

Anglophone Short Stories

A Horse and Two Goats by R.K. NARAYAN



Positive Effects of Colonization

- Industrial and technological revolution, the birth of modernity, science and democracy
- Development of public health systems
- Modern scientific method, ideas, language and religious ideas and a combination of technical and literary excellence
- ENI included was first in many ways including the above



Colonial India

Indian culture before that the traditional ones did. Its great epic were composed before the year A.D. 200, and magnificent art and literature were created in the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. Beginning in the 16th century, Muslim rulers established and developed the Mughal empires, and for the next several hundred years a series of Muslim kingdoms controlled what is now called the Indian subcontinent. European powers also competing for the control of India. In 1857, India became subject to British rule. The British, Africa, India and the Middle East were governed by a single ministry from another country as it is done. When British colony in 1947, when a long campaign of independence led to the independence of India. The British Government was guided by various and religious intolerance. India was divided by the Muslim League presented Britain to return control of the country to its own people. India was divided into two separate nations, India, a secular state, and Pakistan. The late 1940s were marked with great violence and eventually war between Muslims and Hindus. This is the world from which Narayan was writing in the 1950s was both rich in tradition and legend and new struggling for identity.

In this class

- Colonization and India
- Hinduism and The Caste System
- R.K. NARAYAN
- A Horse and Two Goats
- Summary
- Title
- Characters
- Themes
- Style
- Motif



Anglophone Short Stories

A Horse and Two Goats by R.K. NARAYAN



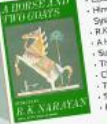
Positive Effects of Colonization

- Introduction of modern medicine and sanitation
- Introduction of public health measures
- A number of modern institutions, such as schools and hospitals, were introduced
- Introduction of modern agriculture and industry
- Introduction of modern transportation and communication



In this class

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- *A Horse and Two Goats*
- R.K. NARAYAN
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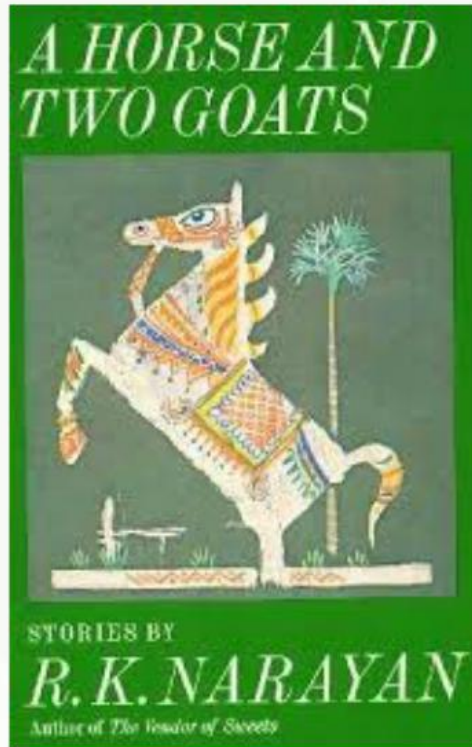


Colonial India

Indian culture is more than five thousand years old. Its great epics were composed before the year A.D. 2000, and magnificent art and architecture were created in the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. Beginning in the 16th century, modern nations claimed the land and resources of the British Empire, and for the next several hundred years, a series of modern nations controlled what is now called British India. In 1947, India became an independent nation. Like South Africa, India found themselves governed by a white majority from 1947 until 1994. In 1994, the Indian government was established and the white majority was removed. India continued to be a British colony until 1947, when a long campaign of peaceful civil disobedience led by Mahatma Gandhi persuaded Britain to return control of the country to its own people. India was divided into two separate nations: India and Pakistan. The late 1940s were marked by great violence and even today are between Muslims and Hindus. Thus, the world story which Narayan was writing in the 1950s was linked with a tradition and legend and now struggling for identity.



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Positive Effects of Colonialism

- Railroads and transportation enabled India to develop a modern economy and connected regions.
- Sanitation and public health improved.
- A modern communication lines, dams, bridges, and irrigation canals were constructed.
- Schools and colleges were founded, and literacy increased.
- End to local warfare among competing local rulers.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS FOR INDIA

- British held most of the political and economic power.
- Profitable industries such as cotton, salt, construction, tea, etc. were firmly controlled by the British.
- Loss of cultural practices and language.
- Divisions between Anglicized elites and traditional Indians.
- Humiliation of being "inferior" in one's own home.



What is the importance of the title?

A Horse and Two Goats

The title indicates that the story is about animals or these animal names have symbolic meanings in the text. Although a horse may symbolize strength, noble qualities, war and victory, two goats may stand for ignorance and survival in a poor, overfished, rural area.

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Hinduism

- Hinduism is a religion that began in India.
- The religion dates back to 1500 B.C. making it the worlds oldest religion.
- There are 750 million Hindus in the world today.

Hindu Beliefs

- Hindus believe in a single Divinity or supreme God that is present in everything called Brahman.
- They also believe in the aspects of God such as Shiva, Shakti, and Ganesh.

Hindu Duties

Each Hindu has 4 daily duties:

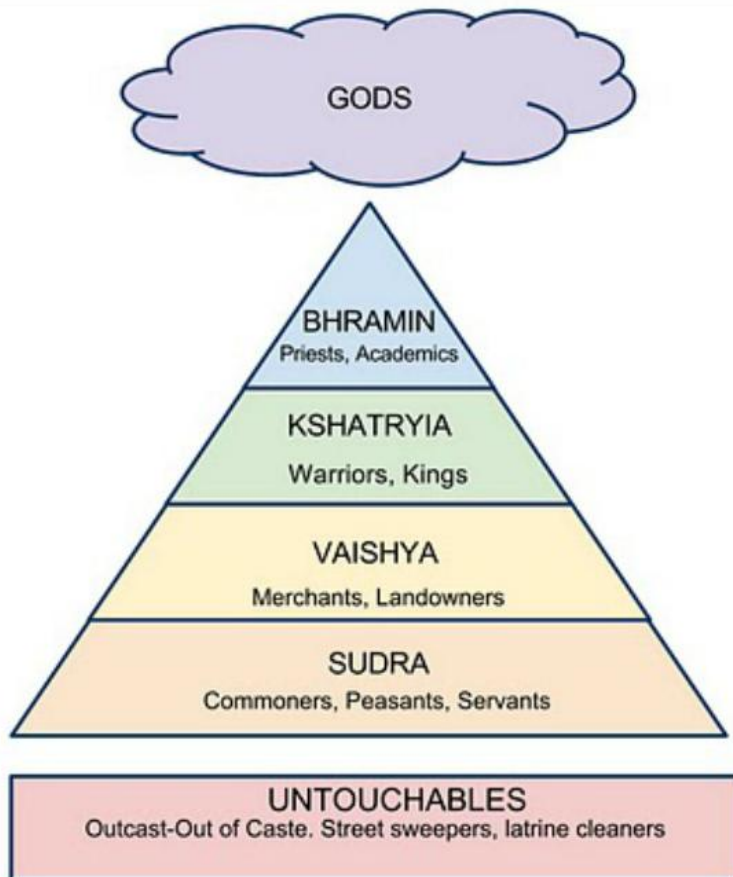
- Revere the deities
- Respect ancestors
- Respect all beings
- Honor all humankind



Indian Caste System

Definition:

A type of social organization/hierarchy in which a person's occupation and position in life is determined by the circumstances of his birth.



- Rigid, **hereditary membership** into birth caste
- **Marriage** only among member of same caste
- **Occupation** choices restricted
- **Personal contact** with other castes restricted
- Acceptance of **fixed place in society**



Rasipuram Krishnaswami NARAYAN

A Horse and Two Goats was written by R.K. Narayan and published in 1970 . R.K Narayan was born in 1906 in Chennai, India during the British Empire. He died in 2001 at the age of 94. R.K Narayan has written a wide range of other short stories that include *Malgudi Days*, *Under the Banyan Tree and Others*, *the Grandmothers Tale* and *Selected Stories and Others*. He has also written many novels of fiction and non-fiction. Narayan has also written stories of mythology, about the Indian gods. Most of Narayan's work, starting with his first novel *Swami and Friends* (1935), captures many Indian traits while retaining a unique identity of its own. He was sometimes compared to the American writer William Faulkner, whose novels were also grounded in a compassionate humanism and celebrated the humour and energy of ordinary life. Along with two other writers, R.K Narayan is a leading figure of the early Indian literature in English.

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Setting

Of the seven hundred thousand villages dotting the map of India, in which the majority of India's five hundred million live, flourish and die, **Kritham** was probably **the tiniest**, indicated on the district survey map by **a microscopic dot**, the map being meant more for the revenue official out to collect tax than for the guidance of the motorist, who in any case could not hope to reach it since it sprawled **far from the highway** at the end of a rough track furrowed up by the iron-hooped wheels of **bullock carts**. But its size did not prevent its giving itself the grandiose name Kritham, which meant in **Tamil 'coronet'** or **'crown'** on the brow of this subcontinent.

The story is set in Kritham ,a fictional Indian village. It is described to be incredibly tiny and poorly built town. The use of words and phrases such as 'microscopic', 'far from highway', and 'tiny' highlight the town's rural and deserted nature.

Also, the author uses a long sentence to create an effect of distance when describing the town and its location to the reader. Therefore, he is able to point out how far from (modern) civilization this village is by means of a long the sentence including adjectives highlighting its size.



MUNI

Muni, an old and desperately poor man, is the protagonist of the story. Once he was prosperous, with a large flock of sheep, but a series of misfortunes have left him with only two scrawny goats. He and his wife have almost no income and no children to help take care of them. Every day, Muni takes the goats out to graze on the scarce grass outside of town, while his wife pulls something together for an evening meal. As he watches the goats from the shade of a large statue, he remembers his younger days when the work was hard but there was enough to eat, when he could not attend school because he was not of the right caste, and when he imagined that he would one day have children. Like many poor and struggling people, he fears authority figures.



American Tourist

The man comes riding into the story in a yellow station wagon. He is a businessman who works in New York as a coffee merchant. He is dressed in the khaki clothing worn by American tourists in the tropics. He speaks only English, but is surprised and a little annoyed to find that Muni can speak only Tamil, and although he is in the tiniest village in India, he expects to find a gas station and English-speaking goatherds. Once he sees the statue of the horse, he must own it for his living room, with no thought for what the statue might mean or who might value it. Even when he can't speak the language, he knows that money talks.

The Wife

Muni's wife has spent some sixty years with him (neither of them is sure about their ages), through prosperity and poverty. Although she is gruff with him now, she is willing to indulge his request for a special meal. She works as hard as he does, or harder, getting up at dawn to fix his morning meal, and taking odd jobs at the Big House when their stores are low. But poverty has worn her down: her first reaction when she sees the hundred rupees is to accuse Muni of stealing.

Culture Clash

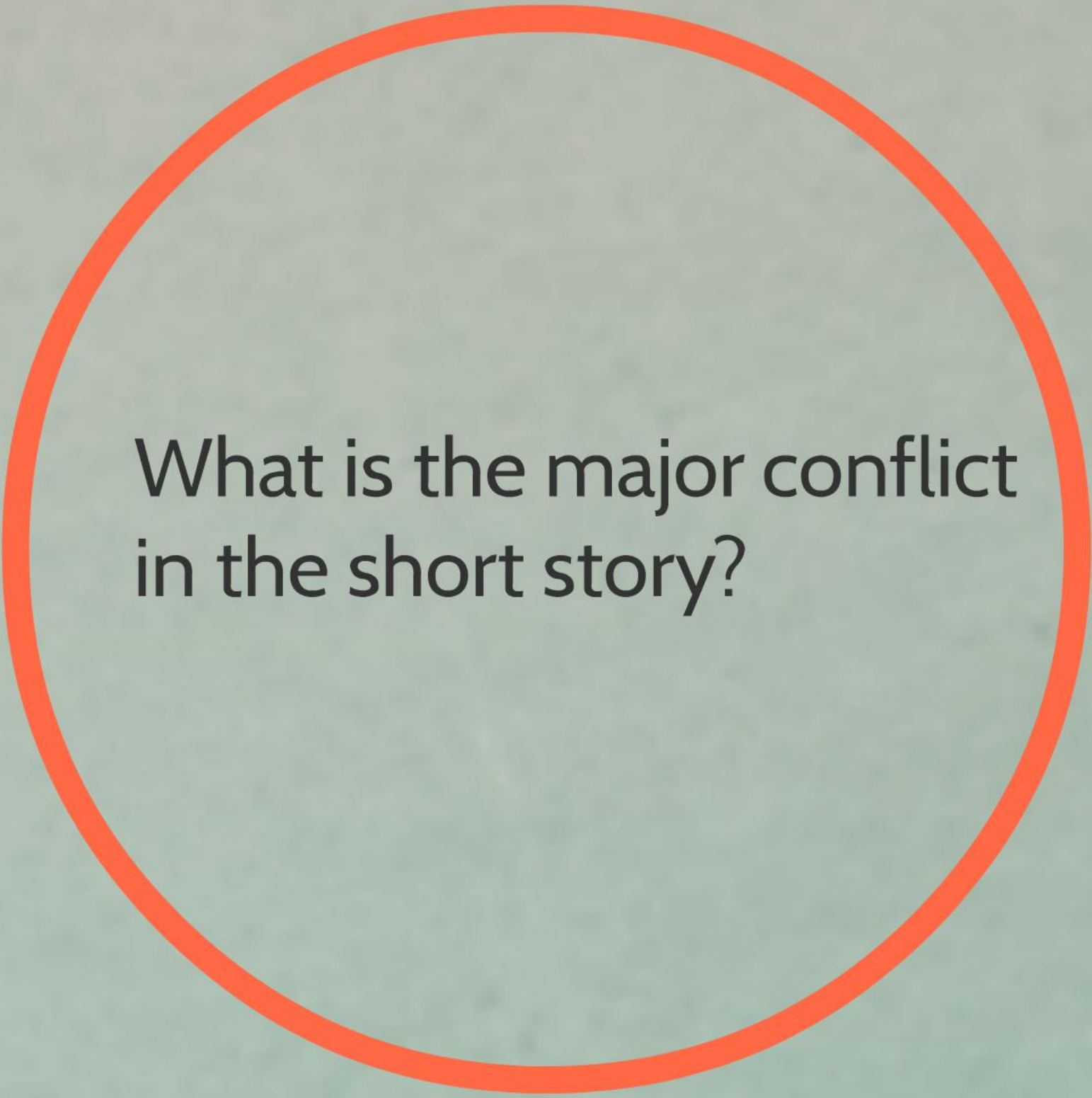
The most important theme in “A Horse and Two Goats,” and in fact the central theme of Narayan’s work, is the clash of cultures, specifically the clash of Indian and Western cultures. Using humor instead of anger, Narayan demonstrates just how far apart the two worlds are: the two cultures exist in the same time and space, but literally and metaphorically speak different languages. The two main characters in this story couldn’t be more different: Muni is poor, rural, uneducated, Hindu, brown; the American is wealthy, urban, educated, probably Judeo-Christian, white. As a good Hindu, Muni calmly accepts the hand that fate has dealt him, while the American is willing and able to take drastic and sudden action to change his life (for example, flying off to India, or throwing away his return plane ticket to transport a horse statue home on a ship). Each man is quite ignorant of the other’s way of life.

Wealth and Poverty

Although they have little in common, the most important way in which Muni and the American differ is in their respective level of wealth. Narayan takes great pains in the opening of the story to show how desperately poor Muni is, and to emphasize that even in his time of “prosperity” his standard of living was still greatly below that of most Americans. The American takes for granted his relative wealth and seems unaware of the difference between Muni and himself. He casually offers cigarettes to a man who has never seen one, complains about four hours without air conditioning to a man who has never had electricity, brags about enjoying manual labor as a Sunday hobby to a man who grew up working in the fields from morning until night, and without a thought gives Muni enough money to open a business. He is not trying to show off; he simply accepts his wealth as his right. His very casualness emphasizes the gap between them. Narayan in no way condemns the man for being wealthy, or for not stepping in to aid the poor Muni, but he wants the two men and their relative wealth to be clear, so the reader can evaluate the relationship between wealth and worth.

Education and Ignorance

“A Horse and Two Goats” explores the different ways that a person can be educated. Muni, who grew up a member of a lower caste at a time when only the Brahmin, the highest caste, could attend school, has had no formal education. He has not traveled beyond his village, and he likes to watch trucks and buses go by on the highway a few miles away so that he can have “a sense of belonging to a larger world.” He does not even know his own age. He does, however, have an impressive amount of knowledge of the two major texts of his literary heritage, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, which he has learned by acting in plays and by listening to speakers at the temple. He knows the stories, and he is able to mine them for truth and wisdom when he needs them.



What is the major conflict
in the short story?

Lack of Communication

Lack of communication is the major conflict in the story because both of the characters don't know the language of each other. Instead Muni who is scared of the American tourist's khaki uniform continues speaking Tamil. Also the American tourist goes on speaking English. He supposes that they may communicate by gestures and mimics.

On the other hand the American tourist, who is fascinated by the beauty of the horse statue, considers that it belongs to Muni. Although they do not understand each other, they continue speaking. Muni talks about his village, Indian culture, Hinduism, Indian epics and the meaning of the horse statue about he and his family. On the other hand, American tourist mentions his occupation, hobbies and how he will bring the horse statue to the USA and put it in his living room.

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Symbols:
A Horse Statue



Khaki Colour



Narrator's Description: (Realistic)

The horse was nearly life-size, moulded of clay, baked, burnt, and brightly coloured, and reared its head proudly, prancing its forelegs in the air and flourishing its tail in a loop; beside the horse stood a warrior with scythe-like mustachios, bulging eyes, aquiline nose.

Muni's view: (Religious)

This is our guardian, it means death to our adversaries. At the end of Kali Yuga, this world and other worlds will be destroyed, and the Redeemer will come in the shape of a horse called Kalki; this horse will come to life and gallop and trample down all bad man.

American Tourist's View: (Materialistic)

I assure you that this will have the best home in the USA. I'll push away the bookcase, you know I love books and am a member of five book clubs, and the choice and bonus volumes really mount up to a pile in our living-room, as high as this horse itself.(...) **I'm going to keep him right in the middle of the room. I don't see how that can interfere with the party- we'll stand around him and have our drinks.**

The red-faced man wore khaki clothes- evidently a policeman or a soldier. Muni said to himself, 'He will chase or shoot if I start running. Sometimes dogs chase only those who run-O Shiva protect me.

Beware of Khaki, one part of his mind warned. Take all the cigarettes or bhang or whatever is offered, but don't get caught. Beware of khaki.

- Colonial Oppression
- Punishment
- Discipline
- Order

Style

The writer uses different language techniques to show the contrast between the two characters. The use of tone that the writer uses is very formal and is shown through the phrases used when the narrator, which is in third person, is describing the thoughts Muni and the American are thinking. The formal tone that the author uses highlights Muni's age. Because he is so old, he speaks in a formal, old-fashioned way, which is the way the story is narrated. The author also uses lengthy sentences to show the length of time that passes and create the effect of an ordinary day in a small village.

The narrator of the story is 3rd person, yet is not judgemental in any way. The story is narrated in detail with much problematic dialogues used to highlight the differences. Though told in English, we read of two men talking in different languages and coming to a mutually beneficial agreement with no understanding of what either is talking about.

Discuss the differences between American and Indian culture by considering the symbols in A Horse and Two Goats by R.K. Narayan.

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A Horse and Two Goats by R.K. NARAYAN



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- Introduction of modern medicine and sanitation
- Introduction of public health measures
- A number of modern institutions, such as schools and hospitals, were established
- Introduction of modern agriculture, industry, and commerce
- Introduction of modern transportation and communication



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- Colonization and India
- *Hind Swaraj* and *The God of Small Things*
- R.K. NARAYAN
- *A Horse and Two Goats*
- Summary
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- Characters
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- Movie

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