

## INDIAN LITERARY CREATIONS IN ENGLISH: THE VISTAS OF A TRUTH SEEKER'S JOURNEY

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Indian traditions and ways of life are very ancient and home to the earliest civilizations. This land has contributed to the field of literature, mysticism and philosophy significantly. The ancient four Vedas are the perennial storehouses of eternal knowledge. Literature has a deep relationship with the tenets of mythology, history, culture and philosophy. There is one perspective that when history becomes too antique to count the number of years, it becomes mythology. The Indian mythology has given the division of perpetual time in the form of Yugas (epochs). Satyuga, Treta, Dwyapar and Kaliyuga are the four Yugas that are spokes of the wheel of time. At one time, one Yuga is dominating with its peculiar qualities. The estimated period of each Yuga is in hundred thousand of years. Each Yuga has its avataar (incarnation of God) for the eradication of the evils and establishment of the dharma (righteousness). Lord Rama and Lord Krishna are revered as the incarnations of God in the Yugas of Treta and Dwyapar respectively, who had their predestined divine functions for the welfare of the exploited and downtrodden people.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Vedanta, Braham, Atman, Self and Realization*

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is an incredible bond between the mythical figures of God and the concept of Ultimate Reality in the Indian context. In Indian mythology, The Supreme Being is regarded in three forms of *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Shiva* as One. These three forms are not considered different entities. Rather, they are being worshipped by the Indians as manifestations of the Ultimate Reality. On the other hand, the Vedanta philosophy believes in Braham, the Imperceptible Reality beyond the realm of senses. However, these mythical elements and abstract theories are not contradictory but complementary to each other in the spiritual practices. The realization of Vedanta's *Braham* is the end of the spiritual journey, whereas, faith in religious convictions and worship of idols is the commencement of the divine mission. The critics and researchers of history may deny the physical existence of these revered figures in the times gone, but in Indian mindset and literature, they are persistently surviving and guiding the human beings for ultimate realization. *Rama*, *Ravana*, *Krishna*, *Arjuna*, *Savithri* and *Radha* are those mythical emblems, which have embellished the structure of Indian Writings in English. Philosophy has always remained an abstract subject, and it is better understood when practiced in life. Similarly, the Vedanta philosophy does not advocate the theoretical knowledge, rather it believes in the application of those principles in human life.

An effort has been made to observe the life of people coloured by mythology and enlightened by philosophy. The various happenings and characters of the novels of Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan substantiate the existence of mythical elements and Vedanta philosophy in the texture of their works. During the investigation, one identifies himself with various characters of the novels. It may be Ramaswamy or Krishna or even an old person Jagan; the reader visualises them as his different forms of his gone and forthcoming stages of life. The purpose of literary creativity and research is to make the human beings aware of their real sense and fetch them out from the superimposed sorrows. In the absence of literary studies, the contemporary man of the twenty-first century is heading towards becoming a money-storing and money-disbursing machine. The awareness of our rich cultural heritage, legends, mythology and philosophy makes us internally more mature. The so-called contemporary and postmodern mindset cannot cancel out the precious values as obsolete and worthless. The existence of the Ultimate is evident before us, and He is doing marvels in the realms of nature and universe. The need is only to cleanse the mirror of our mind to have that spiritual reflection which will illuminate the dark and depressed life of the modern man with eternal bliss.

The great Indian authors Raja Rao and R.K. Narayan have managed to maintain the mythical and philosophical elements in their works, which have undeniably enhanced the worth of Indian literary traditions. Creatively employing different myths and by identifying similarities between the contemporary and antique, Raja Rao has accomplished in conveying the principle of the spiritual expedition for surpassing the normal levels to attain the transcendental bliss.

Raja Rao's novels are acutely absorbed in philosophy, and the writer noticeably has chosen the way of creative writing to convey the spiritual understanding. Rao gradually constructs the holy precincts choosing India as the key backdrop. Traditions, legends, mythology, philosophical values and the contemporary social and political circumstances of his motherland make the ground of his novels. The mechanism of original writing colour and augment his commitment. Mythical elements and philosophical narrative cannot be observed in separation. They are firmly connected to each other. Rao feels that the Indian work of fiction might not subsist in an insignificant emptiness. Therefore, he has intermingled Indian mythology and philosophy within a fantastic structure, and the genre of fiction provides the function of beautifying a challenging and theoretical subject.

Literature and philosophy are harmonising factors to each other. If Raja Rao had preferred to progress with his spiritual practice in the conservative way, then the novels would have been nominated merely as intellectual discourses and not the fictional constructions. The philosophical standards are composed within a story bound configuration consisting of legends, reflective ideas and mysterious protagonists. Rao's approach is distinctive as he attempts to intertwine the Vedanta philosophy, mythology and religious convictions with mundane existence simultaneously.

Raja Rao is a scholar surviving in his secretive domain of spiritual principles. He is a real seeker having the quest for realisation, and his entire work of fiction draws his spiritual progress. The spiritualism is no mere compilation of expressions, but the progression of escalation within self to achieve the state of unification with *Braham*. The spiritual pilgrimage is incomparable, and a pilgrim takes a long time to arrive at a signpost. This quest is a cognizant and focused individual progress, which concludes in the discovery of the Impersonal One. For an Indian author like Raja Rao, fiction is not only a mode of journeying into societal realism. Rather, it turns out to be a standard to communicate an abstract element outside and exceeding material subsistence. Rao has admitted that his novels are silent, profoundly private and philosophical deliberations.

Raja Rao initiated his literary profession with the novel *Kanthapura*. The novel discovers the most important theme of Vedanta philosophy - the quest for self. The novelist has used the Indian freedom struggle as an objective correlative, and the premise of this book and the destiny of the villagers of Kanthapura establish the fortune of the successive characters of Rao as well. The multifaceted resistance gives out a rhythmic pattern in the subsequent works of fiction since this experience lies beneath the fundamental clash of succeeding heroes. The protagonists struggle psychosomatic combats in their illusory realms for the achievement of their levels of certainty. The great efforts of the villagers of Kanthapura are no everyday dissensions or social conflict. Their collective give up, and triumph is promoted to the height of a revolt for independence flouncing throughout the whole nation. The search life essence in *Kanthapura* is personal in addition to combined success. The novel echoes a forceful and combined attempt to achieve triumph above physical components.

Vedanta philosophy propounds the notions of *Karma Yoga*. The book substantiates this idea and draws attention to the beginning phase in Rao's spiritual voyage. The protagonists of his novels are not other than Rao's manifestations in different stages. It may be Moorthy, Ramaswamy or Ramakrishna Pai of his three novels; Rao infuses his intentions into the protagonists who pursue the course to eliminate wickedness. In *Kanthapura*, Moorthy becomes the village-leader, and the masses captivated by his personality follow him blindly. The victory against the British forces develops into a corresponding characteristic in the confrontation of good and wicked elements. The sensitivity of satisfaction is symbolically the first footstep in the stride towards renaissance and current phase of existence. For the protagonist Moorthy, this attempt is converted into a mode of the discovery of self through an unyielding in domination over the distractions of false ego. Rao's first novel *Kanthapura* provides a manifestation for his later works of fiction.

Raja Rao's subsequent significant novel *The Serpent and the Rope* is based entirely on the *Advaita* Vedanta philosophy. In reality, the novel is an elucidation of the author's in the form of his protagonist's quest for the self and the progress as a spiritual pilgrim. The protagonist has traversed the corridor of good deeds and reached the stage of *Aatam gyaan*. Raja Rao's work of fiction, *The Serpent and the Rope* is a detection of the implications of the path of perpetual comprehension (*Brahamgyaan Marag*) which requires absolute dedication, acquiescence and commitment. In the absence of these fundamentals, the seeker is unable to realise the ultimate stage of *Brahamgyaan* (Supreme Knowledge). It is a crucial phase in the journey of the seeker since he recognises the essential questions of subsistence and real self during this juncture of his spiritual practice. The novel turns out to be a milestone in Rao's spiritual expedition. The seeker achieves discernment and understands the inevitability of a guide who could explicate the obscurities of human existence. Therefore, Ramaswamy, the hero commences a serious exploration for a real guru. In the novel, the essential doctrines of Indian philosophy like *Maya*, the *Shakti*, *Braham*, *Jivatama* and *Moksha* are explored. The novel symbolises the strength and connotation of Indian traditions and philosophy.

Raja Rao unlike R.K. Narayan has overtly used and proclaimed the dogmas of Vedanta philosophy in his novels. During this research work, it has been observed that a subterranean flow of philosophy is revealed in the novels of R.K. Narayan, Rao's espousal of Vedanta is apparent and striking. Narayan at various places refused to conscious application of Vedantic elements in his novels, whereas Rao promulgates his novels as the manifested stages of his spiritual progress by following the philosophical canons in his life. When we draw a comparison between these two writers, then it has emerged that both are in search for life essence but working on different echelons. One's domain is a conscious level of mind, and the other is functioning at the subconscious stratum. However, in the realm of spirit, both are acceptable and appreciable.

Raja Rao's next novel *The Cat and Shakespeare* accentuates the significance and inevitability of willing submission to the will of the Almighty. This principle is diligently incorporated into the structure of the narrative. The novel is almost entrenched in the devotion path of Vedanta philosophy as propounded by Ramanuja. This novel has revealed the importance of a guru, the intermediary to show the seeker the course of reality. Ramakrishna Pai has acknowledged the transience and nothingness of *Maya* and searches for assistance from an open-minded person like Govindan Nair. The relationship and profound acquaintance between the two permits the seeker to achieve his desired objective. The outstanding cryptograms of the novel are deeply evocative. Rao's decision to put down three hundred clean and plain pages at the conclusion of this novel is liberated to new perspectives and different elucidations. The blank pages may submit the particular verve of sensed occurrences that Raja Rao deems, are away from articulation and required large domain for its elucidation.

Raja Rao has utilised different outlines and techniques in his original fictional inscription. The new techniques in his works give him the thrust to accomplish his quest for self. In *Kanthapura*, Rao has utilised verbal practice. The raconteur is an uneducated aged female who scours the tale of her village from her reminiscence in a voluble manner. Her portrayal is straightforward, uncontrived, garrulous, and in total consonance with her intellectual position. The recitation gushes continuously. Rao utilises the ancient Puranic practice in his novels *Kanthapura* and *The Serpent and the Rope*. He proclaims:

"I like the Puranic conception. That is the only understanding of the novel for me. I don't want to compare my novel with any foreign novel. I am very much an Indian and the Indian form is the Puranic form."

The *Purana* is an ancient Indian type of creative writing that integrates mythology, philosophy, faith and understanding about spiritual and celestial subsistence. It encompasses legends, myths and great lyrical portrayal of space and life. Some *Puranas* have a description of sacred areas and a mythical account filled with numerous chapters. In the life of characters, religious conviction is the fundamental strength of deeds. In *Kanthapura*, Kenchamma (the deity of the village) directs the existence of the inhabitants and shields them from misfortunes.

Raja Rao's *The Serpent and the Rope* demonstrates a *Puranic* description method. Ramaswamy, a thoughtful young scholar, narrates the poignant and fluctuating account of his years. The novel is an evidence of the protagonist's search for emancipation and his progress as a spiritual pilgrim. The novel combines mythology with philosophy and religious conviction. The novel promulgates the Vedanta by the condensed aphorisms from the *Upanishads*.

Although the storyline of Rao's *The Cat and Shakespeare* seems mysterious and ambiguous, nonetheless an extensive evaluation divulges the secreted philosophy of Vedanta and condensed composition. Rao leaves the usual style by formulating his clandestine pictograms. As a result, different implications proliferate in the novel, and the gist transpires to be vague and intangible. Raja Rao has endowed the expressions similar to the cat, Shakespeare, house and ration shop with the stratum of secretive connections. Rao has been able to commune his unusual connotations and philosophical substance through correlations, propositions and perceptibly different notions. It is this, which makes Rao ambiguous. *The Cat and Shakespeare* is entitled as a metaphysical comedy since it has sober utterances of devotional practice merged with sketches of mirth. This novel emerges as a thoughtful parable with relevant and extraneous elements along with facts and flights of the imagination interspersed in the structure.

For Raja Rao, literature writing is a method of imploring before the divinity, and the characters embody a component of his self. He declares:

“Ramaswamy is me; Rama Moorthy is myself; Ramakrishna Pai is myself. The authors, some authors, I would say, write autobiographically. So each one is an aspect of myself. I don't think you can say- this is me, this is not me”.

The protagonists of Raja Rao's novels are manifestations of his spiritual pilgrimage and move in line with the requirements of the writer. The character's efforts, predicaments, preferences and understanding indicate the author's struggle to accomplish spiritual aspirations and clarify the doubts of spiritual implications. The religious practice of a human being is an exceptionally delicate implementation. Rao's themes are very abstract, and its description in fiction is similarly complicated. The protagonists bear the weight of Rao's philosophical leanings. They provide important stopovers managing the flounce of the novelist's inventive and religious revelation. Rao's range of thoughts is enormous, and the themes are subtle.

Raja Rao's characters are replicas of classics. They appear as growing and rising discernments from the consciousness of the author. They emerge as the progression of deliberation rather than a human creature. Rao's first protagonist Moorthy demonstrates personal intellectual escalation and development of thinker's receptivity. Moorthy exemplifies a position of virtuousness and transparency of spirit, which desires for emancipation from the oppression of this worldly sphere of distress. He is a prototype, often equated with Mahatma Gandhi. The natives of Kanthapura admire him as the home Mahatma and pursue his directives until the ending of the novel. For the innocent villagers, he is an incarnation of the divinity.

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