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Representation of Subaltern People in Raja Rao' Kanthapura

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**Representation of Subaltern People in Raja Rao' Kanthapura**

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## **Abstract**

The novel Kanthapura is based on movement of Subaltern people against the British colony in India in 1930s. Subaltern people of different ranks, castes such as Brahmins, Weavers, Pariahs etc are taken for the national movement. Rather than providing them authentic voice and fruitful destination, these people are presented as violent and barbaric one. They are presented as if they create problems within themselves. Their activities are misrepresented. Neither they get victory nor they get any further encouragement. Their contribution is presented in such a way that it ends in tragedy, horror, migration and so on. Here, their voice is not raised rather presented regretfully.

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### **Worked Cited**

## Chapter I

### Introduction

The novel 'Kanthapura' talks about the independent movement of Subaltern people against British colony in India. Rao brings together the people of different classes, sex, castes for the movement. In the name of freedom movement against British Raj, he misrepresents them. He presents them submissively on the one hand but later presents them violent and barbaric on the other hand. Rao fails them to represent as he perceives them from the perspective of an elite. He is no more different than the other intellectual elites. His heroism of writing this novel seems more authentic than to raise the voice subaltern people. He is an elite figure.

In terms of intellectual's role to represent and show the way to subalterns Raja Rao, an Indian writer is going to be taken as example in this research work. Raja Rao an elite writer brings mostly the subaltern people in the novel Kanthapura (1938). The novel 'Kanthapur' which is being under researched, is a story of how a small, sleepy, south Indian village is caught in the whirlpool of the Indian freedom struggle comes to be completely destroyed. Behind the destruction of fictionalized village Kanthapur, The credit goes to Rao as well. The characters whom he represents in the novel are mostly subaltern people. Being an elite intellectual, he misrepresents them which can be clarified in the textual analysis.

Narrated by Achakka, an old village woman, the plot centers Kanthapura, a village in south India. The village is the microcosm of the traditional Indian society with its hidden caste hierarchy. In Kanthapura, there are Brahmin quarters, Sudra quarters, and Pariah quarters. Outwardly, there is an attempt to show harmony among them which is not true in reality. Kanthapara appears isolated and removed from civilization, but the writer tries to compensate by ceremonies, rituals, and festivals

instead of presenting them according their historical: Contribution in the freedom movement. Rao depicts regular involvement of villagers in Sankara Jayanthi, Kartik-Purnima, Ganesh-Jayanthi, Dasara and the Satyanarayan Puja as if these support them for their natural unity. The local deity Kewchamma protects the villagers "through famine and despairs, death despair". (3)

The time when the action of the novel is set in the 1920s and 1930s, the period when Mahatma Gandhi had become the important figure in Indian's struggle for freedom Rao treats the history of the freedom of the movement at the level of hostility between village folk and the British colonial authority at a time when colonialism had become intensely handed its response to the civil disobedience movement. He focuses on two individual leaders and their beliefs: the actual and mythized figure of Gandhi, and his transmutation into Moorthy, the saintly hero of the novel. As the movement reaches Kanthapura, young Moorthy suggested that in the city, they should have Harikathha man who is much honoured by Maharaja. They had full faith in Moorthy who was, "as honest as elephant," (9) and so they readily agreed each towards the expenses.

Moorthy visits the city, and returns as a Gandhiman. He has become spokeman for Gandhi, by submitting to his attitudes and beliefs. The villagers describes him as "Our Gandhi" (74), but interestingly he seems he has no actual meeting with Gandhi. Rather than in reality, he has only seen him in a vision addressing a public meeting with himself pushing his way through and joining the band of volunteers and inspiration by a touch of Gandhi's hand. It can be clarified by the following extract.

. . . Moorthy would have none of this, for, as everybody knew, one day he had seen a vision, a vision of the Mahatma, mighty & God-

beaming, and stealing between the volunteers Moorthy had got on to the platform and he stood by the Mahatma seemed to send out a mellowed force and love, and he stood by one of the fanners and whispered, Brother the next to me [. . .]. (39)

Moorthy's sole mission now is the non-violent movement, and the improvement of the lives of the untouchables. Then what would be the roles of the untouchables after all? In Kanthapura, there are Brahmin quarters, Sudra quarters and Pariah quarters. their main dedication seems towards Moorthy as if he is everything for them. To support Moorthy is not bad and that should be but what other significant roles do they have? As Moorthy has to resist orthodoxy at social level, and at the political level he has to fight the British authority symbolized by the Skeffington Coffee Estate and the police inspector Bade Khan who is out to suppress Gandhian Movement in Kanthapura. For these, the strong determination of Moorthy and people is inevitably necessary which lacks in Kanthapura. Rather than resisting the orthodox of social level it would be appropriate to show than the will power putting orthodox aside.

Rao presents the female characters like Rangamma, Ratna, the grandmother narrator Achakka and others as Brahmin widow characters for the movement, Rangamma and Ratna are the heroines and the natural leaders of the village women. Though Rao seems to give slight significant status Brahmins to Pariahs or Sudras but still they still do not have good status as they should have. It is clear that whether Brahmin characters or Sudra characters or Pariah characters, there are middle and lower class people. Rao seems as if he is trying to liberate the women from their given image of widows and as such by allotting more space in the home. But in so far as their national activities as members of the Sevika Sangha collides with domestic bliss, they are advised to followed their primary duties first.

If we are to help others, we must begin with our husbands; and she [Rangamma] tells Satamma, 'Your husband is not against Sevika Sangha. He only wants to eat the time . . . Rangamma tells her to be more regular in cooking, and we will say, "We should do our duty. If not, it is no use belonging to the Gandhi group." Rangamma says, "That is right, sister' and we say, "we shall not forget our children and our husband. (152)

In a way Rao is unmindful of the familiar women workers in rural areas who work hand in hand with men in field and plantation. Such women would be surprised at the traditional accepted sphere of women's participation floated by nationalists.

In more senses than one, this so called record in "Kanthapura" happens to be a so called true history of the time. Here in the novel happens as the police charge upon men and women who refuse budge, the police beat them, pour gutter water and even pots of toddy on them. At last, they manage to march them to the Santur police outpost. Only Rajah Rachanna and Hingayya and Potter Siddayya are detained. The other are taken in lorries and left in different places in the middle is the jungle. The satyagrahis get back somehow and plant five twigs of toddy trees and a toddy pot as their Satyagraha trophies of temple. Once again they go to the Skeffington Estate to step the sale of toddy. The police get into action – a scene witnessed many a time during these days.

But everyday of Jay Mahatma brings the crowd back leading to more violence. The non-payment of taxes takes a series turn. It becomes police Raj in Kanthapura. However these is no stopping the flood of movement in 1930. Rao's a picture is very much frightening here.



The field of the Satyagrahis are to be auctioned and the protesters have no place to go. The police open fire. Around thirty people thus exiled settled down at Kashipara. After all these sufferings, the Ramarajya dreamt by the villagers is still far away. There is a tuch of regret in the narrator's voice when after the sufferings and beatings and broken bones and lost properties, nothing seems changed for the mass of the people.

This novel *Kanthapura* is likely to be taken from the perspective of Subaltern studies. To trace the origin of the term 'Subaltern' we should go back to medieval period. In the Middle age, this term applied to vassals and peasants. By 1700, it, however, came to denote lower ranks in Military suggesting peasant origins. In this way finally this term got a rather authentic voice when Gramsci adopted it to refer to those groups in the society, who are subject to the hegemony of the ruling class. His saying seems very much appropriate to support the present thesis. As a Marxist, Gramsci was very much concerned with the porletarians whose voice remains unheard in the history. Gramsci is concerned with intellectual's role in the subaltern's culture and political movement into hegemony. Another figure Ranjit Guha's view is very much enthusiastic about providing the subaltern people with their own voice. He thinks that "Politics of the People (i.e, Subaltern)" was an autonomous domain, for it "neither originated from elite politics, nor did its existence depend on it" (4). Similarly Gaytri Spivak, in her seminal essay *Subaltern studies: Deconstructing Historiography*, give a deconstructive reading to the activities of the subaltern studies group. Like other many critics, she, too finds problem with their compartmentalized views of consciousness. Spivak's another influential and controversial essay "Can the subaltern speak?" makes a remarkable discussion of the feminist problems involved with represented of women issues. She argued that the subaltern people cannot speak

themselves. They have got to be represented and there is problem of representation. The elite intellectuals represent the subaltern voice filtered through their elite perspective. Michel Foucault defines representation in relation to power. The powerful people hold authority enough to manipulate representation the way they like. In this way Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), is replete with the examples of problem of representation. It depicts how the powerful colonizers have misrepresented the colonized people of the their world. It is only because of the power and authority that they would prove their misrepresentation of the third world people into so called truth. These are the major figures mostly will be taken in the present research work.

The present work has been divided into our chapters. The first chapter presents the short introductory outline of the present study. It tries to study Subaltern studies in brief and links it with present research work. The second chapter talks about the subaltern studies as theoretical tools. The third chapter will analyze the text at a considerable length with a critical summary. It will try to prove the hypothesis sorting out some from the text. The forth chapter is the conclusion of this research. Based on the textual analysis in the third chapter, it will conclude the explanation and arguments put forward in the preceding chapters.

## **Chapter II**

### **Subaltern Studies : A Theoretical Support**

This chapter will discuss subaltern studies as a theoretical modality on the basis of which this present research work will be analyzed further. The word subaltern denotes marginalized people or oppressed people whose actions and deeds are not recorded in the colonialist historiography during the colonial and post-colonial in India. As the subaltern people tried to raise the question against the colonizers or elite people, they were termed as second class people. Despite being co-operative to dominant authority, they were insulted. As a result, subaltern studies seem to provide the subaltern people with their own history and their own voices. Subaltern studies tries to find out their real existence and their contribution in all aspects.

"Subaltern studies" started by the end of 1970s formally appeared in 1982 with the aim of writing the historiography of the people ignored by colonialists as well as bourgeois nationalist historiographies. The group led by Ranajit Guha was praiseworthy about providing the subaltern people with their own voices.

The group is known as a group of historians, "who aimed to promote a systematic discussion of subaltern themes in South Asian Society" (vii). The group aimed to study "the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society without discrimination. To go further, it seems to be better denoting the meaning of subaltern. As such, what does the term 'subaltern' stand for? For this, we must go back to the history of the very term "subaltern". As it was not a new term when they announced their project in 1982.

The word 'subaltern' in late-Medieval English, it referred to vassals and peasants. By 1700, it, however, came to denote lower ranks in military suggesting peasant origin. The historians and writers began writing novels and histories about

military campaign in India and America from the subaltern perspective by 1800.

Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist, introduced the term in social theory, using it to denote the people in the margin marginalized by power. Subaltern classes may include peasants, workers and other groups denied access to hegemonic power. As a Marxist, Gramsci is very much concerned with the proletarians whose voice remains unheard in the history. Subaltern studies aim to promote a systematic discussion of oppressed groups of society through new historiographical perspective that rewrites history from the marginal perspective. They describe their project as an attempt to study.

. . .the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether it is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way . . . . Subaltern studies group sketched out its wide ranging concern both with visible 'history, politics, economics, and sociology of subalternity' and with the occluded attitude, ideologies and belief system in short, the culture informing that condition. (Guha vii)

Guha contrasts "politics of the people" with elite politics and privileges the former over the later. He thinks that politics of the people "was an autonomous domain, for it neither originated from elite politics, nor did its existence depend on the later" (4). It was proceeding on by adjusting itself to the prevailing condition in different form and content, despite of colonialism. In this sense, it is as old as colonialism is supposed to be. The development of nationalist consciousness, in accordance with elitist historiography, was an achievement either of colonialist administration, policy, and culture or of elite Indian personalities or idea. It is clear that such historiography, claims Guha, fails to 'acknowledge or interpret the contribution made by people on

their own, (i.e. independent of the elite)' (3). It, of course, ignores the people's politics. In fact, it is to say that the subaltern politics is different from the elite politics. But in terms of their contribution to national politics, the credit goes equally. The subaltern people do have equal contribution in politics as elite people do. In term of differences as they adopt in contribution, the elite groups mobilize their politics through adaptation to parliamentary institution whereas subaltern classes through traditional organization of kinship and territoriality or class association. Even the polices of political mobilization shows the prejudice of bourgeois nationalist as having link with British colonialism. The bourgeois nationalists do not see the contribution of the subaltern people rather adopt the legacies of colonialism. In a way, they are successors of colonial regime. The elite historiography equally claims "that Indian nationalism was primarily and idealist venture in which the indigenious elite led the people from subjugation to freedom" (2). It is proved that this is how the elite historiography ignores the roles of the subaltern classes played independent of elite command or head quarter during the anti-imperialist movements. Likewise, the subaltern reworking of colonials Indian history derives its importance from the face that it presents the viewpoint of the mammoth subaltern population of India, a point of view of the voice consistently gagged both in the imperialist and nationalist constructions of colonial Indian history. The Indian National Movement of the first half of the twentieth century challenged the imperialist notion of Indian in so far as it conceived of India and Indians as active and sovereign whereas imperialism saw only passivity, otherness, and dependency. But the movement, which was dominated by the upper and middle class people, also imbibed the premises on which the imperialist notion of Indian was built. The result was that the voice of the majority of the Indians—subalterns— remained under erasure in both the imperialist and nationalistic

discourse. The subaltern studies seek to rewrite and redraw the boundary of history and recover the erased/missed history of the marginalized people.

A history that recounts only the story of the Indian bourgeoisie, however, cannot ultimately explain nationalism in Indian Guha insists in the article entitled *on some aspects of Historiography of Colonial India*, because it excludes what he calls "the politics of people", and by people he means the subaltern groups (4). Therefore, the subaltern group of historians offer alternative histories of nationalism in India, histories which reveal the workings of subaltern resistance as well as the efforts on part of the nationalist leaders and writers to suppress its emancipatory potential.

The subaltern historiography approach spearheaded by Guha challenges and rewrites imperialist and nationalist construction of the colonial period in Indian history. In addition, subaltern studies has become the global concern, "It has gone," as Dipesh Chakrabarty one of the members of 'subaltern studies' group says, "beyond Indian or South Asia as an area of academic specialization" (9). The reason behind global presence is that, "subaltern studies has participated in contemporary critiques of history and nationalism, and of orientalism Euro-centrism in the construction of social science knowledge" (9). In a way subalternist analysis has become a identifiable mode of critical scholarship in history, literature and so on. Subaltern studies deals with inferiority and domination structure of every global society. Obviously, SS aspires to rewrite the nation outside the state-centred national discourse that replicates colonial power in the world of globalization.

The discussion of the subaltern studies talks about colonial India and again move ahead with its supporting arguments on the subaltern people against elite people or bourgeois nationalist or colonialists as a whole. Subaltern studies talk about the

contribution of subaltern people, their existence in the eyes of elite and women as subaltern etc. So it has multi dimensional aspects.

The publication of subaltern studies is an important event in the writing of the history of colonial India. The research focuses on the activities of the people, the peasants. Rather than raising the voice of the exploited people or oppressed people, it tries to locate as they are and their contribution. There is a kind of mental space between the world of politics on the one hand the economic processes of capitalist transformation the other within which the social forms of existence and consciousness of the people are all their own— strong and enduring in their right and therefore free of manipulations by the dominant groups. However much of the ruling classes may control the theme and content or the sources of history, the subaltern (i.e. people) will manage to make themselves heard. They have their own way to be identified. In other words, this intermediate space represents the subjectivity, the active sources of the political activities of the subaltern people therefore they base their act as subjects of history not as such passive objects acted upon. If the task of the subaltern people's historians is always to keep their antennae directed towards the intermediate space from where comes the voice of the people. Javeed Alam in the book *Reading Subaltern Studies* edited by David Ludden says:

All the contribution are therefore convinced of the autonomy of the peasantry and concerned with demonstrating how in their struggles, whether in the spares of productive activates or in the more directly political sphere of mass upsurges or revolts, the politics of the subaltern constitutes 'autonomous domain. (44)

Definitionally, it is a domain which first 'neither originated from elite politics nor did its existence depend on the later' (Guha 3), and where, second, the politics was as

modern as indigenous elite politics, it was distinguished by its relatively greater depth in time as well as structure' (4).

Empirically the autonomous domain of peasant politics is sought to be established on the basis of evidence which displays a consistent tendency toward resistance and a propensity to rebellion on the part of peasant masses, thereby outstripping the limits set by the ruling classes. It is true as Ranajit Guha says that there is an 'invariant notion of resistance to elite domination' and this is due to as he rightly remarks, the common condition of exploitation. Exploitation and oppression have been a perennial source of revolts. Most class societies have some history of revolts even if the people involved has not grown the limitations of their archaic consciousness. In the context of nationalist politics, a part from everything else, begs the question instead of providing head towards the historical evaluation of peasant revolt and developing a correct revolutionary stand in the struggle for freedom. Hundreds of thousands of peasant masses broke thought the limits imposed by the 'elites' and took to militant action, during the Rowlatt Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience Movement. In a way the co-existence of elite class and subaltern was strong proof of 'the failure of Indian bourgeoisie to speak for the nation. There were vast areas in the life of the consciousness of the people which where never integrated into their hegemony' (5-6, 551). In other word, it endows, colonialism with hegemony which history denied it.

Ranjit Gaha, in his essay *Dominance without Hegemony and it's historiography*, asserts that colonialism exerted dominance without hegemony. It proceeded on with the help of coercion rather than agreement of the people. The people resisted against colonialism but the colonial historiography, however, simply observes their resistance always busy in proving the British rule as based on peoples



request. It undermines their political sensibility. It seems busy in proving the British colonialism as a rule that was based on the assent of the people. Above up these, some native historiographers fall prey to the discourse of colonialism; so called project of improvement. These are the factors which are responsible behind the emergence of colonialism as a project of imperialism that involved the assent or approval of the ruled.

As Guha thinks colonialism as a rule without hegemony, this hegemony was either created out of force or it was simply imagined by colonialist historiographers while writing British history. They tried to ignore the various histories of subaltern people. It is definitely an act of colonial arrogance. After independence, the bourgeoisie nationalism inherited it as a colonial legacy. It boasted of representing all people as it has won the assent of the people. Like colonialism, elite nationalism takes help of force rather than persuasion so it is also dominance without hegemony. Guha therefore, says: "In short the price of blindness about the structure of the colonial regime as a dominance without hegemony has been, for us, a total want of insight into the character of the successor of regime (elite nationalism) too as a dominance without hegemony" (307). The bourgeoisie nationalism historiography, have emerged as deceitful as it made such anti-imperialist mobilization into the ground for bourgeois claims to hegemony. And we know better what the reality was.

Subaltern studies, as a new kind of national history, "consists of dispersed moments and fragments, which subaltern histories seek in ethnographic colonialism" (20). This kind of historiography of course "constitutes subversive politics because it exposes forms of power/knowledge that oppress subaltern people and also because it provides liberating alternatives" (20). For inquiring colonialism, the historians and post colonial critics go together against colonial modernity for the prosperity of

subaltern people. The historians should aspire to create an imaginary liberated community which can come into its own in subaltern language and memory. In fact, it has developed into a cultural history as it is based on the culture of the people (i.e., subaltern).

As we know, subaltern studies have already moved away from people's politics to the study of culture of the subaltern people. It tries to take resort to culture as well as literary modes to inquire into history. It is a great shift in the people's perspective to know history "the first emancipatory act that the subaltern studies performs in our understanding of tribes, castes or other such groups", as Veena Das talks in her articles *Subaltern as Perspective*, "is to restore to them their historical being" (314). In the same way David Ludden says that subaltern studies has become "an original sight for a new kind of history from below, a people's history free of national constraints" (12).

As different critics and writers have taken different issues of subaltern, Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak gives a deconstructive reading to the activities of subaltern studies group in her seminal essay *Subaltern studies: Deconstructing Historiography* like other many critics she too finds problem with their compartmentalized views of consciousness. She comes to realize that the binary oppositions like elite and subaltern are such terms which come under erasure. It is the deconstructive view. Their project, in her view, is rather a positive one as it aspires to investigate, discover and establish a subaltern or peasant consciousness. It more or less supposed that this empirical project will lead to a firm ground or truth that can be disclosed. Spivak however, thinks that 'consciousness, here is not consciousness in general but a historical political species, subaltern consciousness' (338). In fact, deconstructive view of historiography made an influential of subaltern as well as post colonial

studies. It means 'Deconstructing Historiography' paved the way for the progress of subaltern and post colonial studies.

Dipesh Chakrabarty, in his essay *Invitation to a Dialogue* says:

The central aim of the subaltern studies project is to understand the consciousness that informed and still informs political actions taken by the subaltern classes on their own, independently of any elite initiatives. It is only by giving the consciousness a central place in historical analysis that we see the subaltern as the maker of the history s/he lives out. However, this does not mean that we place this consciousness outside history, as the charge of 'idealism' implies. (374)

For establishing subaltern people as an autonomous domain having their own history, Guha's view classified much. Spivak finally suggests SSG to follow "reading against grain" approach because it "would get the group off the dangerous hook of claiming to establish the truth knowledge of the subaltern and his consciousness" (356). In this essay *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency* Guha, too depicts tribal revolts as the subaltern rebellion, which is completely different from nationalism. David Ludden says that subaltern studies entered the academic scene by asserting the complete autonomy of lower class insurgency. It is equally remarkable that the scholars from inside and outside subaltern studies established subaltern people's everyday resistance against elite classes as the basic features of life in the politically decolorized spaces as India.

The peasants or subaltern groups tend to resist the elite domination. It emerges as an invariant feature about subaltern groups. Obviously, it somehow makes the discussion on the discussion on the subaltern mentality fruitful. They resisted colonialists as well as other elitists by disobeying their order. Here we can be sure that

they had their own way of life in terms of resistance. Though they could take orders but they had their traditional ways. They would derive the terms from the idioms of their everyday life so that they could make these struggles of own.

As subaltern people took order and later resist in their own way, sometimes they have problems because of elitists or some educated scholars who head them to nowhere. As the death of subaltern classes in history, in Gramscie's opinion, is inevitably fragmented and episodic as they were subject to the activities of the elite groups even when they raise their voice against complacent elite groups. The subaltern classes have less to means by which they can control their representation and for this, they have the way or can get rid of subordination in the permanent victory. But it is also clear that the victory is not at hand. There Gramsci is concerned with the intellectual's role in the subaltern culture and political movement into hegemony. These subaltern people need intellectuals to show them the way. In such case, if the intellectuals are from elite group, they might perceive subaltern from their perspectives. In the same way, in some cases, it is found that the elite intellectuals encourage the subaltern people to go ahead for their freedom but later they leave them in such a way that these subaltern people can go nowhere. It is the clear example of their misrepresentation. Whatever we think and wherever we go, bourgeois nationalists and colonialists always seem to dominate or marginalize these people (i.e. subaltern people) despite their great contribution in each and every field.

As far as the subaltern women are concerned, they are for more marginalized. Here, Gayatri Chakraworty Spivak has tried to swerve the direction of subaltern studies towards feminist issues. On the one hand the women are dominated by their male counterparts and on the other hand like their male counterparts are suppressed and exploited by colonialist. Colonialism appears to be more hazards to females than

to the males in the colonized spaces. In Spivak's opinion the identity of women is erased in the very process of rewriting subjectivity:

It is, rather, that, both as object of colonialist historiography and as the subject of insurgency, the ideological construction keep the male dominate. If in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history cannot speak, subaltern as female is even deeply in shadow. (82-83)

In fact Spivak tries to restore the significance of the woman in the context of subaltern studies. It is very must transparent that subaltern women took part in the anti-imperialist insurgencies as the members of elite class or other bourgeois nationalist but their contribution was simply overlooked and fantasized. The position of subaltern woman can contribute a lot to bring this bitter fact to light, distorted by elite historiographers. The voice as well as deed of the subaltern woman is ignored in the male dominated society. The subaltern women's contribution and potential is marginalized despite their active participation in the insurgencies against imperialists. In the scholarly commentary *A literary Representation of the Subaltern: Mahasweta Devils' 'Stanadayini'*, Spivak argues how woman are denied their subjectivity, their voice. Whether the woman is looked "from above" as merely a sexual object or "from below" as a goddess, she is reduced into the object of male's desire. Moreover, she has also pointed out the parallelism between Jashado the subaltern, and Jashoda the Divine. From one aspect, she has been turned into an object of the male's desire. On the other, she has been worshipped as she feeds their children with her breast. She has been equally linked with the mother country. The male wants to see the women as a sacrificial being so that he could fulfill his various desires from her. Whether they are perceived from the perspective of goddess or a sacrificial beings, she gets reduced

down to an object of the male's desire. They are made to do all the things for the sake of males. They are used as weapons to make the males hero. By representing women as goddesses, the patriarchal society has tried to hide the injustice and oppression it has inflicted upon women.

Spivak, in her seminal essay, *Can subaltern Speak?* reveals how the white men and brown men reduce the woman into the object of male's desire. The White men deny her subjectivity through their sympathetic paternal desire. They take women as such creature that needs sympathy and protection. In the same manner, the brown men claim that the brown women sets herself on fire to death out of her love and devotion to her male counterpart. This is very much related to Sati custom. Spivak criticizes the white males for trying to call sati custom a barbaric ritual without knowing its cultural importance, though the Hindu males claim that the Hindu Mythology is feminist as it gives powerful position to goddess. They may exploit in the name of beauty that lies in goddess.

Whether it is west or east, the women are denied the position from which they can speak on their own as both spaces are dominated by patriarchies, in which women are always turned into the object of the male's desire. "There", Spivak says, "is no space from which the sexed subaltern subject can speak" (105). "Between patriarchy and imperialism, subject constitution and object formation", in Spivak's words, "Figure of woman disappears . . .". (102) It is to such a danger, to which Spivak alerts us in the last part of the essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?", wherein she cites the example of Goddess Durga. Many native males scholars and insurgents consider Durga's Central role in Hinduism as position of women being the centre of the Hindu Society with her voice taken the voice of Hindu women, but Spivak disagrees with such a positioning of Hindu women.

To see this as Proof of feminism of classical Hinduism or of Indian culture as goddess centred and therefore feminist is as ideologically contaminated by nativism or reverse ethnocentrism as it was imperialist to erase the image of the luminous fighting Mother Durga and invest the proper noun Sati with no significance other than the ritual burning of the helpless widow as Sacrificial offering who can then be saved. There is no space from which the sexual Subaltern subject can speak. (103)

The noticeable fact is that whatever discussion she makes on various subaltern classes, she directs it to the woman issues. She claims that the women is doubly subalternized in the colonized patriarchal spaces.

In her influential essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* Spivak clearly asserts that subaltern can not speak, the subaltern has to be represented. If knowledge is power/ knowledge is privilege, then subaltern subjects are denied to have access to it. Spivak represents the voice of difference among the major postcolonial theorists. Spivak presents the situation of subaltern members whose spokesperson becomes their life-giver and master.

the small peasant proprietors cannot represent themselves; they must be represented. Their representative must appear simultaneously as their master, as an authority over them, as unrestricted governmental power that protects them from the other classes and sends them rain and sunshine from above. (71)

Michel Foucault defines representation in relation to power.

According to him representation is a matter of power. The powerful holders try to represent the people as the way they like Michel Foucault defines representation

in relation to power. He says that representation is a matter of power. As to hold the authority, the powerful people are enough to manipulate representation the way they wish. The powerful people or institution turns their representation a truth by suppressing the representation of their rivals. Edward said in *Orientalism* (1978), replete with the examples of problem of representation. It depicts how the powerful colonizers have misapprehended colonized people of the third world. Because of the power and authority they could prove their misrepresentation which is in fact false. Spivak in her seminal write-up *Subaltern studies: Deconstruction Historiography*, discusses the problems of misrepresentation too. She tries to trace out the complicity between the subject and object of investigation involved in representation. She reveals how this kind of complicity between male subaltern historians and subalterns males have led to the exclusion of women from subaltern historiography. Spivak, on her most controversial and celebrated essay *Can the Subaltern Speak?* asserts that the subaltern classes cannot represent themselves. As a result, they have to be represented. In such a case the elite intellectuals as a subject of investigation tends to overshadow the subaltern class in the investigation. In other words, when any elite intellectuals represent any subaltern classes, his/her representation tends to get filtered through his/her (elite intellectual's) perspective. In fact, there cannot be a representation free of biasness of the elite intellectuals. Moreover these elite intellectuals emerge as the boss or master to the subaltern people. In other words, there is every chance that the elite intellectual overshadows whom he/she represents. In terms of subaltern women's representation in the various texts of elite writers, it can be very much noticeable. Spivak consistently draws our attention to the problem of representation as it is the privileged position of elite intellectual scholars that led them serve as the spokesperson of the marginalized women. It means, the representation of



the subaltern is such type of representation which is done from the perspective of elite. Such type of representation fails to be true representation of oppressed women. The subaltern as a female, as Spivak argues in "Can the subaltern speak?" cannot be heard or read," even if her subalternity is sought to be transcended at the mythical level (104). So, they are misrepresented.

Many writers and critics, with the help of myth and exaggeration, have tried to depict the women as a subaltern class that can speak on its own. This kind of representation is not rooted in the socio-cultural reality. Instead, it tends to give false impression about the represented subaltern class women. But here, the depiction of the woman as the class that can speak itself is nothing but sheer manipulation of subaltern women from the hands of the elite writers. This kind of representation brings the elite writer to the limelight at the cost of the represented subaltern women.

In the light of above representation of the subaltern, I try to explore the theme and misrepresentation of Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*. Raja Rao foregrounds the subaltern people in his novel 'Kanthapura' in submissive way. Though, he presents the characters for independent movements but they are not presented, as the subaltern historiographers claim. Subaltern have contributed much in national politics but Rao in the name of nationalists misrepresent them. He presents the condescending feelings. As the novel begins he presents the marginalized people as such who can do nothing in the face of British Raj. As the novel moves forward, he presents them as most violent one without fruits. He leads in such a way, they have separation in their unity.

### Chapter III

#### Representation of Subaltern People in Kanthapura : A Textual Analysis

Kanthapura is a novel which reflects the conflict between the Subaltern as well as other marginalized people and the British Government of 1930s in India. It shows Gandhian influence on the nationalist movement. From the very beginning, the novel tries to show the Gandhian influence in politics of Subaltern people. The subaltern people strive to fight against the Raj Submissively which can be understood non-violence where as The British Government tries to subdue their uprising through all kinds of means whether violently or non violently. Rao fails to raise the suppressed voice of Subaltern people representing them submissively as the novel starts. But later, he presents them as violent and barbaric one. He presents them so violent that they become really barbaric one and leaves them in such a place where they find no fixed destination and feel regret to some how.

As to point out the beginning he says:

. . . it was old Ramakrishna, the very learned father of Rangamma, that said he would read out the Sankara-Vijaya day after day. Their used to be bhajan . . . . It was beautiful, I tell you - day other day we spent as though the whole village was having a marriage party. (14)

As it is shown in this way in the beginning so is not the case at last. In the same village, there occurs tragic events. The village Kanthapura gets completely destroyed. It is concluded as 'there is neither man nor mosquitos in Kanthapura' (184).

Raja Rao is an intellectual elite figure who brings forth subaltern people as well as other marginalized people in the creation of a national identity for India. In Kanthapura, he highly misrepresents the marginalized people and fails to represent

Gandhian ideology of non-violence. Rao, more truly has metamorphosed Gandhi into Moorthy, the protagonist of the novel. Rao seems positive towards Gandhi but fails to raise his voice and leadership as the novel moves ahead. He takes him even as god, portrays him sometimes shiva, Krishna and Rama during the course of events. 'A literary Representation of the subaltern: Mahasweta Devi's *stanadeyini*', Spivak argues that whether the woman is looked "from above" as merely a sexual object or "from below" as a goddess, she is reduced into the object of male's desire. In the same way, Moorthy, whether he is portrayed as Krishna, Rama or in other form, he is perceived from the perspective of an elite.

The novel *Kanthapura* is the name of fictionalized village. It is a picture of a gallery of living village folk. In the centre of the village *Kanthapura*, there is a temple *Kenchhama*, which is the focal point of all religious and social activities. In the village, there is Moorthy, a Brahmin bachelor who has recently come back to village from the city. Once he went to city for further study but when he came to learn the Gandhian ways, he seems to have been true follower of Gandhi, He is supposed to spread the Mahatma's message among the villagers. He tries to Unite the people ritually as well as politically which after all moves towards violent. To unite them ritually, he sets the *linga* (a phallic symbol representing the god shiva); in the old temple which he starts singing *bhajans* (hymns) and reciting *Harikathar* (11). On the other hand, To unite them politically, he presents them violently and barbaric which is very much against the Gandhian philosophy. The novel *Kanthapura* begins with the praying of goddess *Kanchamma* and Consecrating a half-sunk *Linga* (a phallic symbol of god shiva) in the temple. The activities that take place in the novel are religious and submissive on the one hand the novel records the Gandhian ideological

misrepresentation and its impact on a typical Indian Village, which is brought by the intimate narration of an elderly widow, Achakka.

As the people are drawn from all sectors of the village, there is the proboscis within the community. There are Brahmin street, Pariah street, Potter's street and weavers street in the village. Though, the writer outwardly tries to show the unity but it is not as such. The villagers scare to go to the pariah quarters. With extreme domination it is said that 'he even goes to the potters' quarter and the weavers' quarters and the Sudra quarter, and I closed my ears when I heard he went to the Pariah quarter's (8).

It is very much clear that there is much distinction within the community. Here the subaltern people are dominated. The leader of the movement in Kanthapura tries to bring the Brahmins and the sudras, the potters and the weavers, and the pariahs together but what is their special role after all? There comes the question of their existence. These people are so much marginalized in the eyes of writer that he fails them to bring into main stream. The subaltern people have their own contribution, way of life, but they are presented through the eyes of elite writer. He perceives them from his own perspective. Though he presents Moorthy as if he tries to unite all in the thread of humanity eroding hierarchy and bias of caste division but becomes fruitless as they turn violent later on. The villagers talk:

We said to ourselves, he is one of the Gandhimen, who say there is neither caste nor clan nor family, and they pray like us and they are like us. Only they say, too, one should not marry early, one should allow widows to take husbands and a Brahmin might marry a pariah and a pariah a Brahmin. (13)

But it is clear that the villagers scare to go to pariahs quarters. Though it is said that widows should allow to take husbands but the major characters like Rangamma, Ratna and even narrator Achakka are themselves widows.

Kanthapura contains mainly the events that take place during 1920s and early 1930 of India. The non-cooperation movement of 1920s included within its ambit the Surrender of titles and honours Boyeott of government affiliated schools, collage and universities, low courts, foreign clothes, and could be extended to include resignation from the government service and mass civil disobedience including the non payment of taxes. These activities are fit in Gandhain ideology but These activities do not long last as the writer leads them towards the wrong path. Other good things are National schools and colleges were to be set up Panchayats were to be established for setting disputes, hand spinning and weaving was to be encouraged and people were asked to maintain unity, give up untouchability and try to observe strict non-violence but all the activities are meaningless as they are not practised. When the tragic events occurs in the village, some villagers blame Moorthy as if he has brought all the misery in the village. As it is said, 'this Moorthy who had brought all the misery upno us' (162)

It does give a bit clarification that Rao has shown what happens in the society if they donot follow the British Government. As He tries to show their nationalistic movement, focuses on their weaknesses and miseries.

Similarly, Subaltern people as well as other marginalized people observe the Gandhi's programme of Civil Disobedience Movement. Which is highly highlighted in the novel. The villagers are not successful while following the principles of Gandhi in national movement. The presence of the police, Bade Khan, and the owner of Skeffington coffee Estate, are representing the British government in Kanthapura the villagers (except few) are called the followers of Gandhi and non-violence and they

are satyagrahis (follower of truth or soul-force). But their notion of Satyagraha is shown failure as they are presented as violent time and again. When Moorthy, a Satyagrahi goes to teach for the skeffington coffee Estate coolies, Badekhan, a police, stops him at the entrance. But Moorthy wants to enter the coffee Estate but at the meantime "Bade Khan swings round and - Bang/ - his /Lathi has hit Moorthy and his hands are on Moorthy's tuft" (85). By seeing their leader has been beaten "they all fall our Bade Khan and tearing away the lathi, bang it on his head" (85). Moorthy's non-violent notion of fighting against the government culminates in violence.

Rao says in the novel that there is no any distinction in any castes. They have unity in it but in the mean time the difference seems in the village. Subaltern people are looked differently. As it is said, "of course, you wouldn't expect pariah quarter, but I have seen from the street corner Beadle Timmayyer's hut" (11). The potters's street is presented as the smallest one. He categorizes the size of the houses as well. The sudras presented as badly dressed who are very much ignorant. 'They were always badly dressed and always paid revenues dues and debts after several notices' (12).

Rao presents the people of Brahmin quarters, Sudra quarters, Pariah quarters etc. Whether they are from Brahmin quarters or from others they are marginalized and Indian after all. The author should have presented them strictly unified in the face of the British Government. There is no unity among the people. He creates the character like Bhatta the first Brahmin and primary landlord of Kanthapura who is not likely to keep in elite group. Rao gives emphasis on the categories and other qualities of people rather than the real movement. He presents Bhatta who goes against Subaltern people even if he should have joint with the villagers. In this way, he creates conflict among the villagers. Though it might be odd to keep Brahmins on the categories of Subaltern

people nevertheless they are marginalized people. But Rao presents him as opportunist, who exploits conflict among villagers, taking side with the traditionalists who oppose Gandhi's doctrine of equal treatment for untouchable's because his profits are larger as a result of the cheap labour that they provide. He lobbies his cause with phony smiles of religious devotion, wearing holy ashes to enhance his image. Through frequent trips to the city of Kavar, he becomes the official legal agent of the colonial administration and the sole banker of Kanthapura, using his position to raise "interest rates on mortgaged lands belonging to Gandhi's support.

The next thing to notice in Kanthapura is that the people are presented as though they believe in Superstitions and omens. Numerous superstitions and omens dominate Kanthapura which also is the cause of their failure. They yoke their bulls to the plough under the rohini star. A shooting star means the passing away of some god from the earth. To ward off fever sidhanna's wife Sati put into a rag 'a three-piece bit and a little rice and an areca nut, and hung it securely to the roof' (52). Even the fever they take due to god's anger. They believe that a cobra never bit an innocent man and that the non-curdling of milk or the non-drying up of a dhoti was due to the Sevik business. One of the character Narsamma has apprehensions that Moorthy's mixing with Pariahs is a sin which necessitates her to go to Benares and Rameswaram while Bhatta has fears of having the "community polluted and the manes of our ancestors insaliate" (42). Though Moorthy is educated, even he cannot undo his ancient Brahmanic tradition. When he goes to the house of a pariah, "the roof seems to shake, and all the gods of heaven seem to cry out against him, and his hands steal mechanically to the holy thread and holding it, he feels he could like to say Hari-Om, Hari-Om" (77). And when he drinks milk, he does it "with many a trembling prayer" (77).

As there is the problem within the society, there is much suppression from outside. Rao creates so cruel and nonsense language of British Government to suppress the marginalized people. These marginalized, Kanthapurians are beaten by the policemen. When "the brahmins and pariahs and potters and weavers marched into the police station, the policemen twisted their arms and beat them on their knuckles, and spat into their mouths, and when they had slapped and banged and kicked they left them out one by one. Rao shows here complete suppression of British Raj and failure of these marginalized people. The people can do nothing except utter the sounds of God. As it is said,

And the policemen twisted their arms and beat them on their knuckles, and spat into their mouths, and then they had slapped and banged and kicked, they let them out one by one, one by one they let them out, and they all marched back to Kanthapura, all but Moorthy. Him they put into a morning bus, and with one policeman on the right-and one policeman on the left they carried him away to Karwar. We wept and we prayed, and we vowed and fasted, and may be the gods would hear our feeble voices. Who would hear us, if not they" (92)

Uttering the sound of God indicates that they have nothing to do except the God's provocation which is not possible after all.

The villagers have got limited resources. The resources make the villages so much emotional to his/her property that he/she extends the individual process to the fields and the cattles such as, Rangamme's coconut-field. Though they have such emotional towards their land and property but later they happen to destroy their village and leave it. It shows the contradiction. The very contradiction seems as the matter of problem.



Even the writer presents villagers ironically. A person's speech his identity, for it reveals his/her background, his/her weakness, education, even cast and percentage and Kanthapura has caught the very tone and rhythm of the rural ways of speaking. Whether the village people use phrases, idioms, proverbs, similes or metaphors or curses, whether they appreciate or denunciate, their language is ironical or satirical, they are categorized differently. The narrator's notice or identification about Range Gowda having "a golden tongue and a leather tongue, and what is uttered by the golden tongue is golden and sure, what is uttered by the leather one is for the thief and cuncubine" (101) can be applied to the other characters of the novel as well. The villagers lace or decorate their conversation with similes and metaphors taken from birds and animals, plants and trees, and common objects and expressions. Even the images are used without the brilliance and glass of the mind. Moorthy is "quiet as a noble cow" (5), "honest as an elephant" (9) does indicate his submissive characteristic.

Marginalized people, whether they are observed from the above or from the below they are categorized as others. They are perceived differently by the elite people. There in Kanthapura, these marginalized people are shown as if they engage in the insignificant matters. If the people engage in such matters they really forget or remain backward in terms of their real motto. As to show the conflict in Kanthapura Bhatta plays role to go against his own society. As it is said that "Bhatta was the only one who would have nothing to do with these Gandhi bhajans." (27). As the people say that Bhatta used to live with them before he went to city does indicate that he is not so above to these marginalized people, but here the same person perceives the other people differently.

To tell you the truth, Bhatta began all this after his last visit to the city. Before that he used to sit with us and sing with us, and sometimes, when Moorthy was late in Coming, he would go and get the white Khadi-bound My experiments with truth and ask seem to read it and explain it himself, then suddenly he went to the city . . . . (27)

This saying clarifies that he disregards the people of Kanthapura while following the city people. It does indicate the weakness and gullibility of the people of Kanthapura. The people are shown as they have the problem in their existence. They act difficulty to get many to their children. It does not mean that they have no problem in their society but they are perceived from above.

Lingayya's revenue to not fully paid. The revenue Inspector is brandishing a search-warrant. It has to be paid out before the coming week. Just twenty one rupees and eight annas. Payable soon after harvest. For six month it shall be 10 percent interest- 'Learned Maharaja, anything you deem just !'- 'All right, you are a father of many children, let it be nine and a half' you are like a great father.' Lingayya gets the Money. And Lingayya and Madu send Kanthamma, our Patterns' street Kanthamma. This time it is her son's marriage. She will not die with her son having a wife. And it shall be ground. One hundred and twenty rupees, she needs (29).

From the above description, we can notice that they have the problem of their offspring's, marriage, money etc. It is said that rather than their nationality and non-violence revolution against the British Govt, they have their thinking of their own. Though it is grand marriage, needs hundred and twenty rupees is the example of their inferiority.

As the novel moves further we find the conflict among the people. Bhatta is presented in such a way who tries to neglect the lower caste people. Even he insults the other marginalized people. Bhatta comments,

it is so difficult to find bridegrooms these days, I went to see old subrama pandita. And he was telling me how he could find are of his last granddaughter. No one. Every fellow with Matric or Inter asks, "What dowry do you ofer? How far will you finance my studies? – I went to havethis degree and that degree". Degree, Degree, Nothing but degrees or this Gandhi Vogabondage (33).

It does indicate that money is the means of everything. Bridegrooms will find brides if they have money or if they can offer financial support. It creates the question for the very existence of marginalized people. Here, even the Gandhian business is criticized. Gandhian activities are misinterpreted. If helps to create the confusion among the people. "Nothing but weaving coarse hand-made cloth, not fit for a mop, and bellowing out bhajans and bhajans, and mixing with the Pariahs (133). Here, misinterpreting the Gandhian ideology, Pariahs are extremely insulted. It indicates their poor existence in the society. The elite perspective towards them is clearly noticed. These is different in saying in term of castes the conflict can be identified in terms of it. Whether the caste should exist, whether the separate-eating. Should exist or not is the matter of discussion. It tries to help to expose their existence in the society. As to notice the conflict if can be noted.

But Rangamma whispers again from the corner: 'Has the Mahatma approved it? I don't think so. He always says let the castes exist, let the separate-eating exist, let not one community marry with the other-no no Bhattarai the Mahatma is not for all this pollution. Is that why,

Rangamma, interrupts Bhatta angrily, 'Is that why the Mahatmam has adopted a pariah girl as a daughter? He is a Vaisya and he may do what he likes that does not pollute me. But, Ram-Rama, really if we have to hang the sacred thread over the shoulders of every pariah . . . It's impossible, impossible . . . In fact that's what I was saying to the Swami the other day. (34)

Here is the wrong interpretation of the Mahatma. Mahatma's ideology is perceived from different perspectives. The conflict takes place in terms of caste and separate eating.

The lower castes people have their own way of life. They have their own characteristics which is unique and they are proud of being that. Here the writer tries to take in the front to expose them. Whether exposing to the front or backward, he perceives them from his perspective. It does not mean that they want to wear sacred thread or to be equal like that of brahmin's. It's their personal matters. But such sayings are exposed here. The writer not letting them in their own way, he tries to interpreter them. ". . . the Swami is worried over this pariah movement, and he wants to crash it in its seed, before its cactus-roots have spread far and wide' (34).

The elimination of lower caste people is prevalent in the given extract. It seems as if they have the problem of pariahs business. It is said that the pariahs involvement will hamper the existence of Brahmins. This the concept that they should be confined within their shelter. There is the saying that these pariah who are known as lower caste people will be pariah today, tomorrow they will be Mohomedous, and the day after the European and it should be stopped. Even the Swami says that he will outcaste every brahmin who has touched a pariah. Swami asks help from Bhatta to do that. Bhatta takes no trouble about other matters but it is that pariah business that has

been heavy on his soul. If the Pariah's business goes on like this, and brahmins mix up with it the village Kanthapura will exhuming acted. It is said that Swami has sent a word through Bhatta to say that the whole of Kanthapura will be stopped for further facilities. If anyone from the brahmin family does not stop mixing with the pariahs, he or she can give slaps on his or her chicks, on the buttocks and send him or her seveaning to the pariahs these are the things that indicate the domination of the lower caste people. If anyone sleeps with the women of lower caste, he or will be insulted greatly,

If he does not stop mixing with pariah, this very hand do you hear ? - this very hand will give him two slaps on his cheeks and one on the buttocks and send him screaming to his friends, the pariahs . . . . If he wants to go and sleep with these pariahs whereas, he can do so by all means but let him not call himself a brahmin, do you here? (43).

Such saying indicate the perspective of elite group towards the marginalized people. The women are taken as whores who may do physical business for their livings. Though Moorthy represents Gandhi in the novel he is taken as doubtful as he might do something wrong mixing up with pariahs. It is further said as if he is very fine and does not do any mistake here question arises how Gandhi like Character is perceived in this way. Real Mahatma Gandhi had become Synonymous to non-violence; he had become an icon for many leaders all over the world. Beside these leaders, Mahatma Gandhi has been icon for innumerable persons all over the world. He can be compared as Christ and Buddha. But here the fictionalized Gandhi is perceived differently than the real one. For Gandhi a non-violent revolution is not a programme of seizure of power. It is a programme of transformation of relationships, ending in a peaceful transfer of power. Thus, he kept this non-violent revolution till

the independence of India. He fought for marginalized people as well. Fictionalized Gandhi who is known as Moorthy whose leadership goes towards the violent and failure one as the novel moves towards the ending part.

The novel entangles here and there talking about questions of Pariah, weavers etc and sometimes other insignificant things. There is much problem within the society which is clearly exposed in the novel. As Moorthy goes house to house for the people who weave, there arises the problem for this as well. As Moorthy says that he needs help from people from that day onward. He goes on saying that there is a huge panchayat of all India called the Congress, and that congress belongs to Mahatma, and Mahatma says every village in this country must have a Panchayat. Even they have to spin and practise ahimsa and speak the truth those who become the member of panchayat. Moorthy says this to the lower caste people. These people show the problems in terms of it. Those people show the problem and try to escape from the given duty. Sometimes these people are shown with their problems and sometimes with aggressive mood towards the Government. Those are the contradictory things in the novel. To talk about the problems of villagers the given extract says:

At this Rachanna's wife says, what will it give us, learned one? and Moorthy says something about the foreign government and the heavy taxations and the poverty of the peasants, and the all say; 'of course, of course,' and ask you: Will you spin a hundred yards of yarn per day? But Mandana's wife says, 'I'm going to have a child', and Satanna's wife says, 'I'm going for my bother's marriage, "and her sister says, I'll spin if it will bring money. And Moorthy feels this is awful and nothing could be done with these women, so standing up he asks, 'is

there no one among you who can spin a hundred yards of yarn per day?

(78)

In such a way, Rao reveals the problem of society. These people do have problems, despite that they can contribute for the nation which is not likely to be seen in the novel. Even Moorthy feels so desperate that he says to Rachanna's wife who seems more dependent on her husband. Rachana's wife says, "if my husband says "spin" I shall spin learned one' (79). It seems that no one is willingly ready to carry out this job. Rao tries to show the unity of different castes but time and again he is showing his reality what is he is supposed to do.

Moorthy has several sympathetic souls with him: Rangamma, the kind lady and a patron for harikatha celebrations, Ratna, the young widowed daughter of Kamamma, Rangamma's sister Patel Range Gowda, the revenue collector and others. But there are other sceptics, like mouth Venkamma. His own mother is much concerned is much concerned about Moorthy mixing with the low caste Pariah. Indeed, when someone spreads the rumor that the swami-the priest, upholder of dharma-has threatened the villagers with excommunication if Moorthy continuous to go around with the Pariahs, Naraamma is terribly upset; she sobs and shivers and soon dies. Her death shows the weakness of the society and how the lower class people are perceived into the society. It's from the perspective of an elite the lower castes are taken in this way.

As Moorthy tries to expand the non-violent movement in a more organized manner, he faces much problem. When the police know of this, they come to arrest in the house of Rangamma. The villagers are angry and they protest against it. No success they do get against it. Moorthy is arrested and taken away to the nearby city of Karwar. His friends offer to defend him in the court, but Moorthy insists that truth

alone shall be his defence. A satyaghari needs no advocates. What he says is not followed by the villagers. While perceiving the marginalized villagers, they are taken as problematic and ignorance. They are perceived as if they can contribute nothing against the British Raj. While perceiving them from below, they are presented as active and energetic which after all gives them nothing and while perceiving from above they are much more dominated.

As the novel moves ahead, Subaltern people are presented a bit actively. Whatever the role they play is to make the elite hero. Nonsubaltern people have been discussing about subaltern since long. But still subaltern people do not have certainty of anything. Singing the slogans of subaltern people, elite writers or persons want to be hero. Here, Rao as well may be want to be hero himself by encouraging the subaltern people for the national politics. To be non subaltern is not bad, but to exploit the subaltern is bad. For Rao, to write about the marginalized people is not bad but to lead them into nothingness is much more critical. Though subaltern people can get victory over something, the credit goes to the elite group over their victory. Subaltern people are such people who are encouraged and moved with the help of others. The question arises, upto when the subaltern should be given sympathy to make the nonsubaltern hero? To give sympathy, love or affection is not necessary to the subaltern. This does indicate that subaltern will remain as subaltern for ever. It does not lead them for the further progress. It does not give them any final solution. Saying subaltern cannot speak and move, it is not good to give the guidance. There should be such persons who create subaltern who could speak, move and contribute themselves. These all characteristics are not in Kanthapura. Rao seems to keep subaltern as subaltern not as in progressive way. Though he presents them as nationalists why he gets failed to raise their status from the conventional is the matter of question.



As to point out the ending part of the novel, we find the marginalized people, active, energetic and barbaric at the same way. Why the writer tries to make Moorthy a failure hero and other people complete submission to him the matter of doubt on him. This characteristics seem more violent and barbaric one. In the same village where Bhajans used to be held, takes the place of terror and violent. Gandhian non-violence gets failure. Though India was not successful to be free from British colony at the time of novel writing but seemed to lead forward to these subaltern and other marginalized people towards optimism. There does not seem the sign of would be success as well. They are perceived as subaltern not more than that rank. Rao's elite perspective is not different than that of others. The novel shows much suppression of the British government on the one hand and barbarism for nothingness of subaltern and other marginalized on the other. The Whiteman who owns the skefington coffee Estate is the symbol of imperialist rulers of India who exploits Indians in many ways. As a representative of the Estate owner, there comes Badekhan, a police the British government employs the characters or agents like the Bhatta and Swami to oppose the freedom movement. Bhatta takes an active part to oppose the freedom movement in Kanthapura. He is one who takes the message of the pollution of Brahmin Caste after Moorthy put the dead body of Pariah in the Pyre. In the same way when Rangamma establishes a sevika Sangh of Women, she gets criticized by many and even some of the members of Sangh get beaten by their husbands. The first arrest first arrest of Moorthy has created fear in the heart of villagers and the inclusion of their wives in Sevika Sangh has much more affected to them thus, they say, "our lands will be uncultivated, and there will be neither child nor women to pull the weeds or direct the canal water" (154). So have become impatient with hope of Gandhi's Ramrajya and express that there would not for Ramrajya in these days as they lived in Kaliyaya.

Gandhi is regarded, and desired by most villagers in Kanthapura, but he remains a distance and even somewhat unclear presence. Here in the novel Gandhi never appears and Moorthy is appeared and moves the villagers with the activities of the Gandhi. Whatever Moorthy conveys and does that becomes the acts of the Mahatma for the villagers. There are such villagers who do not understand about the Gandhi's political philosophy, are presented ignorantly. Some of them become impatient and twin into violence. To be violent and failure is the sign of backwardness. There is much problem is the Kanthapurian civil disobedience campaign. As it seems to reach into the climax, there is much trouble in the village. Moorthy, after having gone from house to house the night before along with Rangama and her young niece Ratna, to keep up people's courage and to ensure that he would help them in any cost. Many villages have also been arrested during the night, and now, as the police use an elephant to batter down the door of Rangamma's house and the whole village seems to be a battle field. To show this situation the given extracts clarify:

. . . we rush towards the temple, and shrieks come from the Brahmin street and the weavers' street and cattle began to moo and moan, and the flap of the whips is still heard from the mango grove beyond the promontory, for the coolies were still being marched on and we think neither of Puttamma her Seethamma nor Moorthy nor the Mahatma, but the whole world seems a jungle in battle field, trees rambling, lions roaring, jackals wailing, parrots piping . . . . (154)

Ratna has to escape herself avoiding rape of the policeman. Many vans and buses come to their land and many policemen come to Kanthapura village and start ravaging the village. The policemen disperse and chase the villagers everywhere. Even

Pultamma, a Satyaghari is raped by policeman and all men and women, escape from their houses. When they rush from one place to another there come shrieks and moans from the Brahmin street and the weavers' street and cattle begin to moo and moan and flap-flap of whips is still heard from the mango beyond the promontory [. . .]. So during the fight they only think of themselves and forget the notion of Satyagrahis- even "your enemies-when Rachana's grandson and Moorthy are arrested; they shouted 'butchers, butcher, and dung-cating curs!' and escape from there" (145). Their houses are broken into, their belongings destroy, their lands, confiscated. Moorthy is arrested, so he is no longer. In the absence of Moorthy, Ratna, a young widow takes the part of Moorthy, and leads the procession. The procession creates problem. The greatest bettle begins which has never been before in Kanthapura.

The first scene of fight at this time is presented in quiet different way. Achakka says 'The Mahatma will speak of love to all men says 'Mahatma Gandhiki Jai!' . . . and the polietathis shower on us' (147). The conflict takes place. The police become more furious, the coolies of Skeffington coffee Estate are rolling down for the help of Satyagrahis. As the policemen declare that the place is forbidden, the demonstrators do not obey them, then the much problem is created. There becomes violent presentation. The marginalized people are running here and there. The police start firing at them. They fire in air firstly then in the croud. Here is seems very pathetic condition of the demonstrators. some of them get injured. Many people including women and children shriek, cry, and moan. Vedamma' gets a buttet in the left leg and a fleeing man is shot in the chest and he falls" the injured would be carried away by their comrades on make-shift stretcher and another column would take their place, be beaten to pulp, and carried. These marginalized people are used as weapons, is there any fruitful after all? Sometimes with individual problems and sometimes

with their violent fruitless presentation can be noticed in the novel. It seems to give awareness that the coming generation should not do like that otherwise they would face the same problems. They would be beaten, killed, would get regret at last. The moral lesson goes like that.

The satyagrahis demonstrate violently. But the attack begins again and at this time the soldiers become fiercer they can no mere tolerate the shouting of the demonstrators. They rush to attack the demonstrating coolies. As there becomes fight, persons get killed, many injured and three thousands men run shrieking and slaying weeping, wounding, groaning, crawling, swooning, vomiting, bellowing, moaning, raving [ . . . ]' (179). There is shouting again and again. There is shouts along with the flames. As the village gets burnt by the subaltern woman, She is shown as a woman who destroys the village or who digs her own pit otherwise there would be final solution. Rachanna's wife, Rachi could 'bear the sight no more' and she says that she will burn that village in the name of Goddess and if the rice is to be lost, it should be lost in the ashes. After that There's the set of fire, that fire catches every thatch and house of Kanthapura. After that what the villagers do is to start their journey into the unknown destination. It is sure that they have to cross many places for their safety. So after their departure their remains neither man nor mosquito in Kanthapura' (184). Where does the unite of the villagers go after all? The desertification of this village is a failure made by Rao. The villagers of Kanthapura are shown by Rao not by any triumph but by a crushing defeat and flight. They have lamentation as they have pathetic condition. This given extracts help to show this.

And Men are kicked and, legs tied to hands and hands to legs, are they rolled into the canal, and the waters splash and yells rise up, 'Help, help, Ammayya ! And the coolies rush up and some shout 'Mahtma

Gandhi Ki Jai !, and other shout back 'Vande Mataram' and a bayonet is thrust at one and falls, and again through the night rises lamentation 'Ammayya- he's gone - he's gone - he's gone, Moorthappa, and It whirls and laments over the canal and the sugarcane field and the Bebbur Mound and Skeffington Coffe Estate and the Mango grove of the Kenchamma Temple - and croaching [. . .]. (179)

It is informed that their village has been a desert. It has been destroyed, for saken and vacant. At last Achakka, the narrator, reveals that her own heart beats like a drum. In such a way, she seems herself getting afraid.

As to notice remarkable things, the villagers blame for all the miseries on Moorthy. '[. . .] Moorthy who had brought all the misery upon us. And we asked where will you go now? (162). It is said that what is lost is lost forever gives to some extend the nostalgic feeling of the people. Life they realize, can never be the same without their husbands, sisters and children who have perished in the struggle. They may forget all the things if they have victory or would be victory. After all these sufferings, the Ramarajya dreamt by the villagers is still far away. There is a touch of regret in the narrator's voice when after all the sufferings and beatings and broken bones and lost properties, nothing seems changed for the mass of the people. To write about them is good. To misrepresent them or to leave them in such a place is the elite concept. Though Rao might be hero while writing this novel but he could be criticized being failure of showing their progressive way. Burning their own village and migrating themselves to the unknown destination cannot be taken as Rao's positive perspective.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Conclusion**

In Kanthapura, Raja Rao presents the contribution of Free-Indian Movement of twenties and thirties, which was led by Mahatma Gandhi in India. Rao presents the marginalized people for the freedom movements against the British Colony in India. It talks about the movement experienced by a single village. Subaltern as well as other marginalized people are brought forth for the freedom movement. They are presented submissively as the novel beings and later in different way. Illiterate peasants get victimized while presenting them from the eyes of an elite. In Kanthapura, he highly misrepresents them and fails to raise the voice of these marginalized people. Rao categorizes the people. He talks about the Brahmin quarters, Pariah quarters, weaver quarters etc and try to bring unity among them. In the name of unity, he is very much clever to show their fragmentations. Rao shows as there is problem within the society and from outside as well.

Rao reminds us that Gandhian ideology works as the freedom movement but at the mean time he fails to represent his ideology and even misrepresents the marginalized people. Rao tries to show the contribution of marginalized people. While finding out his intention, we come to realize that his perspective is traditional type like that of other intellectual elites. Subaltern people as well as other marginalized people observe the Gandhi's programme of Civil Disobedience Movement. The villagers are not successful while following the principles of Gandhi in national movement. Marginalized people of Kanthapura have got beaten by the policemen the policemen, have twisted their arms. Raja Rao shows complete suppression of British Raj and failure of these marginalized people as nationalists

while fighting against British Colony in India but there are so many loopholes that he has created. He clearly shows the problem of marginalized people in terms of caste, sex, marriage, livelihood etc. To present them as nationalists is matter of pride but it is very much prejudice or elite perspective.

Moorthy is presented as Gandhi in the novel. In the novel Gandhi has never been appeared but he has become able to move the villagers with his activities with fictionalized characteristic. Though he is from Brahmin background but still he is perceived from the marginalized perspective. Though Rao presents to Brahmins slightly different to other people but still no as such one is supposed to think. Moorthy himself faces much more problem in the movement. Some of the villagers doubt on him as he has brought difficulties in the village. Even his own mother has questioned on him.

As the novel beings, Rao presents the submissiveness of the villagers but as novel moves forwards, the villagers move towards violent one. It does show his contradictory feelings. In the beginning there seems fun and enjoyment of religious performance but later the same village gets, destroyed. There has the painful condition that the people have undergone. Many people including women get suppressed by the British Raj. Many people including women and children shriek, cry, and moan. Blood, cry, shot have become the agents of suffering. Is this the real role of Rao to bring people in such a condition? Is he trying to show his heroism using these people? There are the critical objectives to point out in the novels. The villagers set the fire in the village. Does it indicate the heroism of the villagers or Rao's? It is said that if the rice is lost, it should be lost in the ashes. It seems that Rao has tried to show their failure. The villagers start their journey to such a place where they get no certain destination. Is this their predicament they must face because they did not follow

British Colony. The desertification of this villagers is to show the failure of the marginalized people. He should have shown right way of subaltern but Rao has failed to do that. The credit for the failure of marginalized people goes to Rao. The question of victory or loss may not be great thing but misrepresenting them to bring in such status is not praiseworthy. It does not mean that he has to show the real victory, but the way he has dealt with is very much critical. Here Rao has proved the failure of Gandhian non-violence philosophy to show subaltern people as barbaric and violent. Rao has tried to create their history of contribution but at the mean time he has given the lesson that discourages other marginalized people. He has taught that what happens to the marginalized people if they do not follow British government or they may not get victory at any cost, rather they have to face many difficulties, so better not to go against that.

The events of the novel, Kanthapura are noticeable. This novel has become such document which has proved the failure, tragedy of marginalized people. It also has proved the failure of Gandhian Ideology of non-violence. It has shown the problems that the people faced during the revolt against the British Raj in India.



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