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INFLUENCE OF VEDANTIC PHILOSOPHY ON W.B YEATS AND T.S ELIOT

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ABSTRACT- The present paper is an attempt to explore the influence of vedantic philosophy on W. B Yeats and T. S Eliot. Yeats was highly influenced by three Indians, Swami Purohit with whom he translated Bhagwat Gita, Upanishads, Mohini Chatterji and Rabindra Nath Tagore. Poems of Yeats like - Mohini chatterji, Second coming and Eliot's major works such as The waste land, Four Quartets, Traditional and Individual talent echoes Indian Philosophy. The main essence of vedantic philosophy is vision of rebirth and the fruit of karma. Everybody needs to know the essence of life, which is non-duality, means all the living and non-living are the manifestation of the same ultimate reality. Having this knowledge of essence one can promote equality to achieve peace and the true spiritual nature of human existence. **Keywords-** Upanishad, Vedanta, Knowledge, Philosophy

INTRODUCTION- Vedanta is among the oldest spiritual philosophies which is rooted in Vedas. They are the philosophical holy scriptures of Hindu's. Where Hinduism is about different aspects of Indian culture, vedanta has universal appeal with which every human kind can relate without any religious boundary. Vedanta, a fusion of two words veda which means knowledge and anta means the end of. Here knowledge means the knowledge beyond texts, almighty god and human's divine nature, so Vedanta is search of self knowledge.

According to Vedanta the goal of life is to realise and manifest our own divinity of soul. The divinity is human's real nature and realisation of ultimate truth about human existence. In vedanta there are four paths to achieve the ultimate goals of understanding our own divine nature. These paths are known as four Yogas- Bhakti Yoga(the path of love and devotion), Jnana Yoga(the path of knowledge), Karma Yoga(path of selfless work), Raja Yoga(path of meditation). For leading a peaceful life vedanta suggests to have oneness of existence, solidarity among religions, and celestial well being of all. There are many western authors who have been influenced by Indian vedantic philosophy, among them W. B Yeats and T. S Eliot are the major focus of this paper.

INFLUENCE OF VEDANTIC PHILOSOPHY ON W. B YEATS- W. B Yeats(1865-1937) one of the major 20th century Irish author, who gained knowledge of eastern spirituality through his study of the Indian scriptures mainly the Upanishads. His close association with Mohini Chatterji, Rabindranath Tagore and Purohit Swami also played a significant role in his interest towards Vedanta. In 1885 Mohini chatterji gave a speech on Vedantic philosophy in Dublin which inspired Yeats a lot. For Yeats the speech was like a dream.

In his essay 'The way of wisdom' Yeats wrote "Ah how many years it has taken me to awake out of that dream!". His poem titled 'Mohini Chatterji'(1928), has the lines where he is admiring philosophy of Mohini chatterji.

I asked if I should pray
But the Brahmin said,
Pray for nothing, say
Every night in bed,

I have been a king....

Yeats was later influenced by Rabindranath Tagore and his 'Songs of offering' (Gitanjali). They used to share their views through letters. Gitanjali became the influence for Yeats's anthology 'The oxford book of modern verse'. Another person was Swami Purohit, with whom Yeats translated Bhagwat Gita and Upanishads. In the poem 'Second coming' Yeats transforms st. John's vision of coming of the Anti-Christ into a fearful image which is one of the manifestation of Lord Vishnu, the restorer of dharma in every Yuga.

INFLUENCE OF VEDANTIC PHILOSOPHY ON T. S ELIOT- T. S Eliot(1888-1965) was one of the prominent writers of modern English literature. Many of his works have influence of Indian philosophy. Eliot has studied Sanskrit, Pali, Indian logic & Ethics, patanjali and Sankhy system. Through these philosophical tradition he encountered intellectual and scholarly aspects of Indian philosophy which leads to his spiritual development.

His most famous poem 'The waste land'(1922) depicts not people's materialistic richness but also spiritual hollowness of the generation. The lost of belief in religion makes their place as a complete waste land. This is the devastation result of first world war. All the people of wasteland are in search of peace and happiness thus in the final stanza Eliot includes powerful Sanskrit words - Datta(give), Dayadhvam(be compassionate) and Damyata(be self controlled), taken from chapter five of Brihadaranyak Upanishad.

In his famous essay Tradition and Individual talent, he suggested that a poet should be like the catalyst, the element that changes others but remains itself unchanged. He took this idea from vedantic philosophy that man and his action should be impersonalised. Any piece of work should be performed with full attention without getting entangled in it, because being entangled will destruct one's spiritual development.

CONCLUSION- The vedantic influence in the writings of W. B Yeats and T. S Eliot can be seen in works such as Second Coming, The waste land, Dry salvages, Tradition and Individual talent etc. Vedanta suggests that to lead a virtuous life one needs to follow the spiritual values of vedantic philosophy. A man can live peacefully by utilizing the materialistic things as per their needs without any misuse of it. There should be liberation from the bondage of birth and death to achieve the supreme goal of life which is enlightenment and salvation. These are the thoughts and ideas which have been praised by western authors like Eliot and Yeats.

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