought of it makes me sick... I feel like one of these parrots in a cage taken round village fairs or a performing monkey, as he used to say-". (Narayan 203) This speech broods on the theme from different angles and now we are confronted with the dancer's own view of the art in a sense of the term which ultimately exposes the equivocal and most complex duality that Narayan's art is capable to tell always with absolute and unpretending simplicity.

Unlike Rosie who had appeared on the very first of *The Guide*, Rangi the dancing women in *The Man eater of Malgudi* is a late arrival in order of sequence and appears only in chapter nine though mentioned before. Like Rosie she is careful to be responsible for turning the wheel in one passive placid Natraj, engrossed in his own happy world. Her appearance is near mystical in a midnight and when Natraj was working on printer for the poet's monosyllabic epic on Lord

Krishna. She seems to be the, ‘animated hyena’ in Natraj’s night-ridden eyes. But when the light from the treadle fell on the other side and illuminated the face of Rangī, the narration records Natraj’s response which is very symbolical and significant for the sake of the present essay, “My hair stood on end. Rangī! The woman to avoid” (Narayan 166). Earlier in chapter six at the hyena’s corner one day Shastri heard the jingling of bangles and turned to see a woman go down the steps and out of the building. Soon we came to know about Rangī from the desperate Shastri about Rangī who was a ‘notorious character’ of the town. She was the daughter of Padma, an old dancer attached to the temple of Lord Krishna. Padma was now retired being old, fat and “frightening like the harem guards of Ravana” and her daughter has succeeded her at the temple. Shastri also refers to her school life and commented that she come back in the town “after seducing all the men folk she had set eyes on” (Narayan 117). We can fairly recall Raju’s pondering in chapter five of *The Guide*, “...was she sane or insane?...did she bring all these charges against her husband at our first meeting just to seduce me? Would she be leveling various charges against me now that she seemed to be tiring of me-...” (Narayan 202). Shastri also terms Rangī the ‘worst woman’ who had ever come back to Malgudi. Like Raju, Natraj also feels attached to her in a way as he clearly admits that he felt curious to know what she would look like in the evenings-perhaps she would powder her face, the talcum floating uneasily over her ebonite skin. He also thinks that every inch of her proclaimed that she was a perfect ‘female animal.’ Is it Narayan’s formula of identifying the dancing girl by equating them with animals-the primal energy of the nature as he had done in *The Guide* by repeatedly referring and equating Rosie with the snake, even at the time of Raju’s arrest she was dancing the snake dance and the novelist did not fail to remind us that , “..she rarely chose to do it indeed” (212) and Raju remembers that she always said that a special mood was needed and he remembers as he was seeing the dance he could not possibly figure out whether it was for the first time that he was seeing it and keep on remembering his mother’s words about Rosie on the first day “A serpent girl! Be careful.” This turns the whole picture from the time present into a time eternal which is very much relevant for the present discourse on dancing women.

Natraj felt equally dragged towards Rangī, “...there was an irresistible physical attraction about her, and I was afraid that I might succumb to her charms” (167). Though he tried to impose needless sternness in his voice perhaps to guard himself for any seeming danger that he thinks awaiting from her, he could not but think very much alike Raju , “Not bad, not bad. Her breasts are billowy, like those one sees in temple sculptures. He hips are also classical” (167). This is his impulse on the dancer’s and a desperate effort to accentuate her in the domain of classical unblemished dance, the divine art. Rangī disclosed Vasu’s plan of killing the elephant to Natraj when she ran up the steps, Natraj’s reaction is very symbolical as he recounts his blood “tingled with an unholy thrill” and he led his minds glided into a “wild fantasy of seduction and passion”, even in chapter ten when she has come to him after Natraj’s shout at the temple for Vsihnu to protect the elephant and all the others taking part in the procession, he can think like that “...even in the dark I could see the emphatic curves of her body” (215) and not only that he shows his son’s response, “My son, who had stood around uneasily, feeling rather shy in the presence of a dancing woman, went away and hid himself in the kitchen” (216). Now this body of seduction can be changed into another dimension of womanhood or here the dancing women because he found her ‘irresistible’ so the narration curves a little and it should be. So she stood now on the last step “a goddess curved out of cinder.” Even Narayan in his desperate effort in accentuating Rangī to divinity, the other side of the dancing woman’s face and it goes “the

shadows cast by the low powered lamp were tricky and created a halo around her” (169) which simultaneously differentiates her from who is said to be having a kind of black halo around him, usually associated with the devilish forces of the universe. Narayan ambivalent attitude towards dancing as is expressed in *The Guide* in Raju’s heaping praise what Marco thinks as street acrobatics and perhaps Raju has not any earnest enthusiastic view about it, is repeated here again when Rangi is said to be the “most indifferent dancer in India” and “people were used to seeing her before the god and no one cared how she performed” (170). Rangi even can declare that she will be there in the procession because it is her duty as a dancer, even though Vasu wanted her not be there and declares, “...no man so far has stopped my doing what I like”(170). In chapter ten of *The Guide*, Raju had the almost same idea about Rosie “She would never stop dancing ...I know looking at the way she was going about her business, that she would munge-whether I was inside the bars or outside, whether he husband approved it or not. Neither Marco nor I had any place in her life, which had its own sustaining vitality and which she herself had underestimated all along” (222-223). The only point if difference there is that Rangi does not underestimate herself in anyway that Rosie did perhaps and because of author’s inherent dualism of narrative style forbids us clearly to pronounce that it can be said Rangi is the unsophisticated elder sister, the sequel to Rosie in a way or other.

Thus these two novels are virtually a presentation on the discourse on dancing, where the very duality on dance as a theory and the representation of dancers as the characters are veritably portrayed through these two representative women characters in Narayan’s *The Guide* and *The Man eater of Malgudi*, in which the novelist’s ambivalent mode of narration certainly plays it role in enriching the text. Further these two texts can also be seen as a specific commentary of Narayan on dancing and its related identities that are prone to melt and be melted by different emerging issues in between down from the Vedic period to India after the colonialism. Marco’s simultaneous abhorrence on Rosie as a dancing girl and his academic interest on musical notations and dancing sculpture, Raju’s ambivalent attitude on the reciprocal identity of Rosie as a woman and a dancer as well as dance as an aesthetic art attest that aptly.

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