
RAJA RAO'S THE CAT AND SHAKESPEARE: VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract:

The Vedas are considered as the earliest document in the Indian tradition. The name Veda that means knowledge. Veda is the base of all dharma, philosophy, culture, and element of Hinduism. The main purpose of studying Vedanta is Moksha (Freedom from this cycle of the birth and death). Vedanta offers an intense and transformative approach to spirituality that can be attractive to those who are seeking and deeper understanding of the nature of reality and its place within it. In this novel cat represent the Hindu concept (Notion) of Karma and Indian philosophy, ideally blames with the western thoughts. It also blends with Vedantian concepts that Mukti or salvation is not possible without competent Guru who shows the right way. Raja Rao's assertion that the influence of ancient Indian epic, such as Ramayana and Mahabharata and the Indian tradition and wisdom. Dr. K. Ratna Shiela Mani writes that Raja Rao is virtually the first major Indian writer in English to realise that the 'Indianness' of this writing should make for not only a typically Indian form as well. This is true of all his novel particularly of his third novel The Cat and Shakespeare.

The main purpose of this paper is to present a study of the concept of eternity, life and death through the novel The Cat and Shakespeare by Raja Rao. It is most mysterious novel Raja Rao himself has called it metaphysical novel. In this novel cat has contemplated as 'Eternity of God' such as he always was, always is and always will be. He will exist forever. In this novel, Shakespeare has considered as 'A wise man' like Williams Shakespeare, wrote about timeless themes such as life and death, love and hate, Indian spiritualism. The wise man in this novel knows that only Indian spiritualism is a subscription of peace and lead to proper way to the all-human beings. Raja Rao wants to show that this spiritual knowledge is come from Puranas, Upnishidas and Vedanta, that have power to cleanse human's polluted thoughts and achieve the ultimate goal of salvation. As Raja Rao himself suggested, this novel should be treated as a puranic parable.

Keywords: Faith, Devotion, Surrender, Divine mother, Salvation

Introduction:

In this novel, Raja Rao's concern is to be philosophic and portrait human nature and grand theme of spiritual insight. Dr Letizia Alterna writes "Raja Rao viewed his writing as Sadhana, a quest for truth, his stories never narrate events, but rather this protagonist evaluation and analyse this presentation artificially indicates the most important part of situation of the man's quiz for self-knowledge.

In-realisation, surrender to God to destroy ego and achieve the start of enlightenment. Dr. Ram Sebak Thakur writes “Nair Help Pai to take the Vishishtadvaita (Qualified non dualism), practices of Bhakti (Devotion) and Prapti (Self-surrender) to lead him to his ultimate destination. The cat is a nucleus part of this novel, whole ideology link with the behaviour of the cat.

Views of eternity, life and death :

The cat inclines as the Divine mother. Raja Rao says that ‘The kitten is being carried by the cat; we could all be kittens carried by the cat’. And also ‘I tell you, without mother the world is not. So, allow her to fondle you and hold you. I often think how noble it is to see the world, the legs dangling straight, the eyes steady and mouth of mother at neck beautiful’.

In this way because of complete surrender of yourself to God is only way to create union with eternity (God). Dr. Darshita Dave writes that “Man's surrender is so total as to involve complete dependence on the divine as in the case of young kitten lifted by the scuff of the neck by the mother cat. The divine mother principle is represented by the central symbol of the cat. The ‘cat-hold’ theory is explained in the novel by Govindan Nair, who displays absolute confidence in the mythical animal.” In this connection, Dr. Sudhir Arora observe that “India is always regarded as the feminine gender. It is her rich spiritual heritage that has attached the attention of entire world. The mantra of true happiness and salvation is her life breath”

In this way it is the belief of Nair that only the mother cat can save one from falling down. All of these shows that Raja Rao glorified the supreme power of almighty.

Raja Rao tells in his novel that; Man must pay for his sin in slow death. If you kill you get killed, that is the law of nature. Ram Sebak Thakur writes “Ramanuja is the fountain head of Indian theist. As theist, he believes the salvation is possible, not through Jana (knowledge) and Karma (action) but through Bhakti and Prasada (devotion and grace), the individual soul on account of its own karma gets bound to some Samsara (world).

The death is one of the most unfortunate events in the life cycle. In this novel, the incident of Sridhar's death and Bhoothalinga Iyer's death shows transient of life. Raja Rao says about death, “Feminine is the cause of death, wars are the cause of murder, imperialism is the cause of slavery. How can man be free from birth and death? Why should death come to over door?” The knowledge of truth provides a proper perspective by which one views the complex problems of life and death”.

The Hindu faith is centred around reincarnation, the belief that when someone dies, the soul is reborn as a different form. They believe that although the physical body dies their soul remain and continue and continues to recycle until it settles upon its true nature. Raja Rao says that “If you trick destiny, destiny tricks you, destiny chooses the extra fact for your redemption.”

Dr. K. Ratna Shiela Mani writes as “The novel is a chronicle of two ordinary individuals being presented as tale of two ways of living and assumes the piquancy of the allegorical fable.

The way of cat (Marjala Nyaya) stands for the world of grace and detachment while the way of Shakespeare stands for the Hamletian world of conflict and self-division.”

Life and substance are ideas in divine mind. Life is the acting principal; substance is the thing acted upon. In the phenomenal world, life is the energy that drive all from the action. Life is not in itself intelligent; it requires the directive power of entity that knows where and how to apply its force to get the best results. Life is divine, spiritual and its source is God, Spirit. The river of life is within man in his spiritual consciousness. He comes in to consciousness of the river of life through the quickening of spirit. This contact is made through prayer, meditation and good works. Life is higher state of mind.

For the fulfilment of life, Raja Rao talks about the compassionate love with Santha and Nair's love for mankind, “He like Politics, he admired courage, he always loved people who went in search of the paradise flower. It meant you become the half-brother of mankind.” Love is not development, Love is recognition. Devotion is proof of love. The kitten in the story denoted the devout bhakta who surrender himself to God. Bhakti is absolute love toward the Supreme Being. Man's ego is biggest wall between man and God. Govindan Nair can easily cross the wall, without enlighten nobody can cross the wall. In Raja Rao wards “First tell me, what you and I shall answer the rest, she said and laugh. You are one, I am one Where are the two?” This line shows the union with God involve being one with them in mind, heart, and wills always. This type of union tie to the soul to the god so intimately, that the two wills become one.

Conclusion :

In the journey of self-realisation faith is essential part. God's reciprocal love of Man and the blessed communion between God and Man. Ram Sebak Thakur writes, “The Concrete vision and enkindles the spiritual vision and Pai conscious that new dimensions open out before him so for unsubscribed even by himself, every inane act and thought of his has been like the Bilva leaves dropped unknowingly on the Lord Shrine.”

In this way God enjoy whatever is offered with devotion, if it be flower or leaf. In short, the novel is the theme of quest for self-recognition through surrender to God, overcome to the ego, and achieve the goal of the ultimate realisation.

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