

CHARACTER OF RAJU IN THE GUIDE

*** INTRODUCTION:** R. K. Narayan is a great writer of characters. He is praised for his art of characterization. He creates his characters with great consideration and significance. His characters are based on the psychological treatment. All his characters are real and life like. Thus his characters are immortal characters.

***RAJU AS THE CENTRAL FIGURE:** Raju is the central figure in the novel 'The Guide'. The whole theme revolves round him. He dominates from the beginning to the end of this novel. He is the only source of all incidents and events in it. He appears before us in various forms before us as- a railway guide, Railway Raju, a hermit, a lover, a fraud and a criminal. Thus the novelist has named this novel after him. It is Raju who is the guide.

*** RAJU AS A COMPLEX CHARACTER:** Narayan's characters may be divided into three groups- simple characters, complex characters and minor characters. Raju belongs to the group of complex characters. It is very difficult to understand his character. He is dynamic, intelligent and shrewd. In him we find the craftiness, dishonesty and credulity of Margayya, the flashy bombast of Mr. Sampath, the adventurousness of Mali, the romantic excess of Sitaram and the mystical learning of Chandran. In short, Raju is one of the most complex characters of Narayan.

***RAJU AS A GUIDE:** As a guide Raju gets great fame. He becomes popular as Railway Raju. The tourists are impressed by him. He is a guide with spiritual touch. In fact, everything in Raju's life takes place by chance. In the beginning Raju acts as a tourist guide. Then he becomes guide of Rosie and at last he becomes Swami who guides the villagers. In this way Raju has always been a guide.

*** RAJU AS A LOVER:** Raju is a great lover in the novel. When he first sees Rosie at Malgudi Railway Station, he at once falls in love with her. He at once agrees to fulfil her desire to see the dance of king cobra. As a lover he wins her heart. He regularly seduces her by flattering and paying her bold compliments. He does not hesitate even in establishing sexual relationship with Rosie. As a lover Raju is bold and sincere also. When Rosie's husband turns her out of the house, Raju gives her shelter against his mother's desire. He sets Rosie as a great dancer. In short, Raju is a complex character.

*** RAJU AS A PRISONER:** AS a prisoner Raju proves himself as a model prisoner. His reputation in the jail is special. He developed good relations with the other prisoners. His high sounding talk gave him the title of Ustad. He would impress even the dangerous criminals who listened to him with great respect. He even impressed the jail superintendent who employed him his personal servant. He enjoyed jail life fully. He became sad when the day of his release came.

***RAJU AS A SWAMI:** Raju's role as a Swami is very dramatic. After coming out of jail, he has no arrangement of food and lodging. Listening to the remark of the barber, he decides to play the role of a Swami. By chance he gets recognition and popularity as a Swami. In this way his main problem of food and shelter comes to an end. All went well for some years. But circumstances compelled him to perform fast. Due to this fast Raju grows weak and at last he sinks in the river. Thus final and crucial phase of the novel shows how the outer fit becomes the inner one, how the manner turns into identity.

*** CONCLUSION:** Thus Raju is a very interesting and moving character. He is really very complex. It is he who is the hero of this novel .