

Comparative study between waiting for mahatma and kanthapura

[Countries](#), [India](#)



TITLE :- COMPARISON BETWEEN THE IMAGES OF ' GANDHI' IN KANTHAPURA AND WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA Name :- Purbita Bhattacharya M. A. 1ST SEMESTER ROLL :- ME 110042 PAPER - 2 SUPERVISED BY :- PROF.

CHANDRANATH ADHIKARY The novel WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA deals with the story of a young man named Sriram whose life revolves round the influence of Mahatma on him during the years of Indian Freedom Struggle. In his age of twenty he meets a girl named Bharati, an ardent Gandhi follower and was collecting money for some funds. Her life is pretty much revolving around Gandhiji and his movement.

By presenting Mahatma realistically in town Narayan has portrayed a concrete image of Gandhi. The people of Malgudi can see Gandhi, can touch him and even can spend time with him by attending his lectures and the shavas. Narayan, here, through this novel has shown the down-to-earth image of Gandhi. He comes to town, moves on his own whims and fancies, does not stay at the guest house nor with the rich persons, and prefers to stay in the untouchable colony, gives speeches and also meets with people. Even in this novel we are shown that Bharati takes Sriram to meet Gandhiji. And Sriram is told to do what Bharati tells him.

She becomes his ' Guru'. Later, Sriram moves to cave in hills, gets deeper into the Quit India Movement, tries to force the marriage issue with Bharati but gets rejected. Then he gets involved with a terrorist called Jagadish - who is wanted by the police. He visits his grandmother in disguise who survives a death scare and is rescued off dramatically in her funeral pyre when her toes start wiggling. Then Sriram gets arrested at the burial grounds

and goes to jail. His only solace is that Bharati is also in jail somewhere. In jails he meets many different types of criminals and is finally released after the British leaves India.

Then he again meets Bharati who invites him to Delhi. He there proposes her again and they seek the blessing of Mahatma who promises to perform their wedding himself on the very next morning. On the next morning they go to the prayer meeting where a person rushes up to the stage to the Mahatma and shoots him. " WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA" dwells on the freedom struggle, the Mahatma and his ways, and the kind of an impact he had on the youth in those days. By the physical presence of Gandhi, Narayan brings up many arguments through different characters, those who embrace a violent route and those who follow Gandhiji.

But such was the power of his conviction that they followed him and his words to death. " Love the enemy, and then will he change", said Gandhiji and they all tried to love their enemy. They practiced non-violence, spun the charka and made khadi, shunned all foreign things, behaved like true Satyagrahis - all at an age when they would hardly understand the true importance of what they are doing. Gandhiji's take on untouchability is shown impacting Sriram as he wonders how his grandmother ill treats the boy who comes to clean the road.

The much sacrifices were demanded from the youth and his followers, and they did try to be the perfect examples of what Gandhiji had asked for them. The Abstractness of Gandhi's Image in " KANTHAPURA" by Raja Rao Till now we were concentrating on the concrete image and impact of Gandhi through

Narayan's " WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA". Now in comparison with this image I have chosen " KANTHAPURA" , by Raja Rao, which also shows the impact of Gandhi on the villagers but not by his physical presence, but by the presence of Gandhi in the villagers' mind.

They have never seen Gandhi, but they are familiar by the name of Gandhi as the image of ' God'. " KANTHAPURA" is also a document of the National Struggle of India for Independence. The man, who is struggling and bringing out the image and influence of Gandhi to the villagers, is Moorthy. Like " WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA" , " KANTHAPURA" was also written before Independence and is dealing with the magic of Gandhianism that changes India from a somnolent to an unquestionable battle ground for British Raj. Kanthapura is a village as traditional and self sufficient as any other Indian village.

But the first sign of disturbance comes from outside but is brought to them by their own beloved Moorthy - a Gandhi-man. The villagers' love for Harikatha is gently subverted by him and made into a tool to spread the message of nationalism and Gandhi's principle. Jayaramachar, a popular harikatha singer sings the myth of Gandhi and his divinely task of driving the ' red man' from our land. Slowly the entire community warms up against the British rule. With the principle of non violence sullied by the villagers Moorthy - like the Mahatma - undergoes fasting, ritualistic purification in temple.

Raja Rao has presented Gandhiji as a myth to the villagers of Kanthapura. Gandhi, was like the mythological character to them. They have not seen Gandhi, but Moorthy seems to them similar to Gandhi. In him the villagers

can find out their Gandhi. So that at the last phase of the novel we can see that Moorthy has been mythicised like Gandhi by his village people. The Comparative Study between the Gandhian Impact on both " WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA" and " KANTHAPURA" :- Gandhi is often being cited more as a matter of form and convenience than a deep conviction.

The Gandhian impact on contemporary Indian literature has brought about results at various levels, and in various direction. As regards the writer's choice of language, we have seen that one result of the Gandhian influence has been a general preference for the mother tongue or the regional language, and occasionally a purposeful bilingualism, the same writer handling his mastery his own mother tongue as well as English.

Besides whatever the language medium chosen, the stress has been more on simplicity and clarity and immediate effectiveness than on ornateness or profundity or laborious artistry, and this has been as marked in English writing as in writing in the regional languages. As regards the choice of themes and the portrayal of character, the Gandhian influence has been no less marked. There has been a more or less conscious shift of emphasis from the city to the village, or there is implied a contrast between the two - urban luxury and sophistication on the one hand and rural modes and manners on the other.

R. K. Narayan, however makes Gandhi himself a character in " WAITING FOR THE MAHATMA". Gandhi materially and directly affects the fortunes of Narayan's heroine - Bharati, and her lover Sriram; and the novel ends with Gandhi's death at the hands of an Asian on the way to prayer. Whereas Raja

Rao has made Gandhi a mythical aspect in his novel "KANTHAPURA". The villagers of Kanthapura sacrifice their all while following the Gandhian ideology. They were betrayed. Because Gandhiji, after meeting with the Viceroy, withdrew the Boycott. But still they followed the way of Gandhianism towards Nationalism.

CONCLUSION:- In both the novels by these contemporary writers we can see that Gandhiji laid stress again and again on moral and spiritual values in contrast to material achievement, although this had its place too; he knew that too much industrialization must spell disaster to the seven lacks of Indians villages; and he adopted the loin cloth and the Sevagram way of life because he felt that, for the teeming millions of Indians, no other life is possible - yet he knew that even such bare colourless life could be made reasonably full and purposive.

Although for at least 60 years, at least Gandhi has been the subject of biographical and expository studies - J. J. Doke's M. K. Gandhi : The Man Who Became One with the Universal Being followed 15 years after the approach of the Gandhi birth centenary had understandably stimulated of late a greatly increased flow of Gandhian literature. Mahatma Gandhi : 100 years , edited by S.

Radhakrishnan, was brought out by the Gandhi Peace Foundation in 1968, and contained numerous tributes by Gandhi's friends and admirers, all over the world. While several contributors - Rajaji, Richard B. Gregg, Swami Ranganadhananda, B. N. Rau, G. Ramachandran - have tried to stress one or

another aspect of Gandhi's life and personality, many others have bemoaned the fact that Gandhianism is hardly a live force in India today.