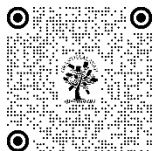


A STUDY OF MOORTHY'S TRANSFORMATION IN THE LIGHT OF GANDHIAN VALUES

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ABSTRACT

The novel's protagonist, Moorthy, exemplifies Gandhi's teachings on the value of truth and nonviolence in obtaining liberation. Moorthy represents Gandhi and brings together the villagers in their desire for independence. The narrative compares the independence movement to the principles of the Bhagavad Gita, with Moorthy promoting nonviolence and integrity among his fellow peasants. The story incorporates Gandhian traditions such as communal prayers, Harikatha recitation, and Khadi attire to reflect the community's values. This paper examines how Gandhi's principles influenced Raja Rao's portrayal of the character Moorthy in his novel. Gandhian beliefs influenced Moorthy's efforts to inspire others to join the Freedom Struggle. Raja Rao sees Gandhi as a guiding light, while Moorthy considers Gandhi's doctrine a guiding principle in life. This paper examines how Gandhi's principles influenced Raja Rao's portrayal of the character Moorthy in his novel. Gandhian beliefs influenced Moorthy's efforts to inspire others to join the Freedom Struggle. Raja Rao sees Gandhi as a guiding light, while Moorthy considers Gandhi's doctrine a guiding principle in life.

Keywords: Gandhian Values, Transformation, Humanity, World, Individuality

1. INTRODUCTION

Raja Rao's heart is still firmly wedded to the profound and transcendent ancient Hindu heritage. The story illustrates the significant impact of Gandhi's ideology on India's oppressed masses, making it an epic tribute to him. Although Gandhi does not appear in the story, his ideology drives the plot. Gandhi's charisma and beliefs heavily influence the work. This novel highlights the lasting impact of Gandhi's ideas on the Indian people, which is deeply embedded in the story. Kanthapura's residents are shown as humble, religious individuals who value nature and retain traditional rituals, such as Harikatha storytelling. Nonetheless, the rigid caste system survives, with a separate pariah area populated by untouchables. Moorthy, while being born into the Brahmin caste, rejects caste discrimination and supports Gandhi's ideal of equality and the eradication of untouchability. Rao's Kanthapura effectively conveys Gandhian concepts and their impact on grassroots movements, challenging established norms and pushing for social justice and equality. The protagonist, Moorthy, from the Brahmin community, challenges the idea of caste-based discrimination. He values equality and is inspired by Gandhi's teachings to eliminate untouchability. In the 'Harikatha' narrative, Gandhi is equated to the heroic Ram, whereas British colonisers are portrayed as malevolent, similar to Ravana. Gandhi is viewed as the saviour of Indian society, fighting against injustice, caste inequality, bloodshed, and riots, identical to how Ram overcame

evil. The story delves into Gandhi's principles of non-violence, truthfulness, forgiveness, and the abolition of untouchability, illustrating their relevance and influence within the community.

Despite adversity, Moorthy remained steadfast in his commitment to Gandhian beliefs. Jayaramachar reflected Gandhi's ideology, emphasising the importance of moral action and universal compassion across differences. He warned against the dangers of greed and encouraged people to follow the path of truth for spiritual growth. Kanthapura's residents prioritised nonviolence, compassion, and honesty in their fight for freedom.

"Truth is divine, and it is the sole divinity known to me" (Kanthapura 22).

Honesty has a critical function in shaping moral behaviour. Raja Rao uses legendary motifs like Siva and Parvati to connect Hindu deities with the "Swaraj" concept, which represents self-rule. Like the deity Siva, Swaraj promotes self-purification, Hindu-Muslim cooperation, and indigenous fabrics like khaddar. In the novel, Gandhi's ideology and influence influenced Moorthy to change the masses. These can be seen from Moorthy's companions abandoning their foreign attire and adopting Gandhi's ideas. They distribute spinning wheels across the hamlet, bridging the divide between the upper and lower classes. Moorthy is deeply saddened as he witnesses the poor's suffering. The Europeans mistreat the natives due to a lack of basic amenities. Moorthy influenced mass. We see this when Moorthy asked people to spin daily. Eventually, people started spinning yarn daily. When Gandhi took the Dandi March, the people of Kanthapura also participated in the Dandi March; it was only possible because of Moorthy. Being Brahmin in the early stages of his life, it was difficult for him to practice the principle of equality. Still, slowly, he started going to the Pariah house, the Potter house, and so on, asking people to treat them equally without discriminating based on caste and creed. He asked them to join the Harikatha. He formed a group that involved people from different castes and gave equal opportunity to all of them. We can see that when Bade Khan arrested Moorthy, Rangamma was looking after Kanthapura and united people like Moorthy used to. Ratna brought women from different castes together. They formed a Sevika Sangh group and women's organisation.

Bade Khan arrived at Kanthapura and was against the toddy plantation. When people were protesting against Toddy Plantation, Moorthy Bade Khan beat the people with a lathi and showed his inhumanity against the people of Kanthapura. When people responded in a non-violent way, Moorthy asked them to stop and repent, and he fasted for three days. This incident shows that Moorthy thought that we should maintain peace and get freedom following the path of humanity. The Moorthy act of fasting influenced people. They revealed that they were wrong and that a non-violent way is not the proper way to get freedom.

2. CONCLUSION

Gandhian influence can be seen from pre-independence to post-independence. When we go through the literature, we find that Raja Rao's characters were influenced not only by Gandhi but also by Mulk Raj Anand's characters, R.K. Narayan's characters, and so on. Gandhi influenced the individual character, but that led to a better world, as we have seen in the work of Rao Moorthy influenced by Gandhi. Gandhi's thoughts changed Moorthy, and he brought change in society by uniting people in the name of Harikatha without discriminating based on caste and creed. He treated women equally, and power was given to them. We can say that the change in individuals leads to mass change. If we want to maintain humanity in the present scenario, we must follow Gandhi's ideology.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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