



RAJA RAO'S NOVEL *KANTHAPURA* IN A *STYLISTIC POINT OF VIEW*

ISHFAQ AHMAD GANAIE

RESEARCH SCHOLAR (PH.D.)

RIMT UNIVERSITY MANDY GOBINDGARH

PUNJAN INDIA 147301

ABSTRACT

The present study Raja Rao's work *Kanthapura* will be examined from the standpoint of stylistic analysis. The analysis is done in light of the work's technique and metaphorical language. The reader can understand the structure and style of his works thanks to the findings.

Keywords: *Kanthapura* , Stylistics Analysis, Biography, Novel, Figurative Language.

INTRODUCTION

The study and analysis of texts from a linguistic perspective is known as stylistics. Although it connects literary criticism with linguistics as a discipline, it lacks a distinct autonomous realm. Literature, but not just "great literature," but also other types of written texts, such as writing from the fields of advertising, pop culture, politics, or religion, is the chosen object of stylistic studies. Additionally, stylistics works to develop theories that can explain the specific decisions people and social groups make when using language, including socialisation, the creation and reception of meaning, critical discourse analysis, and literary criticism. The use of dialogue, that could include local accents and people's dialects, descriptive language, the use of grammar, which may include the active or passive voice, the distribution of sentence lengths, the usage of particular language registers, etc. are further stylistic elements. Additionally, the term "stylistics" is unique and can be used to identify the relationships between form and effects in a specific variety of language. As a result, stylistics examines what is "going on" in the language; specifically, what linguistic linkages the language's style exposes. This paper will eventually analyse *Kanthapura* by Raja Rao's stylistic features. There are multiple sections in this work. In analysing the narrative, the work will be examined in light of the theoretical review. The authors' biographies and a summary of the book will be in the following part. The analytical essay of the novel based on the previously discussed theoretical evaluation will be included at the end of the body.

BIOGRAPHY OF RAJA RAO AND NOVEL'S SUMMARY

One of India's most well-known authors of the 20th century, Raja Rao is best known for his novels and short stories. His "biggest achievement [was] the perfection of the philosophical novel," according to reviewer Ivar Ivask. Rao was born in South India's Hassan (now Karnataka) in 1908. His father taught Kannada at a university in Hyderabad, and his family is a Brahmin from Kannada. Rao attended the University of Madras

for his undergraduate studies and the Montpellier University in France for his graduate studies in literature. At the Sorbonne, he also studied the French language.

His debut novel, *Kanthapura*, was published in 1938 after he started to publish his first short tales in magazines and journals in 1931. The following year, upon his return to India, he joined the nationalist cause. He worked with Indira Gandhi and Jawarhal Nehru, and in Trivandrum, Kerala, he met Sri Atmananda, his guru.

Rao resided in the US from 1996 to 1983 and worked as a professor of Indian philosophy at the University of Texas at Austin. *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960), *The Cat and Shakespeare* (1965), and *The Chessmaster and His Moves* (1988) are among Rao's English-language novels. Other works by him include the short stories "A Client" (1934), "The Cow of the Barricades" (1938), "The Policeman and the Rose" (1963), "Jupiter and Mars" (1954), and "The Writer and the Word" (1965). He received the Sahitya Akademi award in 1992 and the Neustadt medal in 1988. He released a collection of his nonfiction writing, titled *The Meaning of India*, in 1996. In order to "recognise writers and researchers who have made an outstanding contribution to the Literature and Culture of the South Asian Diaspora," the Samvad Undia Foundation, a nonprofit charity trust, established the "Raja Rao Award for Literature" in 2000 with his agreement. Between 2000 and 2009, the award was given out seven times before being withdrawn. Rao passed away at the age of 92 on July 8, 2006. He had one son, after being married three times the last being in 1986

Kanthapura Study Guide

Raja Rao, an Indian author, is most known for his 1938 novel *Kanthapura*, which is significant for being his first book and being written when he was just 21 years old. Rao tried to "experiment with the English language, nativizing it to produce the rhythm and cadence of his mother tongue, Kannada," according to Alpana Sharma Knippling.

The novel explores the effects of Mahatma Gandhi and his fight to free India from British colonial control on this little, ordinary village, and takes its name from the fictional site of *Kanthapura* in Southern India. The story is narrated from the viewpoint of an elderly woman who lives in the hamlet and observes every arrival and departure in *Kanthapura*. She brings with her a lifetime of knowledge and experience. The book was well-received and is today regarded as one of the best important Indian novels ever published in English. It mixes the drama and stories of a typical Indian folk-epic with the poeticism of a modernist work of literature, making it a cross between a conventional folk tale and a modern current book. Rao, more than any other writer of his period, "established the prestige of Indian writing in English, " according to *The Hindu*, and the *New York Times* praised him for "conveying the peculiar cadences."

Style

Raja Rao's writing style in *Kanthapura* exhibits a casual, conversational diction, poetic word choices for descriptive passages about nature (the female narrator tends to be a bit of a dreamy romantic), and long, fluid phrases. *Kanthapura* Symbols, Allegory and Motifs

Symbol: Kenchamma the Goddess

The goddess Kenchamma is a representation of divine and spiritual power in the village of Kanthapura. All of the demons that plagued the people are thought to have been killed by the goddess. The locals believe that the goddess Kenchamma has been sent from heaven to protect the community's spiritual well-being. Kenchamma is our goddess, the narrator writes. She is great and plentiful. A monster that had come to demand our young males as food and young women as wives was killed by her ages, ages ago. Tripura, a wise man, had performed penances in order to bring down Kenchamma, who descended from the skies.

Symbol: The Demon

The narrator frequently serves as a symbol for the evil forces that cause the people to suffer through the demon. For instance, the demon's influence on individuals prevents rain from falling. The goddess, however, has superior strength over the demon. The goddess cries and forgives those who confess their sins to her. When she sobs, it pours and everyone is joyful. The goddess is claimed to have vanquished the demon because she wants the land's sons and young women to be safe and fulfil their roles. The demon intended to consume the young sons and take the young ladies as his wives, but this did not occur because the goddess looked out for her people.

Symbol: Khadi

Moorthy "threw out his foreign garments and his foreign literature into the fire" after converting to Gandhianism (34). The attire is a representation of British control, while khadi is a mark of Indian independence.

Symbol: The Skeffington Gate

The Skeffington Gate serves as a powerful metaphor for the balance between Indian and British power, as well as for foreign rule and self-government. It is a material object that recognises and values subtler, ethereal types of distinction. They lost their independence when the Godaverri coolies came in and the maistri "banged the gate behind him and they all walked up" (46)—a powerful example of the narrative's power.

Symbol: Crossing the Threshold

Moorthy enters a Pariah home, something no one else in Kanthapura has dared to do. When he does, "the room seems to tremble, and all the gods and all the cherubs of heaven seem to scream out against him" (71). This is so that Moorthy doesn't simply enter a house that he's never been to before or a house that belongs to a person of a lower social class. He is transgressing one of Indian society's most sacred lines, demonstrating that he views human life differently.

Kanthapura Metaphors and Similes**Simile: A Noble Cow**

The narrator draws comparisons between Moorthy and another young guy in the area named Dore who has also a university degree and arrives in the community professing to be a follower of Gandhi. Because Gandhi devotees are genuine liberation fighters who carry out their responsibilities with generosity and honesty, the narrator does not recognise his virtues. Moorthy doesn't have any annoying traits, only the excellent ones. According to Rao, "He was not like Corner-House Moorthy, who had lived life like a noble cow, gentle, giving, peaceful, deferent, and brahmanic, I tell you, a very prince."

Metaphor: Gandhi

This strong metaphor for Gandhi is found in the line, "...so he goes from village to hamlet to slay the serpent of foreign rule" (12). The serpent, a traditional emblem of evil and deceit that in this instance refers to British control, is slain by Gandhi, who is shown in the painting as a warrior, a saint, and a virtuous man. As he strives for justice, freedom, and self-rule, he appears to be raised above a normal human being.

Metaphor: Gandhism

The Swami's disapproval and excommunication threats are one of Bhatta's instruments in his arsenal because he is firmly opposed to Moorthy preaching the Gandhi message. The Swami is concerned about the Pariah movement, he claims, and he wants to squash it at the beginning, before its cactus roots become widely dispersed (27). Gandhism is shown in this metaphor as a cactus plant that must be eradicated before its seeds can take root. Gandhism is supposedly dangerous to people who oppose improved treatment of the Pariahs since cactus are prickly, resilient plants.

Metaphor: Enemies

Moorthy uses a nature metaphor to explain enemies and friends: "Every enemy you create is like pulling out a lantana bush in your back yard. The more you pull out, the wider you spread the seeds, and the thicker becomes the lantana growth. But every friend you create is like a jasmine hedge. You plant it, and it is there and bears flowers and you offer them to the gods, and the gods give them back to you and your women put them into their hair" (69). You should not try to eradicate your enemy, because if you destroy him, he is like a bush whose seeds will continue to spread. Friends are compared to beautiful jasmine flowers, who will bear fruit by pleasing the gods and creating harmony. Thus, Moorthy counsels that it is better to turn your enemy into a friend rather than to try to destroy him.

Simile Moorthy

"Our Moorthy is like gold—the more you heat it, the purer it comes from the crucible," explains Nanjundia, one of the village ladies (93). It is a good metaphor because it implies that Moorthy grows stronger and more convinced of the justice and rightness of his cause as he experiences more hardships, including pushback, fasting, violence, and hard work.

Kanthapura Irony**Situational Irony: Non-Violent Protests**

In the book, Gandhi, Moorthy, and others of their ilk advocate for nonviolent means of expressing their ideas and beliefs and work to teach these means of protest to those who adhere to their teachings. Ironically, the protests that follow from the opposing ideologies put forward by the two leaders are far from peaceful and cause a great deal of suffering and destruction. Most non-violent demonstrations in history have displayed this unpleasant irony; the American Civil Rights Movement is a good example.

Dramatic Irony: Skeffington Coolies

The first night when the Godaveri coolies settle down to sleep at the Skeffington Coffee Estate, they thought, "'This would be a lovely location to live in,' and they slept the sleep of kings," according to the chapter on them (47). Because the reader is aware that they would be overworked, mistreated, denied autonomy, and enslaved by the mighty Red-man, this is an example of dramatic irony. Their lives are anything but princely, and Raja Rao spends the rest of the book detailing how their unrealistic ambition came to an end.

Situational Irony: Burning Down the Village

Considering how much the women of Kanthapura love their home, it may appear strange and ironic to some readers that it is they who burn it down rather than the soldiers and police. However, given how much they love their home, it does seem odd and ironic. They are taking matters into their own hands and leaving the invaders with nothing to harvest, nothing to take, and nothing to hold over their heads, but even in this irony there is a sense of justice.

Situational Irony: Concubine

Given that this is a poor position and seems to in no way symbolise Kanthapura as a distinct, sacred place, it is ironic that the Concubine is the only person left in Kanthapura.

Imagery

Sight

Rao describes the village of Kanthapura in fine detail, giving the reader a thorough impression of it. His description of the neighbourhood helps the reader to picture it in their minds. The site is "high on the Ghats, up the steep slopes fronting the chilly Arabian seas, up the Malabar Coast, up Mangalore and Puttur, and many a centre of cardamom and coffee, rose and sugarcane," he claims. Roads go through teak and jack trees, sandal and Sal valleys, and mountain ranges covered in vegetation. They are small, dusty, and rutted. They occasionally make a left or right turn, leading you via the Kola, Campa, Alamps, and Mena passes into vast mountains.

Groaning Carts

The groaning of the carts serves to illustrate to the reader the senses of sound and sight. The narrator claims that the carts toil across the village's roadways, carrying either the coffee crop or any other goods owned or used by the Red-man. The train of carts' lights are the last ones to be seen. Also audible are voices coming from the cart-man. Cart after cart grumbles through the streets of Kanthapura, and many nights, before our eyes close, the last lights we see are the train of carts, and the final sound we hear is the cart-man singing through the night's hollows.

Subba Chetty

The narrator gives the reader a feeling of hearing by using Subba Chetty's bulls. As they pierce the oppression, Subba Chetty's bulls utter a voice. Bulls that are not moving quickly enough begin to groan and grumble as a sign of how worn out they are. "Sometimes when Rama Chetty or Subba Chetty have goods, the carts cease and there are welcomes, and at every house we can hear Subba Chetty's 350-rupee bulls ringing their bells as they get under the yoke," the narrator adds to emphasize this vision.

The Noise

The train of carts is being used by the narrator to show the reader how the sense of hearing works. He claims that the noise of the carts begins to fade away into the pitch-black night once they are on the other side of the hill. The villagers think the goddess of the hill muffles the noises made by the carts. The ruckus abruptly disappears into the night and the gentle hiss of the Himavathy rises into the air as they cross over to the other side of Tippur Hill, the author says.

CONCLUSION

It has not been an easy undertaking to tell the truth, Raja Rao writes in the Preface to his book *Kanthapura*. It is essential to express one's own spirit in a language other than one's own. It is important to convey the many shades and omissions of a particular thought-movement that seems to be being abused when speaking in a foreign language. Although the word "alien" is employed, we do not consider English to be a foreign language in the conventional sense. It is the language of our intellectual make-up, just as Sanskrit or Persian were before it, but not the language of our emotional make-up. The fact that many of us write in both our native tongue and English speaks volumes about our intrinsic bilingualism. We can never write as well as the British can. We shouldn't do this, not at all! The only people who are permitted to write are Indians. We've grown to regard the outside world as an extension of ourselves over the course of our life. We must thus speak in a dialect that, in time, will be as distinctive and colourful as Irish or American.

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