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Raja Rao's Serpent and the Rope and Kanthapura: Redefining man's relationship to the supernatural absolute in terms consistent with the depiction of Indianness

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Abstract---Rao is a great accomplishing man who has written *The Serpent and the Rope* and *Kanthapura*, the elevating and redefining works which show man's relationship to the supernatural absolute in terms consistent with the depiction of Indianness. Evidences are sought to analyse Indianness as marks of values and philosophy behind the character analysis and physical features. Rao imbues his English with a Dravidian tinge in whole and the taste of the Kannada village dialect in specifically. The themes of self-awareness, self-transcendence, and self-fulfillment are deliberately emphasized. *The Serpent and the Rope* is philosophical in that it examines the essence of conceptual and metaphysical inquiry in some of its more complex implications, as well as trying an unique fusion of Indian and European civilizations. . He had an exhaustive understanding of Indian religion and theory and watched Indian life rather minutely. In his books and stories, he is said to have given a realistic portrayal of Indian life. *Kanthapura* is an outspoken opponent of British authority. *Kanthapura* as opposed to British rule. Harikatha is remythologized by the novelist in order to make national people mythological, and she finally becomes a model to emulate. Gandhi was compared to Ram from the *Ramayana*, who saves Sita from Ravana's captivity, and the British Empire was dubbed Ravan's Kingdom. Employing myths from the Upanishad, Vedanta, and other sources, the writer mythicizes most of those complexities and atrocities that occurred during European colonialism.

Kanthapura inspires a feeling of connectedness and independence and is interpreted as a mystical dimension that transcends all boundaries and obstacles. Rao is a novelist of extraordinary powers. He is a tough to understand author, a master of technique and vision, and a great lover of truth. He is a novelist who has earned a place among the best novelists in Indo- Anglian literature as the author of *The Serpent and the Rope*, in which he has eloquently and firmly represented the clash of eastern and western cultures. The heart of the novel, its essence, lies in the philosophy and metaphysics which run through it and in its presentation of the East-West encounter. *The Serpent and the Rope* is an attempt to reinterpret man's interaction with the metaphysical objective truth in concepts that are compatible with current philosophy.

Keywords---Indianness, metaphysical, philosophical, truth, vision.

Introduction

Raja Rao is a forerunner of India's English-language writing with extraordinary abilities. Rao has established himself as one of Indo-Anglian literature's finest novelists. Rao is a great accomplishing man who has written *The Serpent and the Rope* and *Kanthapura*, the elevating and redefining works which show man's relationship to the supernatural absolute in terms consistent with the depiction of Indianness. Evidences are sought to analyse Indianness as marks of values and philosophy behind the character analysis and physical features. Rao has created a new concept, in which he eloquently and strongly depicts the clash between eastern and western cultures to draw a line between the traditional values. Further, his astonishing suaveness is adorned by a brightness of mind and investigation. He is blessed with a broad vision of human progress, which has empowered him to centre an engineered perspective on estimations of different societies around the world. As Dr. Krishna Sastry points out, "While *Kanthapura* is a novel of action, *The Serpent and the Rope* is essentially one recollection" (2). "If *Kanthapura* is Raja Rao's *Ramayana*, then *The Serpent and the Rope* is his *Mahabharata*," writes K. R. Srinivasa Iyenger (3). As the name implies, the novel combines two methods of entrapping actuality: the identification of the item as a body and the knowledge that the entity appears because the sensory perceptions senses it, writes Meenakshi Mukherjee (4). Rao portrays Indian sensitivity through the colonizer's language. He advocates for the internationalization of the English language, which he does not regard as an exotic tongue. His English narrative voice is unique as compared with that of the colonized. His originality of Language is used as a tool for communicating the richness and novelty of the Indian culture. Rao succeeds in reinventing and rewriting history and culture through the Indianization of the narrative form and the written literature. His use of accurate adaptations of Indian terms and expressions, combination of Indian independence movement with *Ramayana*, and his Mythological skill of description are all indicative of his narrative style.

Redefining man's relationship to the supernatural absolute

The *Serpent and the Rope* is a personal portrayal of the narrator, a young educated Brahman and his wife in India, in search of ultimate enlightenment. The tale centers on Rao's first wedding and its collapse. More generally, it examines the clashes between the Eastern and the Western traditional practices, a theme emphasized by the novel's structure, which incorporates a variety of creative styles and texts from both cultures. *The Serpent and the Rope* received widespread acclaim and is widely regarded as his masterwork by many critics. In Indian tradition, "the serpent" and "the rope" are symbols of telling the difference, and Rao hopes to integrate his views about "illusion" and "truth" into his narrative. The protagonist of the novel, Ramaswamy says: The serpent or the rope... the universe is either illusory or real. There is no in-between, and all that exists seen between two is poetry, sainthood... see the serpent and realise the serpent, the saint, out of terror. One - the Guru - brings the lantern; one can see the road, a long, white road that runs parallel to the starry stars. 'It's just the rope,' says the narrator. He demonstrates it. And there was never a serpent ... touch your eyes... The poet who saw the rope as a serpent transformed into the serpent, and thus becoming a saint. Now it is revealed that the saint's salvation was based on association rather than realisation. The true, the genuine, has no designation. To itself, the rope isn't a rope (<https://www.The-Serpent-FJNK592NAU>).

Rao has portrayed the elements of human connections and man's integration with the ultimate, which is only achievable with the teaching of a Guru, in very persuasive concepts of literature. Ramaswamy's illustration is perfect for the objective. The novel by Rao is notable because it depicts Ramaswamy's journey of self-discovery. He is torn between his real-life responsibilities to his wife and his desire to obtain a spiritual understanding of the world. We've been informed, "The serpent or the rope—the world is either unreal or real. There is no world since there is only the rope." The core theme is Rama's desire to overcome the world and seek a profound meaning. The theme of the novel is obviously a dilemma between illusion and reality. Rao's use of symbols in the novel provides authenticity to the characters of Madeleine and Ramaswamy.

Kanthapura reflects the complexities of the country and India's metropolitan existence in the early and mid-twentieth centuries. Thus, for the legitimate understanding of the entirety of Rao's vision for India, one needs to consider both the parts of reality and their internal implications. It is likewise to be borne at the top of the priority list that while his photos of the social, political, and social existence of India owe their existence to his unmistakable fascination for the present, his fixation on the magical implications of the present radiates from his enthusiasm for the inspiration and renewal of the past. In spite of the fact that the enthusiasm for the past is a student of history's mission of roots, it is comparable to the present a pursuit of progression of the Indian custom. Furnished with the psychological blessings of a logician and a pragmatist, Rao has had the option to apply his magical knowledge and otherworldly experiences to the translation of the truth of life in his craft.

The remarkable intricacies of city life are so evocatively represented that the Indian way of life comes to life" (Srivastava 16). The representation was entirely

created by Rao in India. As a sthala-Purana, or epic of a place, he goes toward his story. The narrator isn't the erudite and all-knowing originator, nor the legendary, but rather a grownup town lady, with the purpose of the significant turning point on certain characteristics of a social narrative. In the words of Narsingh Srivastava: "In Kanthapura, Raja Rao has created a veritable sthalapurana, a legendary history out of Indian life in the pre-Independence era". In the very first section itself, there is an intricate tale about the legend of Kanchamma, who once spared Kanthapura from being annihilated by an evil presence. Kanchamma Hill is still red, and the Deity Kanchamma is the presiding goddess of Kanthapura and its environs, which is alluded to as evidence of this occurrence. The story is designed by a city Harikatha, who sees Gandhi as an incarnation of Siva and gives him a fancy beginning. The whole foundation of the story is legendary and strict, for both the gatherings refer to lines from the Gita in which Krishna says that he takes birth in a human structure at whatever point insidious arrives at its extraordinary, so as to rebuff wrongdoers and secure 'dharma'. Though Jayarama Char says that Gandhi is the celestial defender of dharma and an upholder of Truth, an ally of the Swami asserts that the English came to India as defenders of the lives as well as the dharma of the Indians. Kanthapura is, along these lines, completely Indian since it is a case of peculiar Indian artistic expression (ie, the Sthala-Purana). Some firm supporters of Gandhi, like Rangamma in the novel, couldn't envision anything past Gandhi.

Indian family survival strategy

Madeleine obtains Pali lessons from Lezo in order to understand Buddhism directly. He keeps trying to make love to her, but she forcefully rejects and rebukes him. Savithri also pays them a surprise visit on her journey to Cambridge from India. They spend a lot of evenings together. He is passionately in love with her. After his work in Cambridge is over, he comes to London and stays there sometimes. Savithri pays him visits at his apartments, and one morning she arrives with coconut and kumkum, performs aarti, and places her hands on his feet. With God as their testimony, she accepts Rama as her Lord and Master. Savithri is prepared to flee with him. However, Rama realizes that their love can only be meaningful if it is based on spiritual principles. As a devout Hindu woman, she must return to her homeland and marry the man who is destined for her. Savithri joins Pratap Singh in the end, and it is believed that she would be a loving wife to him.

Rama constantly receives letters from Saroj, her little mother, and Sukumari. When Saroj's marriage is fixed up, he has to come back to India to supervise the arrangements as head of the family and give away the bride. He goes for the wedding, even though Madeleine is in the family way at the time. He could not reach France in time for the delivery due to illness. He is advised to take a rest in the warmer climate of Bangalore for three months. During this time, Madeleine has to undergo a caesarian operation. This is the second shock received by Madeleine and it changes the whole course of their future life. Rama comes back to Madeleine. She has moved up to a much smaller house and is gradually giving up the comforts and luxuries of life. She has become a devout Buddhist. She is gradually making her way along the Lord's eight-fold path. She fasts frequently and spends the majority of her time in prayer and meditation. She even goes on a

long forty. Fast-for-one-day normal life with her is no longer possible, and it is obvious that they must separate.

Rama goes to London and falls ill. Savithri, who is in London, frequently visits him. Lakshmi, a young lady he met at Cambridge, also pays him a visit. He visits Madeleine and finds that she has moved into another house. She has become a sanyasini, though she still keeps up her job. It's their final encounter. Divorce proceedings are soon started at Madeleine's request, and they are duly divorced. Rama gives Savithri the path. He can console his small mother and his sister, Saroja. He has the ability to assist Catherine, his wife's cousin, in finding love with Georges. He is, nevertheless, dissatisfied. How is he expected to figure out how to save himself? He wrote in his diary that he needed a Guru, not a God. The death of the ego, the loss of the idea of uniqueness, will be the safer path for a Hindu Brahmin. As a result, Rama goes in search of his Guru. He returns to Travancore. I have to travel to Travancore. I no longer have Banaras, the Ganga, or the Jamuna; Travancore is my homeland.

Kanthapura depicts in simple terms, the living of a town. The journey of the individuals of the town, their common rebellion, and their perseverance against extreme lathi charges are depicted in a language that is basically wonderful and beguiling. In the entire breadth of Indo-Anglian fiction, no one has ever risen to the level of Raja Rao for pure insightfulness and the capacity for camouflage in the sphere of workmanship. Raja Rao is a genius who can explain Sankara's Nirvana-Astakam, Dakshinamurthi Stotram; Pascal, Albigensian theorem, and the development of the Interspaced and of Vedanta, Buddhism, and Christianity all at the same time. "The customary astuteness of Indian Rishis (Holy Seers) has been combined with his close knowledge of Western theology and theory," he explains (Srivastava 2).

The East-West context and Conflicts

Can the marriage of a Hindu with a French girl succeed? But all the problems are the serpent. They are not the real problems. All the problems are really spiritual problems. The truth, the ultimate or the only truth may be the rope only, but the Guru is yet to come with the lantern. Rama needs to choose between different entities following his marriage: the serpent, which represents irrationality and is a representation of the tempting world; and the rope, which represents the reality that is veiled since man sees it through the serpent's eyes. Finally, Rama divorces his European wife and travels to Travancore in order to learn more about the Guru.

They constantly interpret their own and each other's actions in terms of national and cultural differences, invariably ending up with generalizations about Indian and western traits of character. Madeleine slowly excludes Ramaswamy. Rama brings his burden of infinite pathos back to India. As Meenakshi Mukherjee observes. Rao has shown commendable control in avoiding the obvious approach of contriving an easy integration of two cultures. If there is a long-term answer, it is a private one that cannot be revealed in a public debate. Only a Guru can devise such a resolution, and it is implied at the conclusion that Rama wants to meet him in Travancore.

In this way, the physical action of the novel constantly shuttlecocks between India, France, and England. Within it are a whole host of interesting characters—men and women from India, France, England, Russia, and Spain. Madeleine, Rama's wife, is a finely realized character. The other triumph of characterization is Savithri. The importance of psychological activity cannot be overstated. We experience places, people, and events through Rama's eyes. Rama is a reality in the narrative; all else is a figment of the imagination. We may even say that Raja Rao portrays truth, while Rama, Madeleine, Savithri, and the rest of the cast symbolize the serpent, glitz, and glam of the novelist's concealment.

Bill Ashcroft says that “more than three-quarters of the people living of the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism” (*The Empire Writes Back* 23). The novel *Kanthapura* presents a sociological or East-West problem. Even after the political revolution, there were many socioeconomic challenges and crises, and people remained unsure about their cultural identities. The fight for ethnic traditions among colonized subjects and the social emergence of newly independent nations were both aspects of cultural transition that resulted in confrontation with the colonizer's culture. Ethnic strife is another element that has been left behind as a result of colonial actions. The ethnic groups are fighting for their independence or recognition as equals. Colonial rulers produced diverse communities in their colonies by dividing them culturally. “The work has been called “a metaphysical novel,” a prose poem,” “a philosophical disquisition – its projected metaphysical vision, its grounding in Indian religiosity, its portrayal of interpersonal relationships in an East-West context, its bold and imaginative use of the English language” (Wimal 598).

The Indianness in *Kanthapura* and *The Serpent and the Rope*

The Indian battle for autonomy was an epic battle that lasted almost 50 years. The unarmed, notion-ridden Indian country needed to shake off the torpidity of hundreds of years, overlook its cases, sub-standings, temporary contrasts, and walk ahead out and about in progress. The Indian National Congress and Mahatma Gandhi worked together on this supernatural occurrence. The opportunity battle for free reasoning and social vision not only captured the imagination of the entire country, but also inspired Indo-Anglian scholars. On the political front, achievement appeared to stow away into the great beyond. In any case, on the social front, the battle was won in a variety of ways. Social cognizance was awakened, blinding universality and strange notions were discarded, widow remarriages became increasingly successive, the rank framework was shaken from its very foundation, the distance was gradually kicked out, and social shamefulness was to be abolished.

C.D Narashimha attributes his indianness to the old Sanskrit heritage as well as the novel's compulsive behaviours. Rao likes the Indian phraseology “crush it in the seed” to the English phrases “nip it in the bud” even though the latter has an aesthetically aggressive picture that Indian perception does not recognize, and the English old phrase “one swallow does not make a summer” and its indianized rendition “a cock does not make a morning, nor a single man a revolution.” Rao integrates the speed of Indian life into his English articulation, according to K.Ramchandra Rao.

The political revolution that has jolted *Kanthapura* is thoroughly investigated in the style's great deviations giving it a regional significance while fundamentally disrupting English's internal representation or approach. Rao's localization of English is not a disguise or a habit, but a commitment and the creativity of the location portrayed by the storyteller. Rao is largely inspired by Dravidian beats and Kannada phrase structures, and his English reflects this. Rao imbues his English with a Dravidian tinge in whole and the taste of the Kannada village dialect in specifically. The themes of self-awareness, self-transcendence, and self-fulfillment are deliberately emphasized. The *Serpent and the Rope* is philosophical in that it examines the essence of conceptual and metaphysical inquiry in some of its more complex implications, as well as trying an unique fusion of Indian and European civilizations.

Indian-Illustrations from the works

The impression of India in *Kanthapura* is likewise accentuated by its origination as a city for ladies. Ladies held a respected position in Indian culture in the past, but their position became optional and shaky later on. The best revile of Indian womanhood has been widowhood and the situation of kid widows has been graphically introduced by numerous Indian essayists. The remarriage of widows has been viewed as an untouchable in India, albeit numerous social reformers, directly including Ram Mohan Roy, have argued for it. There are a few widows in *Kanthapura* – Rangamma, Narasamma, Kalamma, Venkamma, and others. Presumably, Raja Rao presents the ladies' characters to represent Indian womanhood. India is truly portrayed in the Indianized English in which it is written. This is true of *Kanthapura*'s aesthetic presentation, in which Indian words like 'kumkum,' 'linga,' 'katha,' 'Bhajan,' and so on are used as much as possible. The articulations in this piece are very unique. Raja Rao does not consider English to be a foreign language. His English is rooted in the Indian landscape and terrain, and it looks to also have matured in the country's farms, temples, streets, and dwellings.

A few ladies are as lovely as recently opened guavas, while others are as delicate as April mangoes. His little fellows are as brilliant as banana trunks, and it will be able to be stated that their pictures give an Indian flavour to his compositions. Rao's greatest strength as a novelist is his capacity to design interesting characters. S.S.Mathur correctly analyzes while reflecting on Rao's expertise of bringing significant characters: "His protagonists are actual people with their own virtues and vices, as well as a thirst for gold and a love for their homeland. Their ideas and aspirations, as well as their preconceptions and prejudices, are conveyed very clearly." As the magnum opus of Rao, *Kanthapura* totally reflects Indian ideas and air as its very topic spins around India.

In spite of the fact that it is written in English, the articulation is altogether Indianised and the rhythms of discourse are all the more regularly those of South Indian dialects like Kannada. It is only an impression of the most profound desires and issues of India and an exceptional case of the manifestation of Indian reasonableness in English exploratory writing. It depicts pre-Independence India, the real India of the time, which continues to exist in a variety of ways. Because the mountains surrounding the hamlet and the river have always been around,

even before the first child was born in Kanthapura, nature plays an important role among the village's residents. Nature's elements wield great power over the village. The river Himavathy, as well as the Kenchamma Hill, are also highlighted. Kenchamma "the Goddess of the Hill" is claimed to have eventually put a stop to the horror produced by a demon in the community after a long and hard battle. His blood stained the goddess's hill, which was named for her. Kenchamma began to reside in Kanthapura after defeating the monster. Himavathy, her daughter, was dubbed the "Goddess of the River."

Remytholization of history and Indian Nationalism

Rao's choice of narrator accomplishes numerous goals at once. Rao is able to effectively mix facts and myths by using this elderly woman as the storyteller. Jawaharlal is Bharatha to the Mahatma, according to the old woman, who believes he would defeat Ravana and release Sita. Gandhi has reached the position of a God in her eyes, and Moorthy is seen as an avatar. Mahatma is pictured as a vast and blue mountain, similar to the Sahyadri peak on whose foothills pilgrims trek to the top, while Moorthy is a little mountain in his ignorant perception. As she commits her spiritual passion to the Satyagraha, it becomes a spiritual practice for her.

History is taken as a tool to establish Indian nationalism. History is a conceptual ideology that builds, rebuilds, and creates a structure. The historical background would become guidance for present culture on how to choose the right road in the future. The commencement of the storytelling in *Kanthapura* displays a historical consciousness. The narrative begins with a recounting of the village's ancient glorified past in the style of Sthalapurana, which makes the residents aware of their current situation. The effect of the colonial regime is Indian nationalism. *Kanthapura* is an outspoken opponent of British authority. *Kanthapura* as opposed to British rule. Harikatha is remythologized by the novelist in order to make national people mythological, and she finally becomes a model to emulate. Gandhi was compared to Ram from the *Ramayana*, who saves Sita from Ravana's captivity, and the British Empire was dubbed Ravan's Kingdom. Employing myths from the Upanishad, Vedanta, and other sources, the writer mythicizes most of those complexities and atrocities that occurred during European colonialism.

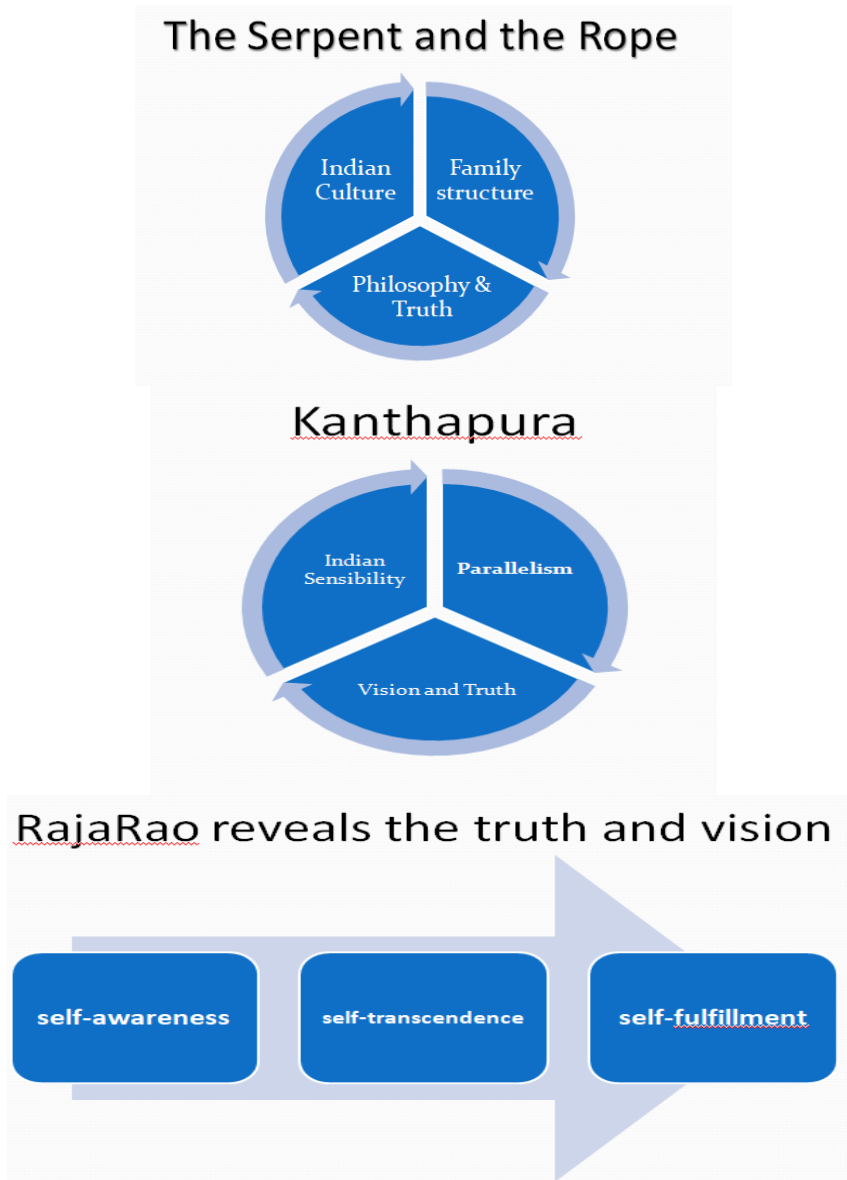
Narrative skills of Rao

Rao is a cognizant craftsman who has a positive scholarly and imaginative doctrine. He is of the view that writing isn't a calling, but a work for him, and he takes it more in the light of an otherworldly order. Rao's technique can be appreciated more fully if one recognises that the rhythms have an intentional quality to them. He writes the way he does because he believes this is the proper way for an Indian author to use English. Rao maintains that English isn't a foreign language; it is, without a doubt, a lot of an Indian language, but it isn't the language of an Indian's impassioned show. Rao himself models his style on the rhythms of Kannada, but he additionally has Sanskrit in his brain. He deciphers Indian ideas and culture as opposed to some other writers. The disclosure of the very pith of Indian life and character is his prime article as a

writer. His realization of India seems to be consciousness for himself because an interpretation of its attributes for others, particularly Western folks, rather than sentimental adulation or sentimental upset. Despite the fact that he emphasises the pith and qualities more significantly, he stimulates both the social and political planes of life as well as the overwhelming plane of internal meanings. His use of language is both expressive and unique.

The emotional turmoil that engulfed *Kanthapura* could only be expressed by violating the conventional English grammar to accommodate the abrupt mood shifts and stark tone contrasts. It had to be a truly unique style, a professional breakthrough that was distinct from a fundamentally Indian sensibility. He is an inquisitive kind who can complement each snapshot of his innovative reasoning with a firm grasp of solid reality and philosophical reflections. In this regard, he can well be set in the organization of the incredible artistic personalities of world writing like Valmiki, Vyas, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Steinbeck with whom he shares the intensity of making brilliant expressions of generally accepted fact and joining the illustrative and interpretative with the natural vision of things. Rao is the most Indian of the Indians writing in English. Indeed, even while he began composing his accounts, sitting a large number of miles from his territory, he could imagine the Indian scenes and Indian manners of thinking unbiasedly. He conveyed his India to any place he went to right off the bat throughout everyday life. He had an exhaustive understanding of Indian religion and theory and watched Indian life rather minutely. In his books and stories, he is said to have given a realistic portrayal of Indian life. He moves the perusers with his astounding portrayals of the sufferings of the Indian untouchables and Hindu widows and draws distinctive photos of the misuse of the workers and workers by the landowners. “Marga and Desi—the two principal musical categories that Matanga definitely employed in his treatise on music, Bribaddesi, said to have been written around the eighth century, have come a long way since then to connote different literary traditions in the context of Indian Literatures” (Komalesha 202). It fits well with Indian propensities, signals, and methods of thought. His style is at its best in *Kanthapura* because of its unmistakable quality of effortlessness. This effortlessness improves the legitimacy of the substance, which is altogether Indian.

The Rationality of Indianness in both works



Summation

Kanthapura inspires a feeling of connectedness and independence and is interpreted as a mystical dimension that transcends all boundaries and obstacles. Rao supplies his novel with a protagonist whose purpose is to urge the peasants to support the righteous campaign of India's quest for unrestricted independence in order to facilitate simple interaction between the worlds of men and gods, across modernity and history. He has aided in the acceptance of an important Indian sensibility. Rao is a novelist of extraordinary powers. He is a tough to

understand author, a master of technique and vision, and a great lover of truth. He is a novelist who has earned a place among the best novelists in Indo- Anglian literature as the author of *The Serpent and the Rope*. Rao has created a new genre with this novel, the philosophical novel, and has eloquently and firmly represented the clash of eastern and western cultures. He poses the sociological question of whether or not a Hindu Brahmin and a French woman can marry. The heart of the novel, its essence, lies in the philosophy and metaphysics which run through it and in its presentation of the East-West encounter. *The Serpent and the Rope* is an attempt to reinterpret man's interaction with the metaphysical objective truth in concepts that are compatible with current philosophy.

With its broad basis and many images of France, England, and India, it is both captivating and fascinating. Rao's novel is his first effort to manipulate Indian mysticism and Vedanta philosophy into a conventional novel. *The Serpent and the Rope* is an adventurous and admirable attempt to portray India as a whole in realistic narrative concepts, and it is possibly the most outstanding novel written by an Indian in English to date. India is depicted as a concept rather than a geographical location. As a result, *Kanthapura* is a real representation of uniquely Indian wisdom in English revolutionary writing. *Kanthapura* is nothing more than a long narrative delivered in the deep-rooted Indian tradition of telling stories from inception to completion.

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