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Realization of One's True Nature: Vedantic Elucidation in R.K. Narayan's

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

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Letter of Recommendation

It is certified that thesis entitled "Realization of One's True Nature: Vedantic Elucidation in R.K. Narayan's " submitted by Manish Sharma in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Arts in English is an original piece of research work carried out by the candidate under my supervision. Literary presentation is satisfactory, and the thesis is in a form appropriate for publication. Work demonstrates the capacity of the candidate for critical inspection and independent judgement. The thesis is progressed for inspection.

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Prof. Dr. Krishna Chandra Sharma

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Realization of One's True Nature: Vedantic Elucidation in R.K. Narayan's " by Manish Sharma, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University has been approved by the undersigned members of Research Committee.

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Abstract

The English Teacher: The Bhagavad Gita The Upanishads essence?

Keywords: Atman, mind, renunciation, self-realization, oneness.

This research analyzes R.K. Narayan's from a Vedantic perspective, especially considering its themes of immortality of individual self (soul), the oneness of existence, and the pursuit of self-realization. In the beginning of the novel, the main character, Krishna is a typical English teacher who is devoted to worldly interests and everyday life, but the passing of his wife causes a substantial transformation in him. Krishna gradually transforms from a self-centered person to a

spiritual man who seeks to connect himself with greater realities, resonating the idea of transcending the ego to realize the unity of the self (atman) with the universal

and wishes to communicate with Krishna. This leads to Krishna's journey in search of enlightenment, with the stranger acting as a medium to Susila in spiritual world. Krishna embarks on a journey to attain self-discovery and to bridge with the spirit of his wife Susila as per her wish in the letter and future correspondences.

Susila wants her husband to tell that she is quite happy in another region, she wants him to eradicate the grief in his mind: "She wants her husband to know that she is quite happy in another region and wants him also to eradicate the grief in his mind. We are nearer each other than you understand" (156). Parallel to this, the daughter has grown up enough and starts to attend school. The school headmaster is a man of strong will and has dedicated his whole life for the education of school children. Headmaster is a revolutionary educationist who wants his pupils to be happy in life. His wife doesn't respect him and rather oppose his principles. One day, he decides to leave his wife and children for good to fulfill his dream. His philosophy attracts Krishna and it's the incidents in headmaster's life which help Krishna turn around and attain self-discovery and enlightenment, which he had been trying to achieve since long time. Finally, Krishna resigns from the college. In farewell function he says, "I'm seeking a great inner peace. I find I can't attain it unless I withdraw from the adult world and adult work into the world of children. And there' let me assure you, is a vast storehouse of peace and harmony" (277). Susila helps Krishna and to restore his peace of mind, therefore he is able to get psychological changes in him and see the flaws in the educational system. Krishna is finally able to establish connection with the spirit of his dead wife and decides to devote the rest of his life to headmaster's school.

Krishna, the central character of the novel has been living happily with his family members, but tragedy takes place in his life as his wife Susila dies of typhoid.

His days after the demise of the wife pass in complications as he is unable to have feeling to surpass all the distresses and griefs. One day, he gets information that spirit soul of his wife wants to communicate with him and through certain mediums he is able to communicate with her who advises him to have peace of mind as his mind is full of thoughts which are sad and painful. Krishna practices meditation to make his mind free of painful and disturbing thoughts which had affected in his psychic condition. He renounces education system leaving his profession of lecturer as his heart does not have likings the activities that have dissatisfaction in him. He gets shifted to a school where the headmaster is a spiritual person there. He enjoys being involved with school children and gets involved as a teacher which satisfies his inner heart and aspirations. Through meditation. he achieves inner peace and self-discovery. He finally attains communication with his wife without any medium and realizes boundaries of their personalities get dissolved that he feels as if the ultimate goal of human life which in consequence helps in realizing the divine self-existing in all beings as the Same and the One.

A few academics have studied Narayan's and have presented their findings from a postcolonial perspective with themes like identity crisis, cultural struggle, and impact of colonial rule in India. The novel gives impression of analysis of British Imperialism on native Indian values and distinctiveness. For instance, Ramana Devika in her research article R.K. Narayan's " – A Postcolonial Discourse" discusses about the novel by focusing on the pressure or the struggle among colonialism and nativism. Evidently, she opines: "The English discourse make it clear that the colonial rule acted so effectively as a seducer that it has weaned the natives away from their own roots. On the other hand, it served as a provocateur; so much so that the natives aggressively felt

the need for freeing themselves from the clutches of the tyrannical rulers" (1). British colonialism influenced native people to accept English culture, language, lifestyle, education, etc. while due to extreme exploitation and domination, native people also ferociously fought against colonial rulers to be free from their domination over native culture and tradition. Krishna is English lecturer in Albert Mission College which shows colonial education structure has domination on Indian education as British educational agenda focused English language over Indian languages with a clear purpose to serve on colonial agenda of where British culture and principles were made obligatory as superior to Indian ethos and civilizations. Krishna feels annoyed teaching English language and literature as he finds English is disengaged from the true spirit of Indian culture. Krishna represents the brawl of an occupied individual in quest to regain his socio-cultural and mystical individuality in the appearance of colonial subjugation.

In addition, K. Mathuramani talks about domination of English language in colonialized society. He claims:

> Language is the fundamental site for postcolonial discourse because the colonial process itself begins in language. The control over language by colonizer, whether achieved by displacing native languages, by installing itself as a standard against other variants which are constituted as impurities, or by planting the language of empire in a new place, remains the most patent instrument of cultural control. Language provides the terms by which reality may be constituted; it provides the names by which world may be known. (4)

Language was an influential means used to start influence, spread beliefs, and impact cultural identities in colonial world. The colonizing supremacies mostly British realms forced their languages on colonized residents, which had thoughtful and long-lasting

effects on natives and their societies. In the novel, central character Krishna is assigned the role of English lecturer at a colonial period. English teaching is the epicenter of colonial education structure, which was intended to train natives Indians in the standards and notions of the British colonial empire.

Another scholar Jyoti points out that "R.K. Narayan is offering to us something of a bildungsroman of a colonial upbringing where we witness consistently ambivalent responses to induction into the colony culture" (3). Bildungsroman novel is the literary work which focuses upon emotional and ethical evolution of the character from childhood to adulthood. It is concerned with the education, growth and adulthood of the character. Krishna was once student of Albert Mission College where he later on serves as a lecturer. The influence of colonial period and its influence on education system is clearly visible in Krishna's life where once he was deeply fascinated by English language thus shaping his upbringing into colonial culture. Later, he becomes cynical with British education system for the reason that he discovers it rigid, boring, and detached with the deeper morals of Indian life.

Narayan's is intensely autobiographical, giving many individual involvements of the writer. A noteworthy portion of it is encouraged by Narayan's personal experience based on his sorrow by the demise of his spouse, Rajam. Krishna is distressed by the loss of his spouse Susila, a plot points straight corresponding to writer's individual life. Identical to the central character Krishna, Narayan apparently believed in communicating with his departed spouse via a psychic medium, a theme dominant to the later portion of the novel. Krishna's challenges to join with Susila's soul replicate Narayan's individual search of the metaphysical subsequently the passing of his companion. The novel represents Krishna's overhaul from an orthodox life as an English teacher towards one where he searches for inward

contentment and gist past material accomplishment. Krishna's frustration with the schooling system, which he sees as power-driven and lackluster also denotes Narayan's assessment of the foreign education structure he himself experienced. Both Krishna and Narayan go on board on expeditions of inner discovery. Krishna's understanding of life's deeper senses and the capability to exceed worldly sorrow bonds into Narayan's personal development later individual loss. In his autobiography, Narayan writes:

> Krishna is a fictional character in the fictional city of Malgudi, but he goes through the same experience I had gone through and he calls his wife Susila, and the child is Leela instead of Hema. The toll of that typhoid and the desolation that followed with a child to look after and psychic adjustment, are based on my own experience. The book falls into two parts—one is domestic life and other half is spiritual. (135)

The events that happened in novel were real life events that happened in Narayan's life as his wife Rajam suffered from typhoid and later died and the distress that was suffered by Krishna was experienced in real-life by Narayan. R.K. Narayan had only hope; his daughter Hema while Krishna had daughter named as Leela and both Narayan and Krishna experience similar happenings and went through psychic development, thus novel being divided into two parts: domestic and spiritual like it happened in Narayan's life, that is, family bliss and spirituality which helped in psychic development.

R.K. Narayan further writes "Even sad and harrowing memories were cherished by me; . . . I seemed to acquire a new peace, a new outlook; a view of life with a place for everything" (146). Narayan went through personal sorrow that had outcome on his life and literary career. He didn't marry again but the loss of his wife

Rajam became part of his writing in the novel . Both the characters, Narayan in real life and Krishna in the novel went through love, loss, and the pursuit for divine linking thus having similarities in protagonist and writer's life. Through spiritual connection with his wife, Narayan learns to battle with difficulties and complexities of life learning death is not the end of life which is reflected in the novel as well. Both the real and fictional characters achieve inner peace and inner development after going through harsh experiences in life and suffering immensely in one period of life.

Narayan dedicated to his wife Rajam and her memories: "The dedication of the book to the memory of my wife should to some extent give the reader a clue that the book may not be all fiction; still most readers resist, naturally, as one always does, the transition from life to death and beyond" (135). Many readers have regarded as part of fiction but in reality, this is mixture of truth and fiction. Narayan has perfectly blended real-life incidents that happened with the death of his wife with the fictional characters, he has changed the name of him, his wife and his daughter into Krishna, Susila and Leela respectively. Narayan dedicated the novel to his wife who was dear to him and her untimely demise led to unprecedented distress in Krishna's life. Narayan himself went through the journey of life beyond death which he excellently has brought in the novel through fictional touch in autobiographical manner.

Narayan's wife dies of typhoid which leaves him in extreme suffering over a period of time resulting into complete loneliness in depressed state not giving attention to daughter and literary writings. However, his contact with medium through which he makes contact with his deceased wife through supernatural phenomena helps him to restore inner peace in his mind. In the novel , Susila

gets infected with typhoid when she goes to flirty lavatory, during beginning it is suspected of malaria, but symptoms started showing of typhoid and her illness continued over weeks which ultimately took her life. Krishna through help of peasant starts having psychic communication with Susila in which her guidance helps in Krishna to restore tranquility of mind through communication with supernatural world.

In this study, the researcher focuses on Vedantic perspective to analyze the characters and incidents related to broader narrative of the novel. Researcher found the novel has not been studied from Vedanta perspective. Researcher feels it will be a new approach to analyze this novel and it will justify my study. The autobiographical fiction portrays main character seeking spiritual freedom by trying to obtain inner peace and self-development through meditation and renunciation. The novel has traits of Vedanta Philosophy which can be analysed through lens of spirituality.

The research done on the novel has found moderate acceptance in present times, though it is of rich aesthetic value. There isn't enough thesis available on the internet as the novel belongs to the previous century; the research that have been done are stored in several universities in print version, thus being out of availability for researchers. The present-day researchers have attempted to explore from a post-colonial and autobiographical perspective, hence forgetting its spiritual richness and potential.

The novel is interpreted from Vedanta Philosophy. Vedanta is comprised of two words: "Ved" meaning highest knowledge and "Anta" meaning end which actually refers to Essence of Vedas. Vedanta is one of the six systems of Hindu philosophy. The three significant textual foundations of Vedanta are

known as which are: , , and

. The genuine historical time of these texts is in controversy. Advaita school of philosophy, one of the traditions of Vedanta is propounded by the prominent philosopher Adi Shankaracharya. He primarily focuses upon knowledge while other schools focus upon devotion to God.

Advaita Vedanta is a serious, practical, and real discussion about the mutual relationship between three apparent realities or levels of existence which is association between Brahman (ultimate reality), the world, and individual self. Advaita is not two or one only and without second, it advocates single reality that is Brahman which is ultimate reality of existence. Advaita teaches that the Universe, Ourselves and God are undistinguishable to each other nevertheless transcendental to them is Atman. The central teaching of Advaita Vedanta is Brahman which is identical with Aatman. Brahman is cosmic principle which is the ultimate reality devoid of initial stages or conclusions which embodies harmony of all three apparent realities. Brahman is called as Satcitananda which refers to absolute existence, pure consciousness and infinite bliss.

Atman, the true self, ever free and broad, is the true foundation of cheerfulness, which is within us. But this truth is often concealed by a veil of ignorance; consequently, individuals are unsuccessful in identifying essential fullness and wholeness. Atman is Satcitananda; Sat, cit and Ananda as per several religious scriptures. Sat means which is real or true and which exists absolutely, consequently eternal, perpetual, and unborn. Cit means the consciousness, awareness because of which individuals are perceptive beings. Ananda is translated as bliss, which shows inner source of cheerfulness, the true source of fullness and gladness within us. Atman refers to the true self, the unchangeable and everlasting realization that is

beyond the body, mind and ego. The individual organism is represented by Jiva, and its essence is Atman, while it is often equated with personality. But Jiva is caught up in limited existence because of ignorance and lack of knowledge. Worldly joys are unnecessary for Atman, who is by nature joyful. On the other hand, ignorance makes jiva fully identify with limited self. Atman is unrealized due to ignorance and realized through knowledge of the self. Atman is eternal, beyond the body and pure consciousness which is described in verse as:

> The atman is neither born nor does it die. It is unborn, eternal, everlasting and ancient which is not destroyed when the body is destroyed. Atman is unattached, of the nature of pure consciousness, and ever-luminous. However, due to ignorance, it appears to be associated with everything and seems to assume multiple forms. (209, 223).

Maya, also known as deceptive veil, is one of the foundational concepts in Advaita Vedanta, which veils the reality and makes it look as many. Maya results in ignorance where individuals or jiva fail to recognize their real self or truth. Maya is described as the cause of ignorance and which covers the true nature of the self in verse: "Ignorance, which causes the misapprehension of the Self, arises from Maya. Know this Maya to be like the illusion of silver in a seashell. Maya is the highest form of ignorance, which pervades the body, senses, and subtle elements, constantly moving and unstable" (108, 111). Hence, just as an individual blunders a seashell for silver due to deception, Maya makes one error the illusory (body, mind, world) for the actual (Atman). It is transitory and ever-changing unlike the unchangeable self.

Self-realization is the truth about who and what we are. It is realizing one's true nature, which is our true nature transcending the physical body that we accept as

ourselves to be. Most of us are unaware of our true nature because of this transitory world full of veil of ignorance, which makes us feel our ego and our senses, which carve for sensory preference, which is illusionary. We are ignorant of our true nature, which is awareness and consciousness in itself, because of our attachment to worldly objects and pleasures. After realizing one's true nature, our self or atman, merges with God, or Brahman which is ultimate reality and goal of spiritual life. This divine awakening is path to perpetual happiness, peace, consciousness, awareness which leads to spiritual enlightenment or liberation. Swami Vivekananda opines, "Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy – by one, or more, or all of these – and be free" (257). Vivekananda's opinion is true nature of an individual is within it but veiled by ignorance and to achieve it, it's the goal of life and making go mind inwards and through several paths such as good work, devotion, through religious texts and through making mind go inwards through meditation.

Swami Vivekananda has mentioned four practices for the aspirant seeking one's true nature, spiritual awakening and liberation. These are: Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Raja Yoga. Karma Yoga is the path of selfless action, which emphasizes carrying out one's responsibilities without regard for the results, in order to achieve spiritual freedom through work: "The secret of Karma-Yoga which is taught by the Gita is to do work without any attachment" (32). Bhakti Yoga is the path of love and devotion to a personal god, cultivating a strong emotional bond with the divine through worship, chanting and prayer: "Bhakti-Yoga is a real, genuine search after the Lord, a search beginning, continuing, and ending in love" (50). Jnana Yoga is the path of wisdom and knowledge that emphasizes intellectual discernment and the

study and contemplation necessary to realize the ultimate reality (Brahman): “Jnana-Yoga is the means by which the human and soul attains to freedom by the exercise of reason and analysis” (88). Raja Yoga is the path of mind control and meditation, which seeks self-realization by disciplining the body and mind: “Raja-Yoga proposes to start from the internal world, to study internal nature, and through that, control the whole both internal and external” (125). The researcher uses all four practices in analyzing the central character of the novel ‘s journey to self-realization: Karma Yoga through his devoted teaching, Bhakti Yoga because of his abiding love and dedication for his wife, Jnana Yoga through his pursuit of enlightenment, Raja Yoga via transcendental experiences and meditation. The central character of the novel, Krishna’s story is not just one of personal development but also of profound spiritual awakening because of this holistic renovation, which is consistent with Vivekananda’s view that spiritual development necessitates a balance of the four yoga practices.

is a spiritual philosophy treatise with a primary focus on God. encourages people to carry out their duties with wholehearted devotion and asserts that doing so with an objective mindset result in fulfillment and perfection in life as well as opens the doors to heaven in the hereafter. The key to mind purification lies in the dynamics of activity. Most people in this world operate and live in the body-mind level of consciousness. With reason and intellect, one can comprehend and gain knowledge about the world of senses. However, the mind and senses are unable to adequately perceive or follow the unmanifest world, or the world beyond the senses. asserts that inner life is more expansive and exquisite. Being the words of God, the is the truth and not a work of philosophy. is composed of 18 chapters and 700 verses. ’s teaching on Raja Yoga centers on mind control and cultivation for a balanced existence and spiritual advancement.

advises equanimity of mind training and ego removal for social harmony and better spiritual realization. emphasizes the need of achieving mental stability by being actively calm in order to observe equilibrium in daily life. In , Lord Krishna emphasizes the importance of maintaining composure and getting rid of ego, citing ignorance as the root of ego.

The is an ancient Advaita Vedanta text that is based on a conversation between Sage Ashtavakra and King Janaka. It is founded on the central teaching of Advaita that Atman, the individual self or oneness of individual self, is identical to ultimate reality, Brahman. It says that there is a oneness of existence, as all the living beings and components of the world are one, and they follow the same spirit. It also has the belief that Maya veils the real nature, and ignorance acts as a superimposition on the individuals. Liberation, or self-realization is achieved through the constant practice and knowledge of self. Ashtavakra holds on to values that attachment to sensory objects, worldly pleasures, and identification with body, mind and ego acts as veil to obstruct self-realization. Renunciation of the fruits of action is the most important factor, as it leads to unidentification with body, mind and world.

, also known as “The Crest-Jewel of Discrimination” is one of the most famous works of Adi Shankaracharya, which centers on Advaita Vedanta teachings. consists of 580 verses in the Sanskrit language, which is translated into many languages, being an extremely popular text in Advaita Vedanta traditions. It teaches any seekers of knowledge about how to pursue self-knowledge, fourfold qualifications of students in order to gain spiritual bliss and awakening, importance of a guru (teacher) in guiding students to attain knowledge, and the veil and superimposition, which are hindrances in attaining one’s true nature. To attain one’s true nature and freedom from all sorrows, griefs is the ultimate goal of life, and

those who achieve this state are Jivanmukta as a liberated individual who is free from cycle of rebirths and has achieved self-realization. The text also focuses on the need of distinguishing between real and false things in the world; real means eternal, while false things are temporality of physical world and identification with body, mind and ego.

are the texts based on the Vedas. In ancient times, Vedanta originally meant , but now it is used for the system of philosophy based on the . are also regarded as conclusion of the Vedas since for the reason they carried the essence, fundamental purpose, and wisdoms of Vedas.

institute the knowledge portions of the Vedas. The knowledge of

has the context of preparation for spiritual awakening, liberation and achieving knowledge of the self. , which is based on philosophical treatise on the realities of Atman, and Brahman and nature of awareness and consciousness, which results in transcendental bliss, is taken as means for analyzing the self or soul, which is divine and present in all forms of the universe, from one of the important incidents that happened in novel.

After going through novel, the researcher got some questions in his mind. The novel has features of Hindu philosophy, such as immortality of soul, life after death, quest for realization and having inner peace, inner development and tranquility of mind through the eradication of thoughts. The researcher got several questions in his mind, such as: How the central character in the novel, Krishna associate self-realization via concept of Atman with distress and discovering one's divine essence? In what ways does Krishna's realization of the oneness of existence, as revealed in the relationship between Atman and Brahman, influence his spiritual development and achieving spiritual knowledge? How is the immortality of the soul possible? How are

any possibilities of life after death likely to happen? What are the processes that involve thoughts to get eradicated which results in tranquility of mind? Why mind gets attached to several thoughts affecting his/her mental health? How an individual achieves realization of self? How does an individual grasp the knowledge of spirituality? How does an individual get to accept separation as the reality? What are the aspects for an individual to seek freedom from physical and material world? Thus, to answer all these questions, the researcher attempts to go through all the incidents that happened in the novel through several perspectives of Vedanta.

Death is only meant for body, not for the soul, as the human never dies; their Atman, known as self or soul, continues past death and death, is only a transformation of state or form. This truth is found in the novel as Susila, who has already passed away, attempts to convey a message to her husband through a medium, which proves that her physical body is destroyed but not the self, which is immortal:

> This is a message for Krishna from his wife Susila who recently passed over . . . She has been seeking all these months some means of expressing herself to her husband, but the opportunity has occurred only to-day, when she found the present gentleman a very suitable medium of expression. Through him she is happy to communicate. She wants her husband to know that she is quite happy in another region and wants him also to eradicate the grief in his mind. We are nearer each other than you understand, And I'm always watching him and the child. (156)

Death is portrayed as a transition to another kind of existence rather than the end of life. In the end, Krishna manages to speak with her spirit, implying that love and awareness endure after death. Krishna builds a spiritual bond with Susila through seances and mystical encounters, reaffirming that death is not the end but rather the

continuance of life in another world. This subject is consistent with Indian philosophical views on the immortality of the self and the potential for spiritual enlightenment to help one transcend material pain. This reality is imparted in

as:

> Self is not born, and it does not die; nor it is ever that this one having been nonexistent becomes existent again. This one is birthless, eternal, undecaying, ancient; it is not killed when the body is killed. O Partha, he who knows this one, which is indestructible, eternal, birthless and undecaying, how and whom does that person kill, or whom does he cause to be killed. (2.20-21)

Therefore, death is just the physical change that happens, but the self or soul is the eternal reality, also divine, and body is impermanent; also, finally it dies. All beings are everlasting and divine, whereas the physical body is impermanent. In the novel, Susila dies away due to typhoid, but self or Atman doesn't pass away.

Meditation, which is the significant aspect in Vedanta of controlling the mind and turning one's attention inward, has the aim of reaching non-dual awareness and bliss, which ultimately results in oneness. Susila asks Krishna for his effort towards obtaining inner peace, as his mind is full of thoughts, which is unrelaxing and has formed an obstacle for their meeting:

> When are you starting an attempt at your own psychic development? Why not make a start to-morrow? To-morrow is a day that never comes. Why not begin to-day as soon as you go home? Just ten minutes of communion and relaxation. Please make the attempt and do not postpone it. You think of me by fits and starts. Sometimes for long periods you do not let your mind do anything else. I can only tell you that I am very happy here. I shall be very happy to meet you when you come over here don't doubt me, but it is not right

> for you to think of passing over before the appointed time. So do not let your thoughts go in that direction. It is to prevent it that I want you regularly to bring me to your side at a stated time. (232)

Following his wife Susila's passing, Krishna looks for comfort and purpose outside of the earthly world. He develops techniques that include introspection, mental discipline, and pursuing a closer relationship with the spiritual world as a result of his voyage. His experiences with a mystical involvement with a mystical person who facilitates his communication with Susila's soul introduce him to the concept of meditation as a means of achieving inner peace. Through this practice, Krishna is able to rise above his pain and reach a higher state of awareness, where he understands that genuine happiness and understanding originate inside. According to Swami Vivekananda: "Meditation is one of the great means of controlling the rising of these (thought) waves. By meditation you can subdue these waves, and if you go on practicing meditation for days. And months, and years until it has become a habit, until it will come in spite of yourself, anger and hatred will be controlled and checked" (242).

Hence, meditation is the practice of keeping the mind free of impressions and thoughts by overcoming (subdue) of thought waves. Our true self is similar to the bottom of the lake, which is unseen due to agitation and being unclear, while our inner true self is far from our reach due to thought waves; the lake is the mind-stuff and the wave in the water is same as thought waves. Krishna is advised by spirit of his wife to be entirely watchful and present, also not excessively responsive or overwhelmed by what's going on everywhere.

In order to acclimatize to the knowledge of Vedanta, the evident individual needs to have a mind that is quiet, introverted, concentrated and subtle enough to

perceive one's true nature. To help Krishna to get rid of all these disturbing thoughts and to make meeting with him possible without medium, Susila advises of having tranquil mind which is full of awareness and for obtaining it, practice is required that is, attempts for his psychic development:

> For the purpose of your complete communion with me or with anyone a degree of concentration is necessary, and this can be done only with some order and plan. At other moments when you are despondent, woe-begone and hopelessly in grief and think of me, I can hardly come to you, because the grief creates a barrier, and this should be avoided for both our sakes. (233)

Krishna turns inward and retreats from the outside world following the passing of his wife, Susila. He is forced into solitary by his grief, where he begins to consider life's greater purpose. He is able to pursue inner serenity and transcend material attachments because of his introverted approach. The importance of having a focused and sensitive mind is highlighted by Krishna's meditation practice and his interactions with Susila's spirit. He has a transcendental connection by calming his mind and turning inward, which supports the novel's central idea that inner serenity and wisdom originate there. This is given importance in the article "The Healing Power of Silence" as:

> Concentration means fixing the mind on a particular object without allowing it to wander from thought to thought. The mind in its ignorant state is always restless. It is continually being pulled by sense objects outside and agitated by desires and attachments inside. This restless state of mind can be controlled by the practice of concentration. (2)

Krishna's mind is agitated due to thoughts of his deceased wife; the memories of her are in his mind. He is in immense distress and unable to have quiescent and

calm mind. Concentration is an eminence that all human existence already enjoys; it's not something we have to summon up; we just have to study how to achieve it.

The mind eradicated of all its defilement and worldly stains will become exceptionally peaceful, resulting into all of the instabilities of the mind to end. Susila talks about Krishna's mind which is full of disturbing, unrelaxed thoughts, and emphasizes on acquiring tranquility of mind: "I have been observing the struggle going on within you and your utter helplessness. To receive impressions from our side, the mind must be calm and unruffled. In your case, I find that thoughts of me produce just the opposite effect" (235). The journey of Krishna from sorrow to inner serenity demonstrates how overcoming adversity can lead to mental stability. After experiencing and conquering instability, one can achieve actual mental stability. Krishna achieves serenity via lamentation, reflection, and spiritual enlightenment, demonstrating that inner peace is achievable even in the face of life's most severe adversities. The importance of tranquil and controlled mind is given importance in

as:

> A man who has become free from hankering for all desirable objects is then said to be Self-absorbed when the fully controlled mind rests on the self alone. That the Yoga is difficult to be attained by one of uncontrolled mind has my approval. But it is possible to be attained through the means by one who is engaged in practice and has a controlled mind. (6.18, 36)

Krishna's mind is disturbed, which acts as a hindrance in attaining peaceful state for him. His thoughts are disturbed due to memories of his wife and also his discontent towards colonial education system. Harmony is within us, which is hidden by ignorance; actually, peace is concealed because of the existence of the features that

interrupt the mind. Actual happiness is found in peaceful mind because happiness is our crucial divine nature.

The Subconscious mind as a storehouse of suppressed sentiments and reminiscences is challenge for upholding awareness and consciousness for individuals. Krishna, in the novel, attempts to maintain calmness of mind by investigating his mind:

> I posted a sentry at the threshold of my mind to stop and turn away any intruder who might try to gain entrance. I rigorously educated my whole being, including the subconscious, (where still perhaps lurked unsuspected raw grief) with the suggestion that my wife was everywhere, happy and well, and I was to think of her only with the greatest joy in mind, no cause for any sort of grief. (240)

As a repository for repressed emotions and sentiments, the subconscious mind is essential. The novel delicately examines how the protagonist, Krishna, progressively discovers and faces his suppressed feelings, which results in his transformation. He progressively reveals the repressed emotions and feelings that are stored in the subconscious mind. He finds a greater level of insight and calm by letting go of these suppressed feelings via contemplation, spiritual experiences, and lamentation. Swami Vivekananda opines “To control the mind you must go deep down into the subconscious mind, classify and arrange in order all the different impressions, thoughts, etc. stored up there, and control them. This is the first step. By the control of the subconscious mind, you get control over the conscious” (30, 32).

The Subconscious mind is that place of the mind where mental courses are functioned beneath the level of mindful consciousness. It is where reminiscences, behaviors, sentiments, and opinions are stored, and it effects actions and conclusion-

making of individuals without them always thoughtful about it. As Krishna is advised by his spirit wife to keep his mind calm, he becomes active for the process involving mental awareness. As his mind is disturbed and all the thoughts, grief, feelings which are stored in subconscious which needs to be cleaned up for complete awareness, he meticulously empties all of them.

Mind free of thoughts which is restricted of relishes and aversions is the emblem of evolving mystically. Krishna under the guidance of his wife to accomplish awareness of mind, finds some progresses in inner state:

> It was a perpetual excitement, ever promising some new riches in the realm of experience and understanding. I sat up at nights faithfully following the instructions she had given, keeping my mind open, and I was beginning to be aware of a slight improvement in my sensibilities. There was a real cheerfulness growing within me, memory hurt less, and I was more and more aware of vague perceptions, like a three-quarter deaf man catching the rustle of a dress of someone he loves. (254)

Krishna's path from sorrow and bewilderment to self-awareness demonstrated how enlightenment results from mental quiet. Krishna's trip demonstrates how spiritual advancement results from clearing the mind of pointless notions. He overcomes grief, becomes self-aware, and accepts a higher kind of existence by calming his mind by meditation and introspection. Mind free of thoughts results in bliss which is found in : "O Pure Intelligence, do not disturb your mind with affirmations and negations. Be calm and abide happily in your own self which is Bliss itself. Completely give up even contemplation and hold nothing in your mind. You are verily the Self, free. What will you do by thinking?" (15.19-20).

Hence, the nature of Atman is brought for the instant understanding for all the pursuers. It says that dislike for relishes and aversions leads to self-awareness and spiritual development. Mind alone is the reason of bondage and unawareness. A Peaceful mind is must for spiritual advancement. An individual's nature is divine, unrestricted from all instabilities and consistent. Krishna starts finding some changes and developments in his sentiment. Earlier, his mind was full of thoughts and griefs, but through meditation erasing the thoughts and anguishes, he experiences slight changes in his sensibilities. It is due to advice given by Susila, and him following all the suggestions, he starts finding some changes in his sensibilities.

In Vedantic life there is acceptance that Brahman, the final reality exists within all beings as the inner self or soul, controlling and guiding everything from within. The main character of the novel Krishna finds the Vedantic belief to be exact; he feels the holiness when he viewed his companion in the shrine:

> Her cheeks glowed, the rest of her person was lost in the shadows of the temple hall. Her lips were moving in prayer. I felt transported at the sight of it. I shut my eyes and prayed: "God bless this child and protect her." We ceased to pass any remarks or comment and settled in a tranquil silence. I studied her face without her knowledge. A great peace had descended on her. "It is God's infinite grace that has given me this girl. (92)

Krishna's spiritual path discreetly reflects the idea of Brahman as the inner self that governs everything from inside. The novel is consistent with Indian philosophical traditions, especially Advaita Vedanta, which holds that the inner self (Atman), which governs all experiences and consciousness, is Brahman, the ultimate reality. The voyage of Krishna serves as an example of how Brahman, the inner self, governs everything from inside. Krishna progresses from ignorance to spiritual realization by

self-examination, meditation and suffering before accepting the reality that the divine is inside him and firects his life from there. The same experience of Krishna is Antaryami Brahman according to Sage Yajnavalkya's description to his companion Maitreyi in as: "He who exists in all beings, who is the innermost (Reality) in all beings, whom all beings do not know whose body is all beings, who regulates all beings from within them, this is your self, this is the Antaryami, the immortal" (21).

When Deity exists in everyone, then the idol is also present, according to Vedanta beliefs. We visit temples to understand the image of God, according to Swami Rangathananda. Consecration transforms what was once just metal or stone into the image and emblem of the celestial. Additionally, he states that one can have the worship in a temple picture if they're not mystically mature effectively to recognize Brahman, or His appearance in themselves and others as the Antaryami or inner-self. Rites, devotion and other practices are important because they serve as a kind of base camp for discovering one's actual self, rendering by a number of sages, including Shankaracharya. The significance of these is recognized in the Gita. Even if these things don't matter once the final truth is known, they nonetheless aid the individual in discovering one's exact nature throughout the process. Hence, Krishna is on the route of embracing Vedantic life in actuality.

The recurrent nature of life and demise is one we must admit earnestly, so as not to get involved to either of the two. Krishna understands the truth that Atman can never be annihilated and is unborn, unending, ancient; thus, he stops grieving over the bereavement of his wife, Susila:

> There is no escape from loneliness and separation . . . Wife, child, brothers, parents, friends . . . We come together only to apart again. It is one continuous

> movement. They move away from us as we move away from them. The law of life can't be avoided. The law comes into operation the moment we detach ourselves from our mother's womb. All struggle and misery in life is due to our attempt to arrest this law or get away from it or in allowing ourselves to be hurt by it. The fact must be recognized. A profound unmitigated loneliness is only the truth of life. All else is false. My mother got away from her parents, my sisters from our house, I and my brother away from each other, my wife was torn away from me, my daughter is going away with my mother, my father has gone away from his father, my earliest friends where are they? They scatter apart like the droplets of a water-spray. The law of life. No sense in battling against it. (267)

The main idea that propels Krishna's transformation is acceptance of life and death. The novel examines how realizing life's greater purpose might help one overcome sadness and suffering. The lesson of Krishna's trip is that genuine tranquility requires acceptance of both life and death. He has a greater perspective of life after discovering via meditation. Spiritual insight, and grieving that death is a transition rather than an end. This reality can easily be apprehended from

as:

> Since death of anyone born is certain, and of the dead(re-)birth is a certainty, therefore you ought not to grieve over an inevitable fact. All the bodies remain unmanifest in the beginning; they become manifest in the middle. After death they certainly become unmanifest. What lamentation can there be with regard to them? (2.27-28).

In the , Arjuna was despondent on whether to fight the war against his own relatives. So, to inspire and teach Arjuna, Lord Krishna gives him

lesson and message that is known as Gita today. Shree Krishna teaches Arjuna that Atman is immortal reality and death is just for body not for Atman:

> You grieve for those who are not to be grieved for; and you speak words of wisdom. The learned do not grieve for the departed and those who have not departed. As after rejecting worn-out clothes a man takes up other new ones, likewise after rejecting worn-out bodies the embodied one unites with other new ones. (2.11, 22).

Krishna values the truth demonstrated in the that Atman which resides in everyone's form may well by no means be destroyed. Krishna contends the truth that the Atman is perpetual, unborn and ancient. Krishna appreciates the reality explained in the , which is why he stops being heartbroken over the demise of his spouse, Susila.

The necessity of attaining psyche serene and peaceable is required for identifying the real Atman or Self. As Lord Krishna states, an individual through calm understanding can identify the Atman; Susila sends message to Krishna:

> It is a long time since I spoke to you through your friend. I have a feeling as if I were sitting on a wall. On one side I see your big friend. On the other I see you, lying in your green canvas easy chair and also trying to be present here at the same time. . . Seeing you now in your old chair, as you shut your eyes and try to keep your mind still, I forgot for a moment that we are in two totally different mediums of existence. (229)

A tranquil mind is necessary to achieve Atman. Through self-reflection, detachment, and meditation, Krishna transcends anguish and material illusions to discover his spiritual essence. His experience shows that the only way to see the higher self and achieve ultimate emancipation is to have a still mind. The novel holds

that enlightenment and self-discovery require mental calm and inner tranquility. Keeping intellect serene results in experiencing the Atman or real self which is stated by Lord Krishna in as:

> He into whom all objects of desire enter (unsought and causing no perturbation), even like the ocean that is ever being filled by the rivers but still remains steady within its bounds, such a person attains to peace, not he who runs madly after objects of desire. With the mind restrained from going outward to objects and always uniting with the supreme in spiritual communion, the Yogi attains to peace, which is supreme salvation and enduring establishment in my state. (2.70, 6.15)

Vedanta philosophy recognizes an organized improvement in the dimensions of individual awareness in accomplishing the broad understanding. When the characters realize to regulate his outlook, it becomes the basic phase of his pursuit for self. The blessed Atman of Susila executes as Krishna's mystical instructor, and the Advaita Vedanta sculptures declare the requirement of mystical instructor to grasp the self-knowledge.

Renunciation is introducing our mind to developed, additional nourishing characteristics of our character, giving up enjoyments while enduring to adore the lower ecstasies. Krishna finds happiness and tranquility of mind in Headmaster's school and in the presence of the children; consequently, the desire of renunciation arises:

> I spent a great deal of my time watching the children at play or hearing him narrate his stories for the children as they sat under the mango tree in the school compound. When I sat there at the threshold of his hut and watched the children, all sense of loneliness ceased to oppress, and I felt a deep joy and

contentment stirring within me. I felt there was nothing more to demand of life. The headmaster's presence was always most soothing. (267)

Renunciation is a key component of Krishna's transformation, and his path resembles that of the headmaster, who acts as a mentor. Both people serve as examples of how pursuing inner serenity and letting go of material worries are the paths to ultimate fulfillment. Krishna's own path to renunciation is reflected in and inspired by the headmaster's life. Both personalities show that letting go of attachments and embracing a higher purpose is the path to true tranquility and enlightenment. Krishna's transitions from a life of pain to one of spiritual fulfillment and self-realization as a result of this procedure. Renunciation is defined by Adi Shankaracharya in verse as: "Vairagya or renunciation is the desire to give up all transitory enjoyments (ranging) from those of an (animate) body to those of Brahmahood, (having already known their defects) from observation, instruction and so forth" (8).

Renunciation is one of the most important virtues in Advaita Vedanta philosophy, where an individual who is seeker of inner peace and self-discovery gives up fruits of enjoyments for attaining transcendental peace. Renunciation is regarded as the most important asset, as without giving up what is untrue, seeker of self-knowledge can never have courage of accomplishing what it is. Giving up of inferior ethics to achieve higher ones is the important symbol of a divine explorer. Inferior or lower ideals means wordly enjoyments which are transitory, while discovering one's own self is spiritual and divine. Krishna renounces everything that appears to him to be an obstacle to the realization of the self. Krishna gives up that which comes in the way of his happiness and ecstasies. The magnificence of renunciation lies in progress to an advanced dimension, as an outcome of which inferior appeals drop. Krishna

gives up his profession at Albert Mission College where he used to get 100 Rupees per month, but that doesn't satisfy his inner heart. He is against the education system which doesn't involve in the character progress, originality, critical judgement, and emotive well-being of children. Thus, Krishna renounces the education system which becomes turning point in his seek of inner peace.

A person with an intense desire for freedom is extremely dedicated to understanding their true nature and breaking free from the boundaries of worldly existence. Krishna wants to be free from his college duties and experience total awareness and get freedom from activities he is not interested in anymore:

> My mind was made up. I was in search of harmonious existence and everything that disturbed that harmony was to be rigorously excluded, even my college work. One whole night I sat up in the loneliness of my house thinking it over, and before the night was out my mind was made up. I'm seeking a great inner peace. I find I can't attain it unless I withdraw from the adult world into the world of children. And there, let me assure you, is a vast superhouse of peace and harmony. I have not had in mind anything more than that. (269, 277)

A major factor in Krishna's transformation is Mumukshutva, or the strong yearning for spiritual freedom. His journey exemplifies the Vedantic notion that discovering one's higher nature and escaping earthly attachments are the paths to true freedom. His anguish fuels his quest for greater truths, and he eventually achieves spiritual enlightenment and liberation from material illusions via detachment and meditation. His transformation serves as an example of how a strong desire to transcend material existence is the first step toward ultimate liberty. Adi Shankaracharya gives definition of Mumukshuta in as:

"Mumukshuta or yearning for freedom is the desire to free oneself, by realizing one's true nature, from all bondages from that of egoism to that of the body, bondages superimposed by ignorance" (11).

The yearning for freedom is the concluding requisite of an explorer, as whatever other potentials may be there in him, if Mumukshuta is not there in an individual, there is no confidence of achieving self-knowledge and being free from worldly transitoriness. Krishna realizes that college works cannot contribute to the bliss that he is searching for; he finds happiness in the world of small children in headmaster's school, as that place is where children have scope for creativity, critical evaluation, novelty, etc. Krishna realizes that he doesn't need any material bliss anymore in his life, and headmaster's school is where there is peace, cheerfulness, harmony in the world of small children.

The central character of the novel, Krishna becomes able to witness his partner Susila's Atman. Afterward, his outlook cultivates to be wholly enlightened from accompanying inclinations and partialities. Krishna witnesses his wife Susila:

> My wife. . . my wife, my wife. . ." My mind trembled with this rhythm, I forgot myself and my own existence. I fell into a drowse, whispering, "My wife, wife." How long? How could I say? When I opened my eyes again, she was sitting on my bed looking at me with an extraordinary smile in her eyes. (279)

Only when his mind is free of biases and tendencies, Krishna is able to recognize his wife's presence. His path from sorrow and emotional upheaval to spiritual enlightenment serves as an example of how a cleansed mind can discern more profound realities outside of the physical realm. Becoming composed and going

beyond attachment and repugnance is imparted from Lord Krishna in

as:

> A man of disciplined mind, who has neither attraction nor aversion for sense objects, attains tranquility, though he may be moving amidst objects of the senses. It is natural for each organ to feel attraction or aversion in respect of objects pertaining to each sense. Do not come under their sway, for they are enemies (of all spiritual aspirants) (2.64, 3.34).

Therefore, attachment is deception which hampers an individual's spiritual development and stops an individual from achieving precise cheerfulness. Attachment, which is sensitive bond or durable attraction towards something, or someone ascends from desires, potentials, etc., which centrals to reliance upon something and misery. Krishna fruitfully achieves calmness without inclinations and partialities, executes his responsibilities without attachment to attain outcomes and surrender the consequences to a higher supremacy. Through meditation, by calming mind and being free from all kinds of likes and dislikes, Krishna is able to realize his true nature. His wife Susila's guidance has helped him in going past material luxuries and the thoughts that were the reason behind sorrows and griefs.

Krishna experiences the allure of his partner and consequently witnesses oneness, which combines all actualities; there is holiness in every life and the entire existence is a solitary truth and reality. Krishna experiences oneness as Atman, which is identical with ultimate reality Brahman, in which existence is all one and divine: "We stood at the window, gazing on a slender, red streak over the eastern rim of the earth. A cool breeze lapped our faces. The boundaries of our personalities suddenly dissolved. It was a moment of rare, immutable joy. . . a moment for which one feels grateful to Life and death" (280).

Krishna's mytical encounter at the end with Susila serves as a metaphor of the oneness of existence. His spiritual journey comes to a close at this point, as he overcomes personal grief and recognizes the interconnectedness of all life despite physical separations. Krishna and Susila's last encounter symbolize the oneness of existence, where all distances vanish. The realization of the interconnectedness of all life, transcending both physical and emotional barriers, is the source of true tranquility, as Krishna's journey shows. His final experience serves as a reminder of the timeless and interwoven nature of existence, love, and consciousness. Oneness of existence is reflected in Adi Shankaracharya's as: "Let people quote scriptures and sacrifice to the gods, let them perform rituals and worship the deities, there is no Liberation for anyone without the realization of one's identity with the Atman, no, not even in the lifetime of a hundred Brahmas put together" (3).

The central character of the novel, Krishna comprehends that the physical boundaries of their identities do not have any constituent since the final reality; the one's own true nature is identical in everyone. It is clear from Vedantic perspective on presence that a person has a voyage of self-apprehension moving from ignorance to self-realization. It is not calm voyage from ignorance to the self-realization of its magnificent and all-pervading quintessence. This is an upward commission, and the path is not without its setbacks and uneven moments, but the quest for the self culminates in transcendental bliss.

Krishna realizes that death is not the end of life. He stops grieving over the death of his wife as he apprehends separation is the law of nature. He is able to recognize about the certainties of life and temporality of physical world. The needs and vulnerability in the appearance of situations causes discomfort and leave him abandoned and solitary. Therefore, consequently he grasps, "A profound unmitigated

loneliness is the only truth of life" (267). The profession of lecturer at college is not able to overcome his sorrows and anguishes; therefore, there is no cheerfulness in his life. He puts all his devotion into taking attention of his daughter, but the anguish of

ultimate reality are one, is reflected in his journey. Krishna undergoes a transformation as he gains the ability to speak with Susila's spirit, which enables him to let go of worldly ties and accept spiritual wisdom. In the end, he gives up his everyday life in pursuit of inner fulfillment, signifying his awareness that true wisdom sterns from knowing the self's (Atman) eternal nature and its union with Brahman. The Upanishadic idea that self-awareness results in liberation (Moksha) is reflected in his journey. Krishna achieves enlightenment and peace by the novel's end, showing how spiritual development and the understanding of oneness with the universe can result from human suffering.

This research highlights the importance of oneness, which refers to attaining the unity of an Individual self, God and Universe. One who recognizes that God is existing in one and all consequently doesn't find anything distinct from him, or instead, one who perceives the whole thing in relation to God is said to have accomplished the zenith of oneness. This is the topmost of meditation in which tranquility of mind is achieved. It can only be achieved when one has advanced, concentrated, dearest affection for Self and God. Meditation in Advaita Vedanta refers to realizing state of harmony or interrelation. The one who efficaciously performs meditation vanish their distinct unity, leading to a thoughtful wisdom of integration with the ultimate divine existence. Oneness highlights the knowledge that all existences and phenomena are unified. In state of oneness, people view it as a supreme experience, where they move past their individual judgements and feelings to attach with a higher consciousness. Accomplishing an intellect of oneness can be seen as a substantial landmark in spiritual progress, helping individuals foster inner harmony and profound thoughtful of existence. Overall, oneness through meditation is

a thoughtful understanding that can lead to transformative understandings and a superior wisdom of unity with oneself and the world.

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