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Gandhism Is Always a Powerful Tool of Social Change: A Study of Vizai Bhaskar's *The Return of Gandhi*

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Gandhi's practice of non-violence, honesty, simplicity is an everlasting tool for harmony in human life. Vizai Bhaskar's play *The Return of Gandhi* is an imagination of the Playwright how Gandhi would come as a spring thunder to oversee the social change after his well sought after freedom. It is an attack on modern man's advantage in marketing Gandhi's image for their selfish needs. The play is written in Telugu and translated into English and many other Indian languages. In this imaginative play Gandhi's image is transcribed as an idea or a practice that helps people to live harmoniously. This paper attempts to study how this drama stands as an example for Transcreation

1. Introduction

"I shall be alive in the grave and what is more, speaking from it"

M.K. Gandhi

The essence of the above quoted is very much the central idea of Vizai's play *The Return of Gandhi*. The play aptly attacks the rot in present day political system. The play has won Nandi Award in 2002 given by the Government of Andhra Pradesh in the Best Drama category. This Play has been written well before the most popular hit movies in Hindi as *Lage raho Munnabhai* and in Telugu *Sankardada MBBS* were made on the re-arrival of Gandhi to Earth. *Yama Dharma Raju*..... Hell..... Gandhiji's arrival to Hell on an invitation..... Happy mood in Hell because of Gandhiji's entry... *Chitragupta's* allegation (with a fear) on Gandhi as a sinner.... *Yama Dharma Raju's* unwillingness to convict Gandhiji..... Chitra Gupta's reiteration of promoting Gandhi as a sinner because he who is held responsible in bringing freedom to an immature nation.... as

The Languishing race in feudal society for ages marked with hero worship and dynastic adulation, understands only dependence — not independence. The gullible masses who were divided by caste and religion cannot appreciate the principles of equality. The people at large were illiterate, ignorant and innocent. The few educated were careless and irresponsible. The selfish and immoral rulers always indulged in power-game, encouraged factions, and further divided the people in the name of language, region, culture and the like. What kind of rule can the country expect from such rulers? The nation at large was thrown into a vicious circle. Giving independence to such people and power to such leaders naturally proved suicide. My Lord, killing a person is a sin. But trying to kill the whole nation? The biggest sin. And this man committed that biggest sin. Hence, it is prayed that appropriate punishment be imposed on this man. (Vizai Bhaskar P 21-22)

Yama Dharma Raju's decision of sending Gandhiji to India for a month in order to witness people's behavior, attitude and their exercise of his sought after freedom.... are the background

elements of the Play. The implied expectation of the punishment is that Gandhi has to suffer like a father of disgraceful children does.

2. Gandhism.... a flavor of Modern Times

. It is a welcoming fact to see some neo-Gandhians are found today and Centers for study of Gandhi are appearing praiseworthy. At this need worthy phenomenon, Vizai's play *The Return of Gandhi* appeals the youth of this nation to have a great faith in the ideals of Gandhi as pointed in the following....

Gandhism is becoming the flavor of our times as a newly awakened youth discovers the eternal relevance of values like love, truth, and non-violence (Life Positive P 70)

Gandhi is a paper figure for those who are born after independence. People have started learning of Gandhi as a subject in lessons, a pale picture on books and in quotations of wall portraits. His ideology would not be fit for the nation which is running after a swift transformation in attaining the developed country status. His acclaimed policy of village-model economy is surprisingly forgotten immediately after independence in the name of industrialization which has given rise to numerous hindrances like pollution, corruption, class conflict etc., Having discontented the youth now have begun to see there should be a change in the path of living, as that is quoted by Gandhi 'Be the change you want to see in the world'. The Play, *the Return of Gandhi* is also highlighting the same in provoking the youth to understand the sheer power behind of Gandhism to bring the change in social order.

3. Gandhi..... an exploited figure

The Playwright has been succeeded in analyzing and criticizing the present day trend of using Gandhi for one's own material benefits. Name of Gandhi, his Picture, even his Birth and Death anniversaries are shown how they are exploited to its optimum. In the return of Gandhi, while various party leaders try to get the support of Gandhi in order to popularize their party Poor People Party Leader (PPPL) says....

Comrades, any time, Gandhiji alone are the true representative of farmers and labourers! Look at Gandhiji. His clothes are the symbol the scantiness of our nation. The food he eats reflects the poverty of our country. His hand stick is the deadly weapon which provokes people for armed struggle. I straightaway put a question to all of you "can there be a greater revolutionary than Gandhiji? Certainly No." (Vizai Bhaskar P 58)

Ruling Party Leader (RPL) focusing at his own aim of attracting the followers of Gandhi towards his party shamefully utters the following....

Look here, gentleman! We are not bothered whether you are real Gandhi or a fake one. But people believe that you are real. They are ready to obey your orders. "If" you support our party, we will give you a decent house in Jubilee hills with a car and a phone. We will arrange yearly four foreign trips for you. For your benefit, we will turn a profit-making public sector undertaking into a sick unit and privatize it in favour of your people. What do you say? (Vizai Bhaskar P 58)

4. An Effective Transcreation....

Transcreation is used to refer to the process of adapting a message from one language to another, while maintaining its intent, style, tone and context. A successfully transcreated message evokes the same emotions and carries the same implications in the target language as it does in the source language. Increasingly, transcreation is used in global marketing and advertising campaigns as advertisers seek to transcend the boundaries of culture and language. It also takes account of images which are used within a creative message, ensuring that they are suitable for the target local market.

The Play *The Return of Gandhi* may be said to be a perfect Transcreation as Gandhi is shown as a symbol or an idea or a practice. As he is believed to be a following ideal, the playwright sharply presents Gandhi as a revolutionary in the end of the play. Gandhiji is also presented in evaluating the message of truth and non-violence that he has left for his nation.

5. Raja ram..... a link Character

In the Play, Gandhi comes out of his tomb when a character Rajaram, a stern follower of Gandhiji alone recognizes Gandhi's reentry. There were several displeasing practices like present election polling, vote franchise to Gandhi still, leaders' will and wish in adopting various untruthful ways to attract voters, appear before Gandhi for his utter dejection. There was an allegation raised for a theft and murder on Gandhi. It was he a lawyer for his own case. Gandhi's argument in the court opens up a Pandora box. Finally Court issues a death sentence to Gandhi. In all these situations, Raja ram is alone who understands Gandhi's agony and in turn explains back to the audience. Thus Playwright succeeded in introducing a link character.

6. Conclusion

Playwright's ability in moulding this drama an unusual transcreation of an idea into picture portrait is praiseworthy. He tried to put all the Indian love, adoration and spirit of following towards Gandhi is put into the heart of *Yama Dharma Raju* and presented before the audience lively. It is also picturised quite contrarily Hell is filled with peace with the entry of Gandhi. Though there is some imagination in describing the selfish deeds of present generation, the playwright has succeeded in mocking the situation. On the other hand he is also successful in presenting the present day common public's deep love, admirable adoration, and sincere sympathy on Gandhi's ideals. Politicians' collection of subscriptions by putting *Hundis* and spreading gossips in the name of Gandhi's re-entry to save Gujarat Earthquake victims is presented effectively on the stage. The murder of the leader who has put this *hundi* and convicting this offense on Gandhi is a crucial turn in the play. Gandhi introducing himself and promoting his own ideals and presenting his inner conscience to the present day public is crucial in the play. Actually, the playwright makes all to envisage, the situation would be like this if Gandhi really comes to earth now. This may be an outstanding experimentation of the very idea of many to expect a savior like Gandhi to come to guide the present generation. By translating this play into several languages he succeeded in influencing many.

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