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GURAJADA'S LITERATURE - INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE - A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

If we observe Gurajada Apparao's literature deeply, one thing is clear. English literature influence on him is not just in thoughts. It is visible directly in his character creation, in the way he handles the drama, in his satire and in his poetry style. In this article I have tried to present my observations on - how Mr.Jingle character in Charles Dickens' Pickwick Papers is similar to our Girisam how Emerson's Self-Reliance essay influenced, Shakespeare's five act structure, Letter Motifs, Mistaken Identity techniques, Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads theory connection with spoken language movement, Ballad Stanza rhythm in Mutyala Saralu, Gurajada's own English writings Sarangadhara and Suryaraopeta Reform Club, and the satire behind Girisam's dialogues like "If a person trusts you...", "Religious prejudices are dying out", "Napoleon of anti-nauch"

Keywords: *Gurajada; Kanyasulkam; Girisam; English literature influence; Dickens; Jingle; Shakespeare; Emerson; Wordsworth; spoken Telugu; Mutyala Saralu.*

INTRODUCTION

Gurajada Apparao is not just a writer, he is a visionary. He studied in a time when English education had strong influence. Many people studied English and just kept those ideas as it is. But Gurajada is different. He took those ideas and that craft and changed them to suit our Telugu people. To tell how much command he had on English, there is a best example. He first proved his talent in English only. In 1880s itself he published a long English poem Sarangadhara and a story Suryaraopeta Reform Club in English journals. So he did not just read English literature, he digested it. That is why he could use it as a weapon for our social reform.

ANALYSIS

1. Dickens Characters Influence - My Observation

Whenever I read Girisam character in Kanyasulkam, I always remember Mr.Jingle from Charles Dickens' The Pickwick Papers. Jingle speaks in broken English bits, very fast, and he tells lies so confidently that others get trapped. Our Girisam is also exactly like that. He says "Damn it! Poets' hearts..." , "Our country is in a state of transition..." and with these English bits he fools innocent people, especially Venkatesam. I feel Gurajada took inspiration from Dickens for both character nature and speaking style and he moulded it to our Telugu atmosphere.

2. Emerson's Philosophical Influence

American philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote an essay Self-Reliance. We can see how much it influenced Gurajada. Emerson says one great line - "A foolish

consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds" means sticking to one word and being adamant is a character of small minded people. In Kanyasulkam, Girisaam himself changes his word and to support it, without shame he uses Emerson's name and tells this line. A great line of a western philosopher being used by a selfish Telugu person for his own selfish purpose - I think there is no bigger satire than this.

3. Shakespeare's Drama Structure Influence

In old plays there was Nandi, Prastavana, Bharatavaakya. Gurajada left that old method fully. He brought Shakespeare's Five-act structure in Kanyasulkam. If we read Shakespeare's plays like Twelfth Night, As You Like It, we find tricks like disguises, story turning due to wrong letters (Letter Motifs), one person mistaken for another (Mistaken Identity). Same tricks Gurajada used brilliantly in Kanyasulkam in the episode where disciple is made to wear female dress. In my view, this is a great experiment which brought modernity to Telugu drama.

4. Wordsworth's Poetry Theory Influence

In English, poets like Wordsworth, Coleridge brought Romantic Revival movement. Wordsworth said in his Preface to Lyrical Ballads - "Poetry should not be in scholars' language, it should be in common people's spoken language". This

line itself looks like root mantra for Gurajada's spoken language movement. Gurajada also opposed grandhika bhasha and fought that poetry should be written only in spoken language. Another point I observed is, Mutyala Saralu meter also resembles Ballad Stanza rhythm in English.

5. Satire in Great English Words Spoken by Girisaam

When Girisaam gives lectures about social reform, the English words he uses are very thought provoking. He says "If a person trusts you and you deceive him, it's fraud. If a person doesn't trust you, it's politics" means if you cheat a trusted person it is fraud, if you cheat an untrusted person it is politics, like that he justifies his cheating. He says "Religious prejudices are dying out" means religious superstitions are disappearing, he brags outside like that, but inside he is wicked - to mock educated people of that time who were like that, Gurajada used this line. In another place he says "I am rather averse to sensual pleasures. That's why my people call me the Napoleon of anti-naught" means I don't like luxuries, that is why they call me Napoleon of anti-naught movement, and staying near Madhuravani itself saying he is a great reformer - this is the great satire shown by Gurajada. Anti-naught means the movement at that time to abolish Devadasi system.

CONCLUSION

So finally, Gurajada did not just read English literature, he digested it. He took character from Dickens, philosophy from Emerson, drama structure from

Shakespeare, language theory from Wordsworth, and he made them into weapons on our Telugu soil, for our social reform. That is why his writings are still alive today.

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