



A Parallel Study of Emerson and Kannadasan

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Abstract

Emerson has revolted against the evil of rules prescribed by the religion of his country. His could see that people have been fooled and put in the clutches by those religious rules and it has also failed to make people realize God. He has observed that Indian religion has been doing right things with right ideas giving all freedom people and helping them to realize God much. The result of this experience of Emerson is the poem 'Brahma'. Kannadasan from Tamil language has revolted against many evils in the society and written poems attacking them boldly. Both Emerson and Kannadasan could find the work of God behind all events in the world in many a different in unimaginable forms and have stressed it in their writing. Kannadasan like Shakespeare for drama has written innumerable playback songs containing philosophical ideas about life and the world, which is the immortal mark of Shakespeare as well as Kannadasan.hence, the article is a parallel study of the selected poems of Emerson and Kannadasan.

Keywords: Soul, Brahman, Transcendentalism, Hinduism, Immortality, Purity.

Emerson is a renowned scholar, genius, philosopher, writer of poetry and Essays. He is a lover of divinity but he chooses to be writer rather than to be a priest, which he asserts in his very famous essay 'Self Reliance'. He is also very popular for his slogan 'newness'. He is the head of the Transcendentalist group. He introduced the movement of Transcendentalism which teaches to go beyond the rules prescribed to imprison men in some set of religious activities and freedom less life. Emerson wants to free men from the clutches of those rules and put them on the free path of realizing God and he finds a free religious activities leading to real experience with God in India.

Emerson's popular poem Brahma displays his interest, vast reading and deeper understanding of Indian religious dogmas of 'Upanishads'. His genius has directed his intellect to see the truth and significance in the ideas given by Indian religious writing such as 'Upanishads'. Though he cares newness, he never underestimates the strength, truth value and the necessity of principles and ideas treasured in ancient writings like 'Upanishad'. He is such a true scholar and real man of divinity and literature that he wants to enlighten and imparts the world with the precious treasures of truth of truth from divine writings like



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‘Upanishad’. He believes undoubtedly that divinity is behind all things and happenings of the world. He openly and boldly points out wrongs done in the name of religion and church, which can be seen when one comes out of the influence and blind faith in religion.

In the small lyric poem ‘Brahma’, Emerson has shown the work of God in the entire activities of the world and his deeper and minute realization of it. This poem exposes his genius to put in a small space all his understanding of function of God in a clear and simple language. The poem ‘Brahma’ bears the marks of his genius in many marvelous ways. His device of making Brahma speak in the poem is very apt for the theme defeating other choices. The killer thinks he kills and the other thinks he is killed but the Brahman (God) says He is in both actions functioning subtly and that they don’t know. Emerson writes:

If the red slayer think he slays,

Or if the slain think he is slain,

They know not well the subtle ways

I keep, and pass and turn again. (Emerson Poems Vol. IX 170)

Brahman asserts the following ideas that his keeping in, passing from and turning into the world. The things that are far away and forgotten are near Brahman. There is no difference between shadow and sunlight and shame and fame for Him. Gods forgotten and disappeared from the minds of people remain in Brahman. The doubt and the one who doubts and the hymn and the one who sings are Brahman.

Brahman warns of ill to people who try to do things without seeking His aid and promises His support to people who do things having Him with them. Brahman concludes that strong gods who wishes to reach His place will never come, but assures a simple and humble lover of Him will find Him. To quote:

They reckon ill who leave me out;

When me they fly, I am the wings:

I am the doubter and the doubt,

And I the hymn the Brahmin sings. (Emerson Poems Vol. IX 171)

Thus Emerson poem ‘Brahma’ portrays the works of God in all forms.

Kannadasan is a popular poet in Tamil Nadu in India. He is very famous for his immortal playback songs for cinema. His poetry and playback songs have very attractive and immortal lines with ideas about life and the world. They have had their much influence on people of Tamil Nadu for many decades and even now.

Kannadasan’s famous writing ‘Arthamulla Inthumatham’ exposes his vast and deeper reading of Indian and Tamil ancient literature like ‘Ramayana’ Mahabharata, Silapathikaram etc. Both his poetry and playback cinema songs have immortal marks of his reading and knowledge Indian and Tamil ancient literature. Kannadasan in his poetry “Where is He?” writes of various unseen works of God. He shares that when he writes God in his pen writes. The poet’s entire tongue is God’s dwelling place. His very mind is God’s shrine and God sits in the poet as poet himself.



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He (God) is in the pen in my hand

My whole tongue is His house

My whole mind is His temple

He as me sits in me... (Kannadasan's Poetry. Part III. 208)

Emerson says that the talent, trick, thought, ability to write and characters of men have been given by God. In his poetry 'Where is He?' Kannadasan says God is the basic force for all. Emerson calls God an 'overpowering reality'. The thought of mind, act of body are directed by God. Kannadasan had deep insight on the function of soul inside the body. He calls God as source of all soul and challenges that we cannot understand God in the Scriptures.

Education in the world tries to polish up the external body and to enrich men in the material world. But Kannadasan is sure that there can't be purity in mind by polishing up the body. It is only through exploring of the individual soul we can understand the existence of Supreme soul, the God. Emerson says that soul carries all knowledge and all realities but men are not aware of soul's presence in them. Kannadasan perceives that the world is a creation from one power.

The Vedantist names that power 'Brahma' and the Brahma is all powerful and all knowledgeable. Kannadasan's idea reveals that Brahma creates all. The soul has all the attributes of Brahma. We call a man a mere existence of body when we don't see the soul in him.

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