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A Study of the Importance of Non-human Creatures and its Social Function in V. R. Sudheesh's Stories

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Abstract:

V.R.Sudheesh is a short story writer and literary critic. He is known for depicting love, lost love, politics and modern world in his heart touching language. He was born in Vadakara. He is working as a College Lecturer in Calicut. His major works include Krooraphalithakkaran Daivam, Daivathinu Oru Poovu, Vamsananthara Thalamura, Cholamarappathakal, Rajavinte Meenukal, Sankadamaram, Kadhaparayum Kadhamaman, Bhavanabhedanam, Oru Valarthupoochayude Jeevithakadha, Sreekrishnan and Athmaganam. He is a winner of Kerala Sahithya Academy Award for Bhavanabhedanam in 2015, and he got Thoppil Ravi Award, Ayanam C.V.Sreeraman Award and so on. It is very interesting to note that after Vaikkom Muhammad Basheer, the writer who made a voracious account of non-human creatures, it was V.R.Sudheesh who follows this narration of creatures. In this paper I would like to go through an analysis of the importance of non-human creatures in V.R.Sudheesh stories. And it may also be an account of nature, humanity, the pretension of modern world etc. It's my pleasure to write about him because his works are pertinent and it may be read the World wide readers too.

Keywords: V.R.Sudheesh, Short Story, Non-Human Creatures, Nature, Humanity.

The early works of V.R.Sudheesh were appeared in the evolutionary period of Modern story writing in Malayalam Literature. His stories expetively expressed the fousls and worries of youth. He also stated his literary career, at his young age, when he was college student. Hence his stories uphold the strength and weakness of youth. The Nostalgia that filled in his stories enriches the expressions and the memories. Those images put us in the grief and sometimes makes us happy. The presence of a man who is delved in the depth of love is always in his

stories. The existence of the self is also love as it is freedom. He also depicts the social and political background of the images in his stories. He is celebrated as the most Romantic story writer of the current Malayalam Literature. M.Mukundan, the famous Malayalam writer aptly says: "V.R.Sudheesh is the Sreekrishna in Malayalam Literature, with his flute who enhance the reader in the world of love and music". The poetic quality of his language makes him distinct from other story writers.

The short stories of V.R.Sudheesh gives us a different reading experience by presenting non-human characters. It's been a long year since the story "Vamsanantha Thalamura"(Generations after Generations) has published. This work possess a prominent place in the history of Malayalam short story as well as in the career of the author. The critics have hailed this story as a great success in the field of Malayalam short story in these three decades. He has adopted the primitive mode of story, anecdotes. Human like non-human characters share equal importance as human characters. Frog appeared as the central non-human character in this story. A teacher and few students are the other human characters. The frog is the one who was destined to be destructed in the biology class, but it thinks it is his duty to be so: "We cannot be judgmental, and we don't have the right to allege sin in the Karma of other people", these words reflects the submissive attitude of so called lower class people in the society. The story also signifies how the learning class room changes in the place for killing and hurting. Thus the students shows an extension of this experience in their life as: "They learned love by breaking hearts, they are being taught all the values by breaking it"(Sudheesh 25). They continue to exist in the history. It is to be set down that, there is not even a girl child in the classroom. The group might have felt an easiness if they had the presence of a girl.

The reckless power that transforms the streams of helpless living beings, into hymns can be seen in this story. The author race the question that who creates all these streams that repeat in the history. The teacher and the students approach the frog- the central character of the story- with a wild enthusiasm. When the destruction class came to be an end, they all feel an extraordinary joy: "when they were bath at their place, they felt immense joy and pride at learning of it body". (Sudheesh 27). We read: "The whole classroom clapped when the wounded frog made a move"(Sudheesh 27). The first lesson in the biology turns into the lesson of violence.

Gopikkuttan- another character in the story- and his friends were misled into a wrong happiness of violence, savagery and torment.

The second half of the story reveals the substantial attitude of the frog. The destructed frog was taken back to the pond to his wife and children. Even in the midst of their lament the frog- move into the death, undismayed. He died with a rare courage and the lady frog condole his death. The theme of the story in the contradiction that the human values are lost and transformed from humans to the non-human beings. The story makes us to think how the values like sacrifice and selfless love has been root out from earth instead its been a generation of violence and cruelty. The story is an extension of history that is inhuman and against nature.

Another short story of V.R.Sudheesh “Kurukka Kurukka” (fox) shares the anxiety about the lack of awareness by the biodiversity of nature. The author enters into the hopes and desires of the non-human beings that were discussed only in the proverbs and fables. The fox in the represents the animal beings who were thrown out of the expanding or blooming life situations. He realizes that the cleverness and cunningness of the ancestors is now inhabited among the humans. He understands their dwelling places cannot be replaced and the author expresses the fear that gradually the image of the clever fox will be disappeared from the minds.

The story “Rajasalabham” (King Butterfly) shares the agonirs and anxieties of a consumarised time. ‘Janakikkadu’ (The forest of Janaki) is a myth organized from the unrestrained environmental philosophy of the author. The forest of Janaki is surrounded by a substantial atmosphere and the reason for that is said to be the presence of Seetha- a mythological character of Hindu religion. Lakshmana, another character from the epic Ramayana, leaves Seetha alone in the forest and ask forgiveness for doing so: “If you are given forgiveness, let all your sins fly as butterflies in the forest”(Sudheesh 2). Thus the forest of Janaki is born from this blessing of Seetha and it is the forest of butterflies. The author portrays these butterflies as the symbol of Seetha’s beauty of purity.

The butterflies in the neighbouring forest wish to come to the Janaki forest. They believe that the memories of their ancestors are spread there. They want to imbibe the pure expression of nature. The author writes:

Not the animals of the forest, instead the human beings are making noise in the darkness. People come as groups and having liquor and they throw away the bottles to the forest. The river 'Akalappuzha' has disappeared. At the midnight 'kavi' (a bird) hears the scream of a lady and awakes from the sleep. The place butterflies found for laying eggs is another land of tragedies. A generation is born without eyes, legs, with bulged abdomen, and head. An air of death and illness is spread all over the village. Rajasalabham realizes that there are flowers but no money (Sudheesh 8).

The people who run behind the developments and eat chemicals cannot be seen the poor beheaded butterflies and human beings. Those butterflies flew away to the neighboring forest and 'kavi' is afraid that, it may also turn into the terrific situation of Janaki forest. It also disturbs the mind of readers. The author shares the environmental diligence which is necessary in the new age of environmental destruction. V.R.Sudheesh picturizes all the environmental issues such as deforestation, sand mining and pollution through the eyes of 'kavi' bird. He points out the fault that the earth and the minds will be turned into deserts alike, there we lose our kindness.

The story "Gowli Rajante Swakarya Lokam" (The private world of King Lizard) is the attempt of a lizard to make people to depend on 'Gowlisasthra' (The art of reading one's fortune in relation to fall, movement or sound of the lizard). The lizard in the story thinks for the need of imposing the thought that, "death is sure, if the lizard fall on the head", even in the minds of non-believers. It believes that it can also put stop of human life, who had attained the power of destruction. The lizard thinks: "human beings be like, he will possess enmity towards some other beings. The man who love all living beings selflessly are rare"(Sudheesh 34). The author has succeeding in portraying the private world of lizard, that is been living through a short duration of life.

The theme of the story "Ko-Ko-Kokkarako" (The Sound of Hens) is the thoughts of an indigenous hen who unexpectedly fell among the broiler hens. When she lived as 'hen' in a house she fell in love with a cock. The cock was martyred on a festive day, while they were enjoying their beautiful moments. When she failed to make love with an another cock, she was handover to a butcher. She lives among the broiler hens and observes that they cannot even realize the traps awaits for them. She possess an aesthetic sense that has attained from the village life. She imagines her beloved as 'Theyya', an idol of God. She even try aesthetize the death she

sees every day. The indifferent nature of other hens sometimes make her astonished. It is awful that to live without being able to differentiate life and death. We can consider those hens as the representatives of indifferent beings. They cannot do nothing except being others meal. By bringing the image of broiler hens and the indigenous he analyzes the whole society including students. The diminution or decline that happens in every field such as personal, social and political that determines the human condition is criticized by the author. He also criticize himself by writing that he may having some broiler chicken while drinking alcohol in the club at the evening.

“Cherayude Veedu” (The House of Snake) is a painful story. This story brings together the human life and the animal life. The author makes us compassionate by bringing us to the mind of a small child. The phrase ‘house of snake’ itself is a matter of amazement. Since, the concept of house is associated with human beings. We can see two families in “The House of Snake”. First one is the protagonist named Ravi, his son Saran and his wife Geetha. The other one is an imaginative family of a snake. The protagonist of the story leave to the office by seeing a snake fell in the tank of tar, made for the construction of road. His son Saran who happened to see this ran to them for telling this, but his school bus came before he could. The snake’s body was covered with the tar and they could not save him. On the other hand they did not try to.

At noon Geetha was asked to come to the school, because Saran was so depressed at seeing that snake. He keeps on thinking about the snake. When he goes there and check, there was no snake. So he thinks that it might have escaped. His father also tells him that the snake was brought home by parents and he is doing well. They consulted a doctor and the life go on. But Saran could not resist, he was caught up by the fever. Ravi, then makes his friend to call Saran, to tell that he is calling from little snake’s house and everything is alright. Then Saran comes in to normal condition. But unfortunately the very next day he was happened to see the same snake dead on the road. He cried loudly, he could not help.

Saran is an innocent boy who expresses love to all his fellow beings. He was so much concerned on that snake and his heart was broken seeing it dead. The child’s concept about the life of fellow beings is different from elders. They consider it as a part of his world. The author portrays the truth that the animal is also a part of human world. Animals may have the same feeling of human beings. They may have a family, life and personality. They may expressing

these things in their little world. The man who run behind all the luxuries may cannot see that. But the innocent creatures like children cannot shut their eyes, to their poor creatures. They connect everything with the nature. They understand the fact that earth is everybody's.

The pet animals are mere a showoff for the people who are immersed in the consumer culture. But the story "Oru Valarthu Poochayude Jheevitha Kadha" (The Life Story of a Pet Cat) turns its fate from this attitude and express a time of love towards the fellow beings. 'Puppy' is the name of the pet cat- the central character of the story. It is a real life story happens in the house of author namely 'Prapancham' meaning 'Universe'. He writes: "They born in Prapancham... Five little beings... Little snow. Puppy turned into the role of a responsible mother, feeding her children" (Sudheesh 59). He adds:

I got this moggis cat from Kuttan Moosath's home. I did not brought up cats in my home yet. Bu I am always enquired him.. At last the very first day when we are started to living our new home on twenty third, May, two thousand and four Puppy comes and it becomes our family member. Actually it's a fortune for our decision that no need of an other child. Ammu got a sister (Sudheesh 60).

It is very interesting note that how the author describes the moments with Puppy, in Prapancham.Ammu, V.R.Sudheesh's daughter and Puppy lived together. Getting inspired with her father's act of cutting his moustache, Ammu cuts Puppy's too. Then the cat lost its sensibility. Author cares Puppy as his daughter when it was pregnant and anguished it knows all about these things.

Cats always move from their own house to some other place to die at their last moments. She gave birth to many children, and they brought to different places. The story ends with a pain that the author could not kept a single child of Puppy as her extension. The story written in the first person narrative, since it is a real life incident. All life moments cannot be transformed into stories. They can be included in the next category of Memoirs. But sometimes the brilliance of the story teller can be make wonder by transforming memoir into story. In Malayalam Literature, it was Vaikom Muhammad Basheer began this s strategy. V.R.Sudheesh also follows the same path of Basheer. The self-expression of the author also lies in the world of Puppy can be seen in the story. He is able to convey the love and affection which he had towards Puppy, to the reader. Puppy, is the relief in his 'Universe'. Puppy shows more love than any other, his fellow beings.

When we come to the end of the story, we realize that the cat is not mere an animal, and no human beings are greater than these animals. The puppy become our pet too, when we come to the end of the story.

“Kakkakal” (The Crows), written two decades ago, predicts about the contemporary world. And its nature of crucifixion of writings, arts, films and so on. The crows are a symbol here. Some crows are attacks the writer’s library which did not have any doors or windows. He wish to keep this book lifelong. But when he back from a journey, he saws everything damaged. The crows completely attack the library. Among the scattered books he finds a wounded finger. It is the writer’s finger which he uses to reflects his art and himself. The story is reminiscent and the writer shows his social commitment by depicting a world which questions the artist’s freedom.

V.R.Sudhesh’s another short story titled “Poocha” (The Cat) portrays about his anguish on the dull and non-political campuses. He finds this cat on his surroundings. He says:

While the students enjoying the poetry class, the cat enters. It stands near the window and nobody cares him. Next day the cat get inside and troubles the class where poetry absorbs like alcohol. It disturbs the calm and quite atmosphere of the class again and again. Students are afraid and take leave.. day by day the number absence increased. Students who left there waits the cat with courage and delve into poetry. But the cat attack the students and now no one remains (Sudhesh 71).

He realizes he is the next victim. Here the cat which take apart the whole students in the world of poetry, discussion and awareness. It symbolizes so many things and make alert that our students are deviate from their path. V.R.Sudhesh as a teacher points out the campuses which is sometimes gloomed and dark because of the lack of ideas and reactions.

The problems of family is the theme of “Eli” (The Rats). The story published in 1988, Year’s before old age homes and day homes become common. The narrator goes his friend’s home only his mother is there at that time. She cannot recognize him. She tells about the busy life of her son, his new home and be sad of his new Mixer Grinder is damaged by a rat. When the friend visits the second time the life status improved a lot and the rat destructed the Tele Vision, Tape Recorder and Air Conditioner now. Then after a long time he comes again and the mother

easily recognize him. The rat dies. Mother lost her only companion in her world of alienation. The mother is the representative of whole old people who struggles in their last days and fated to live in loneliness. These three stories of V.R.Sudheesh, "The Crows", "The Cat" and "The Rat" makes a trio. We can see the author's reaction on the environment through these stories. Non-human creatures are appeared as the inner eyes and soul's cry through this self-narration. Here these creature are find an asylum in fearfulness and then become symbols. Even though these stories are written decades ago the anguish of the writer comes true that shows the predicative quality of his writing.

It is pertinent to note that V.R.Sudheesh portrays so many other creatures in his short stories. "Rajavinte Meenukal" (The Fishes of a King), "Ottakam" (The Camel), "Vavval" (The Bat), "Kathunna Pularikal Sandhyakal" (Burning Mornings Evenings), "Pranayam Koyhunna Pravukal" (Love Kissing Doves) and "Puli"() also describes the world of non-human creatures. His latest story "Pandathe Prema Kadhayile Vavval" (The Bat's in the Old Love Story) written in the back ground of Nipa fever, which shivers Kerala recently. Love is a major theme in this story. By depicting all these non-human creatures our author hails his vision of unity.

The story of V.R.Sudheesh discusses the theory of 'Sarvva Jeevithva Vadham', (The term in Malayalam, means to consider every cratures alike). It is the philosophy like Adwaita. He portrays different characters to prove his philosophy. This philosophy of 'Sarvva Jeevithva Vadham' resembles the theory of Buddhism. His stories are stands as an epic of love which cures every reader in the brutal world of cruelty. Here man kills his fellow beings and lacks the human values. All his non-human characters reflects the utmost love and empathy and proclaims that we are not as cruel as the human beings. They knows the fact that love is omnipotent. But man deliberately forgets that truth. In these stories writer is present as an hidden God, who pains his creatures pain. The images of his stories depicts the agonies of human beings, non-human beings and nature alike. Sometimes his non-human characters expresses love, affection and tenderness more than human beings. The humanity of V.R.Sudheesh does not contrasts in human beings yet they express immense kindness towards everything. In my observation, "He is the man. He did not want to hurt even the smallest creature on earth and firmly believed that the earth was not man's alone". All his short stories, especially which centers on the life of non-human beings

touches the readers heart and we feels our heart burning and we will ready to thinks about our own existence.

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