

Early Twentieth-Century Fiction

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December 5, 2025. Faulkner, concluded; Narayan; Anand (1).

review: Faulkner's endings

- ▶ comic, ironic, tragic: all?
- ▶ Dewey Dell doesn't solve her problem, but she's no fool
- ▶ Anse is *really* no fool
- ▶ poor Darl

[Cash:] Sometimes I aint so sho who's got ere a right to say when a man is crazy and when he aint. Sometimes I think it aint none of us pure crazy and aint none of us pure sane until the balance of us talks him that-a-way. (233)

uneven development: “simple natural”

I simply imagined a group of people and subjected them to the simple universal natural catastrophes which are flood and fire with a simple natural motive to give direction to their progress.

Faulkner, interviewed by Jean Stein, *Paris Review* 12 (Spring 1956).

uneven development: drowned mules and portable music

[Moseley:] "We're doing the best we can," the father said. Then he told a long tale about how they had to wait for the wagon to come back and how the bridge was washed away and how they went eight miles to another bridge and it was gone too so they came back and swum the ford and the mules got drowned and how they got another team and found that the road was washed out and they had to come clean around by Mottson, and then the one with the cement came back and told him to shut up. (204)

[Cash:] I dont know if a little music aint about the nicest thing a fellow can have....I have seen them that shuts up like a hand-grip, with a handle and all, so a fellow can carry it with him wherever he wants. (259)

what we don't see

[Vardaman:] Jewel was lying on his face. His back was red. Dewey Dell put the medicine on it. The medicine was made out of butter and soot, to draw out the fire. Then his back was black. (224)

[Darl:] When we pass the negroes their heads turn suddenly with that expression of shock and instinctive outrage. "Great God," one says; "what they got in that wagon?"

Jewel whirls. "Son of a bitches," he says....It is as though Jewel had gone blind for the moment, for it is the white man toward whom he whirls. (229)

"Thinks because he's a goddamn town fellow," Jewel says. (229)

We mount again while the heads turn with that expression which we know; save Jewel. (231)

around the world

To see literature through the mirror of nation, time and people is to diminish it, not see it fully. If we understand that in literature the universal man (*vishva-manav*) expresses himself, then we can perceive what is truly worthy of observing in literature.

World literature [*viśva-sāhitya*] is not merely the sum of your writings, plus my writing, plus his writings. We generally see literature in this limited, provincial manner. To free oneself of that regional narrowness and resolve to see the universal being in world literature, to apprehend such totality in every writer's work, and to see its interconnectedness with every man's attempt at self-expression—that is the objective we need to pledge ourselves to.

Rabindranath Tagore, "Visva Sahitya" (1907), trans. Rijula Das and Makarand R. Paranjape, in *Rabindranath Tagore in the 21st Century*, ed. Debashish Banerji (New Delhi: Springer India, 2015), 286, 288.

another rainy day

- 1906 RK Narayan b. Madras (Chennai); father a school headmaster
educated in English and Tamil; fails English exam
- 1930 B.A. in English, Maharaja College, Mysore
"A Night of Cyclone," *The Hindu* (Madras)
- 1935 *Swami and Friends* (London: Hamish Hamilton) thanks to Graham Greene
- 1942 founds Indian Thought Publications, Mysore
- 1943 *Malgudi Days* (Indian Thought): stories
many more novels and story collections
- 2001 d.
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- How does Narayan's storm compare to Faulkner's?

whose words?

- ▶ Describe some aspects of the novel's relationship to Standard English in its narrative language. Compare this to Bakha's relationship to Standard English. Generalize later. Find specific examples first.

audiences

for the sake of what he called 'fashun' (4)

"throw away that blanket of the *gora* (white man)" (4)

So proud of his izzat!* *Prestige. (6 and n.)

languages of envy and scorn

He remembered so well the Tommies' familiar abuse of the natives: 'Kala admi zamin par hagne wala' (black man, you who relieve yourself on the ground).... They were, however, sahibs. Whatever they did was 'fashun'. (12)

'You are becoming a gentreman, ohe Bakhya! Where did you get that uniform?' (10)

SAHIB, s. The title by which, all over India, European gentlemen, and it may be said Europeans generally, are addressed, and spoken of, when no disrespect is intended, by natives....In other Hind. use the word is equivalent to 'Master'.... The word is Arabic, and originally means 'a companion'.

Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases (1903), s.v. "sahib," dsal.uchicago.edu. In Hindi the word is sāhab. The British say "sahb" or "SAH-hib."

globalizing English: a political context

1857	Sepoy Rebellion ("Mutiny") and direct rule
1885	First meeting of Indian National Congress
1905	Partition of Bengal
1917	"Padmini," "Vasantika," <i>Indian Ladies' Magazine</i>
1919	Rowlatt Acts; Amritsar massacre
1920	Gandhi's first non-cooperation movement
1930	Narayan, "A Night of Cyclone," <i>The Hindu</i>
1932	Poona Pact between Gandhi and Ambedkar
1935	Government of India Act
	Popular Front program of the 3rd International
	Anand, <i>Untouchable</i> (London: Wishart)
1942	Quit India movement
1947	Independence and Partition

next

- ▶ Anand through 102
- ▶ Rao, "The Cow of the Barricades" (print it out)