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MYTHICAL CONCEPT IN *THE TIGER FOR MALGUDI*

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ABSTRACT

The mythical concept of *The Tiger for Malgudi* by R.K.Narayan has conceptualized the theory of Karma as depicted in the Bhagawad Gita.

The tiger (Raja), the unmitigated animal, finally becomes the mitigated animal and he reaches to a state of total equilibrium. The state of self-realization is evidently seen in the life of the tiger (Raja). The tiger(Raja), gradually realizes the obstacles and illusions which hamper this process of self-realization. It is true that his identify is undergoing change" that leads him towards new Janma which is the symbol of pure consciousness of God, self-realization and identification with the supreme. Once his spirit reaches the threshold of spirituality, he does not feel crushed by the weight of the world. Technically the body is prison and the soul is held in it as the prisoner for the sin of the physical self. At the time of death, the physical body and the gross mind return to the elements of the earth. But part of the subtle body survives and accompanies the soul to the next world.

Thus R.K.Narayan gives astounding lessons with the profound use of Indian myth to his readers saying that self-realization is a self-seeking process, every person has to achieve his own spiritual liberation through penance and meditation like (Raja) the tiger.

Key words: unmitigated, illusion, self-realization, spirituality, liberation, meditation.

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INTRODUCTION

The mythical concept which is depicted in the character tiger(Raja), which has been permeated throughout the novel, *The Tiger for Malgudi* R.K.Narayan has conceptualised the theory of Karma as depicted in *the Bhagawad Gita*, which presents unambiguously a comprehensive ideal of true religion and its conceptualization of ultimate reality and the ideal of morality.

R.K.Narayan has artistically woven the fourfold path of detached action (Niskama Karma Yoga), the path of knowledge (Jnan Yoga), the path of devotion and dedication (Bhakti yoga), for

attainment of the ultimate goal of Moksha in the life of the tiger(Raja).

As we are aware, to write a novel one should be well-versed with the technique of narration and the myth and folklore consciously and unconsciously in his writings. He has read ancient culture very minutely and thoroughly. He has found several myths in the Hindu Epics-Ramayana and Mahabharatha and made use of them in most of his novels very vividly and in particular in the novel, '*The Tiger for Malgudi.*'

In English literature there is a rich use of mythology. English writers like Toru Dutt, Raja Rao,

R.K.Narayan, GirishKarnard, T.S.Eliot, W.B.Yeats, P.B.Shelley and so on widely made use of myths in their literature. T.S.Eliot has used the mythical method on Gerontion in Sweeney among the Nightingales'. The Wasteland is the most extended example of Eliot's use of mythical technique. As T.S.Eliot finds several close parallels in the waste land of the past for the modern wasteland, R.K.Narayan depicts the transformation which has taken place in course of time, through many stages in the life of the tiger (Raja).

As on the eve of the composition of the Waste Land, T.S.Eliot had been reading Jessie Weston's book, *Ritual to Romance* and James Frazer's famous book, *The Golden Bough*, R.K.Narayan has a profuse and profound knowledge of Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita and Puranas and he has openly made use of them in novels.

A Tiger for Malgudi can be regarded as a practical document of the Bhagavad Gita. The novel offers the most enlightening over the discourse on the four ideals of kama, Artha, Dharma and Moksha, the traditional of Guru-Shishya, the three Gunas and the objectives of Ashrama Dharma, the concept of Sansara, renunciation and detachment. The power Yoga and the philosophical discourses in the Bhagavad Gita through the autobiography of a Tiger (Raja) are also expressly projected in the novel, *The Tiger for Malgudi*.

As Milton absorbed the Hebrew sagas, Keats the Greek myths and W.B.Yeats Irish mythology, R.K.Narayan has adopted the Indian Philosophy from Indian Mythology. In the *TIGER FOR Malgudi*, Narayan manifests the essentials of Indian Philosophy. The Vedantic philosophy of Moksha or self and self-realization, the concepts of Maya or illusion, Avidya or ignorance and the ideal Nishkama, Karma or action without attachment, the four ideals of purushartha and other Hindu concepts such as ascetic purification, Yoga renunciation, cyclic progression of life and death all these philosophical ideals have been artistically embedded in this novel, *'The Tiger for Malgudi.'*

"A special class of stories, regarded as sacred, embodied in rituals, morals and social

organizations and which form an integral and active part of primitive culture. These stories live not by idle interest, not as fictitious or even as true narrative, but are to the natives a statement of a primeval, greater and more relevant reality by which the present life, fates and activities of mankind are determined, the knowledge of which supplies man with the motive for ritual and moral actions, as well as indications of how to perform." (Jeremiah Curtin: *Myths and folklore of Ireland*)

Myth is a special class of story. The ethical and moral in Narayanian fiction reiterates the basic trends of Hindu mythology which is founded on a threefold system of spiritual life encompassing the stages of social, moral and transcendental. The tiger (Raja) undergoes through the transformation and transfiguration to the threefold systems of spiritual life, social, moral and transcendental.

Like the myth of Yavakri, the myth of Rakshasas, the myth of Gods and Goddesses, the myth in *'The Tiger for Malgudi'* is dexterously woven to expatiate on different phases of transformed life of the tiger (Raja) and how finally reaches to the experience of "Samadhi" which is integral in Yogic schools. It is a higher level of concentrated meditation, or dhyana. In the Yoga tradition, it is the eighth and final limb identified in the Yoga sutras of Patanjali.

It has been described as a non-dualistic stage of consciousness in which the consciousness of the experiences subject becomes one with the experienced object, and in which the mind becomes still, one-pointed or concentrated while the person remains conscious".

In Hinduism, Samadhi can also refer to videhamukti or the complete absorption of the individual consciousness in the self at the time of death-usually referred to as mahasamadhi. 'Samadhi' is the state of consciousness induced by complete meditation. R.K.Narayan unfolds this enigmatic truth how the tiger (Raja) acquires integration or wholeness, or truth through the teachings of his master 'Hermit' finally.

Etymological analysis of "Samadhi" is "Sama" means (even) and "dhi" means intellect, a state of total equilibrium. 'Samadhi' is described in different ways within Hinduism, such as the state of

being aware of one's existence or as an altered state of consciousness that is characterized by bliss (ananda) and joy (sukha).

The tiger (Raja), the unmitigated animal, finally becomes the mitigated animal and he reaches to a state of total equilibrium. R.K. Narayan uses it as a moral instigator in the lives of the readers to teach us that one should undergo in one's life to achieve the same kind of ananda and joy which the tiger (Raja) has finally attained.

'Nisargadatta Maharaj' describes this state in the following manner.

"When you say you sit for meditation, the first thing to be done is to understand that it is not this body identification that is sitting for meditation, but this knowledge. "IO am, this consciousness, which is sitting in meditation and is meditation on itself".(wikipedia.org/wiki/Samadhi)

This state of self-realization is evidently seen in the life of the tiger (Raja). The mundane commonalities are deserted by the tiger (Raja), so as to attain wholeness which is supernatural. It is indicated that one has to get rid of worldly entanglements to involve oneself in the divine will of God to attain the experience of Moksha.

'Myth' is not something spurious. The truth goes along with 'myth' as the soul with the body. It is a true story which appears to be incredible. Once the Author R.K. Narayan has come across a hermit who arrives with a companion, a tiger, he does not hold the animal on a leash since he claims they were brothers in previous lives. Even he comes across a few other instances of enduring friendship between tigers and human beings.

The tiger (Raja) says, "I keep scrutinizing faces, but all faces look dull and monotonous, none radiant like my masters.".(Narayan R.K: A Tiger for Malgudi, P.11)

The keenest observation shapers 'Raja' in to a different kind of Narayanian hero the tiger. R.K.Narayan is able to decipher the inner urge of the tiger (Raja) which symbolically the humans possess. The comprehension of the master's radiant face is the turning and central point to the tiger (Raja) to be transformed in to a transformed tiger (Raja). This unique quality in the life of the tiger (Raja) later in his life will blossom to fruition and aids to attain the

enlightenment which Narayan wants to unfold to his readers to teach a lesson that everyone will have a chance for the turning point and which ought not to be missed. This experience the tiger (Raja) is universal, people from various walks of life happen to go through the same experience.

"I don't know why God has chosen to give us this fierce make-up, the same God who has created the parrot, the peacock, and the deer, which inspire poets and painters." (Narayan R.K: A Tiger for Malgudi, P.12)

Like every modern man, the tiger (Raja) possesses the advanced and revolutionary ideas. At this stage of his life, he radically posits and argument saying that why God has given such a fierce make-up. Here the tiger (Raja) stands for the blend of the stream of consciousness and the despondency. The tiger (Raja) is dejected as the humans raise their voice in distress and feel dejected in sorrow. The experience of the tiger (Raja) is similar to the mankind in the universe. Man always strives for something which he is devoid of and he is not satisfied with that he has, though he knows that "comparison kills confidence". The comparison of the tiger (Raja) is similar to the modern revolutionary man which R.K. Narayan has adroitly brought out in this novel, 'The Tiger for Malgudi'.

In the course of time the tiger (Raja), is transformed to another phase of life. Now he becomes philosophic for he is filled with the philosophical questions like who am I? where am I from? There are undoubtedly the questions asked by philosophy from the time immemorial. It is the sole influence of his master. The Yogic powers of the master that are unseen but supernaturally influences the tiger (Raja). Here the master, the Guru, influences the tiger (Raja), 'Sisya'. The Tiger for Malgudi'.

R.K. Narayan's fictional texts have a foregrounding in Indian philosophy that could be partly ascribed to his traditional background. But his philosophical vision is purely indigenous that bears the imprint of his knowledge of ancient Indian traditional culture and philosophy.

According to Sethuraman, "Myth means originally a short narrative or epic describing events/

actions relating to supernatural beings, but now used in the sense of a pattern which such stories provide for our understanding of any modern novel or story". (Sethuraman V.S: Practical Criticism, P:239)

The supernatural element that is in 'Eklavya', the poem written by Toru Dutt is comparable to the supernatural power that lies in the master in educating the tiger (Raja). In Mahabharata, one day 'Ekalavya' practices, he hears a dog barking, at first the body ignores the dog, but continuous disturbance in his practices angers him. "Eklavya' fires seven arrows in rapid succession to fill the dog mouth without man from reaching the state of 'Nibbana'. The moment he is free from the way of his passions, he learns to achieve 'Nibbana'.

These passions, according to the Buddha's analysis, fall under three groups. First group refers to craving, attachment, lust, infatuation and greed. The second group refers to antipathy, hatred, anger, vexation and repugnance. The third group refers to ignorance, division and stupidity. Having the control over these negative characteristics is 'Nibbana'.

"Nibbana means enough control over passion so as to enable one to walk on the path of righteousness." (Narayan R.K: The Man Eater of Malgudi, P:182)

There is a marked contrast between the tiger in 'The tiger for Malgudi' and Vasu in 'The Man Eater of Malgudi. Vasu having the characteristics of 'Rakshasa, refuses to be taught and finally becomes self-destructive.

"Every demon appears in the world with a special boon of indestructibility. Yet the universe has survived all the Rakshasas that were even born. Every demon carries within him, unknown to himself, a tiny seed of self-destruction and goes up in thin air at the most unexpected moment".⁹ Narayan R.K: A Tiger for Malgudi, p:17)

Whereas the tiger (Raja) is taught and gains the control over passions called 'Nibbana'. The tiger (Raja) goes from one level of transformation to a great level of transformation and finally to Buddha kind of enlightenment. As the goal of life is the attainment of release from the empirical state of 'Samsara', the recurrent round of birth and death

and the realization of one's own true nature, the tiger (Raja) comes to realize his own true nature at this stage.

The tiger (Raja) mentions of a fable "The first tiger in creation was very much like a lion, endowed with a tawny, shining coat of pure Gold. Imagine! But he offended some forest spirit, which branded his back with hot coal."¹⁰ (GirishKarnard, The Fire and The Rain, P:10)

R.K. Narayan highlights the 'Myth' of forest spirits as he is well versed in Indian Mythology. He goes to the extent of saying the Gods and Goddesses in the mythology are filled with human weaknesses like lust, greed, envy and anger. The stories from the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Puranas as well as legends, folklore and primitive rituals are considered to be 'Myths'.

The 'Myth' of forest spirits was used in the writings of Alexander Pope and GirishKarnard. Alexander Pope in the Rape of the Lock, believes in sylphs and gnomes who play an active part in the story. Ariel is Belinda's guardian – sylph. Ariel also describes the four different categories of spirits, Salamanders, nymphs, gnomes and sylphs. The function of the sylphs is to protect the purity and virtue of young maidens.

In the 'Myth of Yavakri' the spirit in the form of the daughter-in-law approaches Yavakri seductively and steals the urn which contains the water that makes him invulnerable to danger. The rakshasa then chases him with a trident. Yavakri runs towards a lake in search of water, but the lake dries up. Every spot of water in it dries up at his approach. Finally Yavakri tries to enter his father's hermitage. But a blind man of the sudra caste, who is guarding the gate, bars Yavakri's entry. At the moment the rakshasa kills Yavakri.

In the Fire and Rain in conversation of Nittilai with Aravasu, she boasts of her tribal gods saying "the priest announces that he'll invoke the deity at such and such a time on such and such a day. And then there, right in front of the whole tribe, he gets possessed. And the spirit answers your questions.

'Myth' as a technique, is used by R.K.Narayan as it was used in the Fire and the Rain and the Rape of the Lock. The tiger (Raja)'s

recollections of a forest spirit is the mythical technique which has been skillfully used to mention of unseen spirits.

My master said "You probably in a precious life enjoyed putting your fellow beings behind bars. One has to face the reaction of every act, if not in the same life, at least in another life or a series of lives." (Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, *The Buddha & his Dhamma*, p:245)

Bhagwad Gita and its Karma philosophy regard self-realization or enlightenment as the ultimate goal in a man's life, although the methods for the attainment of this goal may vary from man to man. Soul, atman acquires unanimity with the supreme soul or almighty who is paramatma or God. The explicit identification of Brahman and soul is vividly postulated in the various schools of Indian philosophy. The aim of life as conceived in the Upanishads and other holy scriptures is to overcome congenial ignorance, Avidya, by attaining full enlightenment or Gyana.

The Indian view of life is marked by the absence of bitterness at the face of misfortune in the life of people, there is neither a shouting against injustice, nor a railing against God. Karma induces in an Indian a mood of acceptance and understanding as he knows that there is no dark fate governing the universe. One moves by one's deeds. Karma is central to the Indian philosophy.

According to Fowler, since it is impossible for living beings to avoid action all together, the Bhagvad Gita therefore offers a practical approach to liberation in the form of Karma Yoga. The path of Karma Yoga upholds the necessity of action. However, this action is to be undertaken without any attachment to the work or desire for results. Bhagvad Gita terms this "inaction in action and action in inaction".

According to the Hindu religious and Philosophical concepts, man is composed to two fundamental principles opposed to each other per nature, one spiritual, the soul (atman), and the other material, the body (sarira). The atman is eternal, immutable, not born, not created, indestructible, instead, the body is temporal, created, mutable and destructible.

Avidya and Karma are two basic presuppositions of Hinduism. They have no beginning because they did not have a beginning. It is therefore a truth that transcends every intellectual explanation. Karma signifies the moral debit of the actions which one has done. Every action inevitably produces its own fruit and the subject has necessarily to experience all the consequences of this own actions.

A person's behavior leads irrevocably to an appropriate reward or punishment commensurate with that behavior. It is the inevitable law of retribution or the law of Karma. It is the law of cause and effect applied to the life of every individual, law according to which everyone gathers the fruit of what one has sowed or undergoes the effect of his own actions.

The soul from all eternity is undergoing birth and rebirth due to this inviolable law of Karma. Thus is born the doctrine of the transfiguration of the soul. It is a corollary of the doctrine of Karma.

Vishnu Purana Book I, Chapter VI, the legend of Dhruva, speaks of Manu who has two sons, Prayavrata and Uttanapadu. Uttanapadu marries two wives. 'Suruchee' is his most adored and Suneete, less beloved. Uttama is a handsome petted boy of Suruchee. Dhruva is the son of Suneete. One day explains to Dhruva that she is an unfortunate woman without powers for she is reaping grief and working for her ancient sins whereas Suruchee raised her virtue pile on

Power has determined the number of breaths for each individual, who can neither stop them nor prolong that's why God says in the Githa, I am life and death, I am the killer and the killed.

Now the tiger (Raja) has come to a stage to understand sastras, the mysteries of spirituality, life and life after death. The comprehension of the mysteries of spirituality is a state of moral and intellectual perfection transcending the distinction between good and evil, between doubt and faith, between being and non-being. This goal is attainable in present life as per the teachings, sayings of the Upanishads and it is known as JivanMukti or liberation while still alive. In the end, when the individual reaches this stage, dissociates himself

from physical accomplishments as it has taken place in the life of the tiger (Raja).

How ever, only a few people succeed in attaining complete enlightenment, majority of the people are mainly the seekers. The upanishads have classified these people into two broad categories. First there are the people who follow the right path and second those who yield to natural passions for want of self-control. The first category of the people ultimately attains release from the cycle of birth and death. In this connection, the tiger (Raja) belongs to the first category that has not remained as a seeker but the attainer of complete enlightenment.

R.K.Narayan's fiction corroborates with the eternal view of self-realization as well as the contents of Indian philosophy. In 'A Tiger for Malgudi' the victory of good and the annihilation of evil is clearly depicted in the character of the Tiger (Raja) who profoundly comprehends the mysteries of spirituality.

The tiger (Raja) shares his spiritual bliss and magnetic moral powers of his master. The tiger (Raja) is wonderstruck for he understands a strange power on him. The master hermit says; A change is coming, you will have to start a new life, a different one.

Buddha, having seen the stark realities of old age, disease and death and a wandering ascetic, he realizes that he cannot longer be content with the life of a prince. The luxuries, musicians and dancing girls in the palace seem to him grotesque. In the same manner, the tiger (Raja) realizes that the world is a passing wind and he has been transformed into the world of spirituality from mundane world.

Siddhartha sits beneath a scared Bodhi tree and settles in meditation, the work of Siddhartha's mind comes to be mythologized as a great battle with Mara, a demon whose name means 'destruction' and who represents the passions that snare and delude us. Mara brings the vast armies of monsters to attack Siddhartha, who sits still and remains untouched. Mara's most beautiful daughter tries to seduce Siddhartha, but this effort also fails.

Finally Mara claims the seat of enlightenment which rightfully belongs to him. Mara's spiritual accomplishments are greater than

Siddhartha's. The demon says, Mara's monstrous challenges Siddhartha who will speak for you?

Then Siddhartha reaches out his right hand to touch the earth, and the earth itself roars, "I bear you witness". Mara disappears. And as the morning star rises in the sky, Siddhartha Gautama realizes enlightenment and becomes a Buddha.

Here R.K.Narayan tries to mention the basic trends of Buddhism which is founded on the meditation and the struggle with the evil thoughts. As Buddha becomes enlightened, and makes 'Mara' disappear, the tiger (Raja)

Becomes enlightened through the influence of the master (hermit) through meditation.

The four stages of enlightenment in Buddhism are the four progressive stages culminating in full enlightenment as an "Arahat". The four stages are sotapanna, sakadagami, Anagami and Arahat. The Buddha refers to people who are at one of these four stages as noble people and the community of such persons as the noble Sangha. The teaching of four stages of enlightenment is a central element of the early Buddhist schools. The tiger (Raja), undergoes these four stages and comes to the final stages of Arahat in the most powerful teachings of his master (hermit). The tiger (Raja) thinks of his master (hermit).

The tiger (Raja) thinks of his master saying that "The hermit must have come from the Himalayas. I have heard that there are many extraordinary souls residing in the ice caves, capable of travelling any distance at will, and able to control anything by their Yogic powers." 16 (Narayan.R.K, A Tiger for Malgudi, P:151)

R.K.Narayan has interwoven into this novel, The Tiger for Malgudi, the mysticism in India which is prevalent in India and the Yogic powers that the hermits possess that reside in the Himalayas. This Yogic power has been recognized by the tiger (Raja), through the influence of Yogic powers of his master (hermit). In novel, The Guide, Narayan says: "Raju felt grateful to this man for the sentiment, do you know, sometimes these Yogis can travel to the Himalayas just by although." 17 (Narayan.R.K, The guide, p:26)

In Indian Yoga, there is belief that miracles are based on the principle of the concentration of the mind. The mind has immense powers. It derives its powers from the atman or the supreme soul. The mind is a collection of thoughts. The mind's energy is dissipated by worry, evil thoughts, cares, anxieties and lack Brahmacharya. If we can control the immense amount of power which the mind possesses through concentration and sublime thoughts, you will acquire Siddhis or the power for do supernatural actions.

There is a belief that the siddhis (The greatest miracles) performed by Raja Yogins are true. They cannot change the molecules of an object. They can draw their supply from the cosmic source, ether and create any kind of object through their yogic power. A Raja Yogi does miracles through Samyama. By doing 'Samyama' on the form of the body and checking the power of comprehension, he is able to make the body disappear. By practicing Samyama on the relation between ether and body, the Yogi attains extreme lightness of the body and the ability to travel through space.

Sri Aurobind Ghosh, profusely explains the foundations of his integral Yoga. He also discusses other spiritual paths and the difficulties of spiritual life. His related subjects include the place of human relationships in yoga. Sadhana through meditation, work and devotion, reason, science, religion, morality, Idealism and Yoga, spiritual and occult knowledge, occult forces, beings and powers, destiny, karma, rebirth and survival. (Ghosh Sri Aurobindo, Critical Considerations, Karmachari, Surakha Chhawani, Bareilly. P.106)

As Sri Aurobindo has written in his 'on Yoga' through which the tiger (Raja) has undergone through vision, experience illumination and knowledge that is realization with the power of hermit (the master).

The sense of detachment from all material aspects and the efforts to achieve communion with God as found in Raja the tiger who live the life of Yogi is central idea of R.K. Narayan in the end of the novel.

The philosophic views are fully comprehended by the tiger (Raja) on life, existence and death. Previously the word God was unheard to

the tiger (Raja). But now the description of God or the creator is clear with the spiritual power of his master.

Narayan's characters are Yogis in their distinct ways. 'Patanjali' Yoga sutra is the main source of the yoga system founded on the control of the mind and stands for all humans who can be transformed and start a new life with the power of spirituality.

The tiger (Raja) in 'A Tiger for Malgudi' acquires the maturity of saints which can be described as satvik life, a deeply religious and spiritual life corresponding to the Indian philosophical paradigms of renunciation and Moksha. The tension between the one and many, a perennial theme of Hinduism operates quietly throughout Narayan's fiction, the author's optimistic view of life traces the will of God in all matters, actions and ends is a marked feature of Hindu religion.

The ethical and moral code in Narayanian fiction reiterates the basic trends of Hindu ethics which is founded on a threefold system of spiritual life encompassing the stages of social, moral and transcendental. Majority of Narayanian characters adhere to the Varna Ashrama Dharma, Sadharana Dharma and Vishesh Dharma as per the Hindu ethical code specified by Manu and Parasurama.

All the systems are one in defining Moksha as experimental comprehension of ultimate reality that is to be exclusively attained not by discursive knowledge but by an experience described as Prajanana, Kevalgnana, Anubhuthi- a state of ultimate bliss, joy or liberation which the tiger (Raja) has attained this liberation, the mythical character of Narayan, through the ultimate teachings of his master (hermit). Finally, the tiger (Raja) finds elevating, the change churns internally. He gets accustomed to many changes. He feels within himself if he has the physical form, he will live on the air and on the dry leaves.

Narayan has artistically woven the concept of the power of God and Moksha in this novel, 'The Tiger for Malgudi'. The ideal of Moksha is central to all the Indian Philosophical systems and doctrines with the single exception of Charvaka. Narayan

describes himself in a mighty terrifying form which pervades the whole universe in every form of life and action. An analysis of his novels unleashes the spontaneous flow of philosophy of Karma. His novels offer us an insight into the wisdom and knowledge of the epics, the Puranas and the Upanishads.

The master (hermit) mentions that separation is the law of life right from the mother's womb. One has to accept it if one has to live God's plans. Now the tiger (Raja) is in Zoo, a new life opens for (Raja), the awakened one like Buddha. He is no more a cruel animal.

The mysteries of life and death have been a subject of perpetual enquiry in the Indian Philosophy. The Bhagwad Gita and the Upanishads contain exhaustive discourses on these metaphysical queries. Narayan, who is deeply rooted in religion, consistently refers to religious, philosophical and metaphysical issues. The Indian philosophy upholds a belief in the supernatural, transcendental, para-natural, the mystic life and so on which is inculcated by the master (hermit) in the life of the tiger (Raja) in 'The Tiger for Malgudi'.

The ideas of God for the tiger (Raja) collaborate with the idea of God in the vedantic philosophy. In the vedantic school of Indian philosophy, God is manifested as omnipresent and omnipotent in the form of soul or Atman.

R.K.Narayan offers another paradigm of Guru shishya i.e. seeker and a teacher, the relationship between the tiger and the master. The master assists the tiger (Raja) in the process of self-realization and the tiger (Raja) is enlightened one finally as Buddha is enlightened. Narayan's philosophy in the novel, 'The Tiger for Malgudi' is related to the concepts of self, illusion, body and God.

K.R.Srinivas Iyengar rightly observes "There is generally a flight, an uprooting a disturbance of order followed by a return, a restoration to normalcy." (Indian Writings in English, p:385)

The tiger (Raja), gradually realizes the obstacles and illusions which hamper this process of self-realization. It is true that his identity is undergoing change" that leads him towards new Janna which is the symbol of pure consciousness of God, self-realization and identification with the

supreme. Once his spirit reaches the threshold of spirituality, he does not feel crushed by the weight of the world.

The master finally gives a word of comfort to the Raja the Tiger." Both of us will shed our forms soon and perhaps we could meet again, who knows? So goodbye for the present." (The Tiger for Malgudi, R.K.Narayan)

Here R.K.Narayan highlights the Hinduistic concept of rebirth. Rebirth is the religious or philosophical concept that the soul or spirit, after biological death, begins a new life in a new body that may be human, animal or spiritual depending on the moral quality of the previous life's actions. This doctrine is a central tenet of the Indian religions. It is also a common belief of many tribal societies around the world.

According to Hinduism, soul reincarnates again and again on earth until it becomes perfect and reunites with its source. During this process, the soul enters into many bodies, assumes many forms and passes through many births and deaths. This concept is clearly taught to the tiger (Raja) by the master (Raja) in saying 'shedding our forms soon'.

Technically the body is prison and the soul is held in it as the prisoner for the sin of the physical self. At the time of death, the physical body and the gross mind return to the elements of the earth. But part of the subtle body survives and accompanies the soul to the next world.

Depending upon the nature of their past deeds and the extent of subtle bodies they develop, the jivas either ascend to the ancestral heaven or descend into the hell. Hiding the indwelling spirit in its core, the subtle being stays in these worlds until the fruits of its good or bad actions are fully exhausted. Having squared off the karma and learned new lessons, it then returns to the earth to take another birth and repeats the process.

R.K.Narayan, having kept this concept in the mind, mentions of the rebirth which the tiger (Raja) as well as the master are going to have in the future life. The tiger (Raja) drifts, sailing in the boat of his Karma, in a sea of worldly illusion towards the shores of liberation, through the rigorous training invisible and spiritual power of his master (the hermit)

In the tale of the elephant Gajendra, the elephant of mythology steps into a lake and is caught up in the jaws of a mighty crocodile and elephant trumpets helplessly. In the end, Gajendra calls on Vishnu and he immediately appears and gives him strength to come ashore out of the jaws of crocodile. God Krishna is an incarnation of Vishnu who saves Gajendra. This is quite comparable to the master(hermit) who is the saviour of the tiger (Raja) as the Vishnu, the incarnation of Krishna, is the saviour of the elephant Gajendra.

The antics of the mundane affairs of the world finally disappear and the tiger(Raja) has a new Jamma or birth in his life. Narayan's artistic genius arouses a sense of awe and respect for his protagonist Raja(The tiger) who gradually undergoes an internal spiritual transformation and is a release from illusiory world to enlightenment. Thus R.K.Narayan gives astounding lessons with the profound use of Indian myth to his readers saying that self-realization is a self-seeking process, every person has to achieve his own spiritual liberation through penance and meditation like (Raja) the tiger.

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