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‘MANUMATSYAKATHA’ AND THE HOLLYWOOD MOVIE ‘2012’

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Abstract: The theory of creation and destruction is found in almost every religion of this world. All the religions have the belief that, as the Universe is created, then it will be destructed one day and this belief gives birth to many theories and different types of mythological stories. In the White Yajurveda, the story of Manumatsyakatha is found where destruction occurred due to a great deluge and the Hollywood movie 2012 also shows destruction of the world. The objective of this paper is to relate the story of ‘Manumatsyakatha’ with the Hollywood movie ‘2012’ and to find out the points of agreement and difference between these two stories.

Keywords: Destruction, Manumatsyakatha, Movie, Flood, Tsunami, Survival

Introduction

According to Hindu mythology, there are four yugas – Satya, Treta, Dvapara and Kali and after completion of the four yugas, there is an end of the Universe. At the end of every Kali Yuga(era) there must have one Kalpanta, where after the destruction of the previous era or yuga, a new era begins. Such types of stories are found in the Vedas in the Puranas and in other places also. In the Satapatha Brahmana (SB) of the Sukla or white Yajurveda, we find one story named ‘Manumatsyakatha’ which describes the destruction of this world after a great deluge (flood) occurred. In the Hollywood movie ‘2012’ also we find the story of destruction of the world.

Story of Manumatsyakatha

The story of Manumatsyakatha is found in the Satapatha Brahmana Part – I, chapter – 8 and Brahmana – I. Apart from Satapatha Brahmana the the story of Manu and Mastya is found in the Puranas and in the Vanaparvar of Mahabharata. According to Satapatha Brahmana, the story is – one day morning Manus servants brought water for ablution and when he bring it for washing his hands one fish came into his hand and said to save it ‘विभृहि मा पारयिष्यामि त्वेति’¹ and on behalf of it fish will save him. When Manu asked the fish that from what will the fish save him ‘कस्मान्मा पारयिष्यसि इति’² then the fish replied that – a flood will sweep away all these creatures and from that the fish will save him- ‘औघ इसाः प्रजा निव्वोढा ततस्त्वा पारयितास्मीति’³. Then Manu asked the fish how to rear him, then fish said that as long as there it is small it may liable to danger because a fish can devours fish, so at first it can be kept in a jar, when it will outgrow one pit could be dig out and keep it there. Again when the fish will outgrow Manu can carry him away to the ocean and fish will be beyond destruction. After that the fish became larger fish and then into a largest and advised to Manu that, when in such and such year the great flood will come manu shall wait for the fist by preparing a ship and the fish will ferry him across ‘शशद्ध झषऽआस स हि ज्येष्ठं व्वर्धतेऽथेतिथीं समां तदौघ आगन्ता तन्मा नावमुपकल्प्योपासासै स औघ उत्थिते नावमापह्यासौ ततस्त्वा पारयितास्मीति।’⁴

Manu had reared the fish in the way the fish said and after that he took it down to the ocean. In the very year which the fish had pointed out to him, he prepared a ship and waited for the fish. When the flood has risen he stepped into the ship, the fish then swam up to him, and Manu tied the rope of the ship to its horn and by these means he crossed over the Northern Mountain. 'तमेवं भूत्वा समुद्रमभ्यवजहार । स यतिथीं तत् समां परिदिदेश ततिथीं समां नवमुपलकल्प्योपासाञ्चक्रे स औघ उत्तिथे नावमापेदे तं स मत्स्य उपन्यापुप्लवे तस्य शृङ्गे नावः पाशं प्रतिमुमोच तनैतमुत्तरं गिरिमतिदुद्राव ।'⁵

After that the fish said him to bind up the ship securely with a tree in the mountain but let not the water cut across that while he is on the mountain. When the water subsides gradually he will slide down. Manu descended accordingly and hence that slope of the northern mountain is called Manus descent (मनोरवसर्पनम्). The flood swept away all the creatures, and Manu alone remained there.

Besides Satapatha Brahmana, the story of Manu and Matsya is found in the Puranas and in the Vanaparvan of Mahabharata also. There are some differences between the story found in the Veda and stories found in the Puranas and Mahabharata. In the Mahabharata it is found that the fish tells Manu to make ship and bring with him the seven sages (Saptarshis) and all kinds of seeds on the day of the great flood. The Matsya Purana is almost some like the Mahabharata but the only differences that here the God provides the ship to Manu and to be in it on the day of great flood with all types of living creatures and seeds of plants to produce food for everyone after the great flood is over.

The story of the movie '2012'

The Hollywood movie '2012' directed by Ronald Ammerich, released on 13th November 2009. The story is - In 2009, Adrian Helmsley, an American geologist, visits astrophysicist Dr. Satnam Tsurutani in India and learns that neutrinos from a massive solar flare are causing the temperature of the Earth's core to increase rapidly. Adrian travels to Washington DC and gives a report on the findings to White House Chief of Staff Carl Anheuser who takes Adrian to meet the President of the United States. In 2010, President Thomas Wilson and other international leaders begin a secret project to ensure humanity's survival. Approximately 400,000 people are chosen to board ships that are being constructed at Cho Ming, Tibet, in the Himalayas. By 2011, humanity's valuable treasures are moved to the Himalayas under the guise of protecting them from terrorist attacks with the help of art expert and First Daughter Dr. Laura Wilson.

In 2012, Jackson Curtis is a science fiction writer in Los Angeles who works part-time as a limousine driver for the Russian oligarch billionaire, Yuri Karpov. Jackson's ex-wife, Kate and their children Noah and Lilly live with Kate's boyfriend, plastic surgeon Gordon Silberman. Jackson takes Noah and Lilly camping in Yellowstone National Park. After an encounter at a restricted government research site with Helmsley, they meet Charlie Frost, who hosts a radio show from the park. Charlie, a conspiracy theorist, plays a video of Charles Hapgood's theory that polar shifts and the Mesoamerican Long Count Calendar predict that the 2012 phenomenon will occur. Hapgood believed that unstable conditions under the crust of the Earth would cause it to shift -- Earth crust displacement. Charlie has a map of the ark project in addition to conspiracy-theory information about officials and scientists from around the world who were murdered after planning to alert the public. One such scientist was a fan of Charlie's & had sent him the map before his untimely death. The family returns home as seismic activity vastly increases along the west coast of the United States. After dropping off Karpov's bratty sons at the airport, Jackson grows suspicious and rents a plane to rescue his family. He collects his family and Gordon as the Earth crust displacement begins, and they narrowly escape Los Angeles as the city slips into the Pacific Ocean, racked by a massive earthquake that destroys all of downtown. As millions die in catastrophic earthquakes worldwide, the group, with Gordon piloting the small plane, flies to Yellowstone to retrieve Charlie's map, escaping as the Yellowstone Caldera erupts. Charlie stays behind to broadcast the eruption and is killed in the blast of the expulsion of an ash cloud. Learning that the ships are in China, the group lands in a devastated Las Vegas to find a larger plane.

They meet Yuri, his twin sons Alec and Oleg ,girlfriend Tamara and pilot Sasha. The group secures an Antonov An-225 aircraft and they depart for China. Also heading for the Cho Ming site aboard Air Force One are Anheuser, Helmsley and Laura Wilson. Upon arriving in Tibet, they find that the ships are not ships destined to take the survivors off Earth but are giant seagoing ships, large arks that can hold thousands of people. Helmsley finds that the cabins are actually quite luxurious and only meant for 1-2 people, a fact he criticizes when he tells his porter the room could hold about 10 people. Anheuser explains that the high price of a room was necessary to fund the project since the governments of the world couldn't possibly have hidden the cost for very long.

President Wilson remains in Washington, D.C. to address the nation one last time. With the Vice President dead and the Speaker of the House missing, Anheuser assumes de facto leadership. Washington is hit by the pyroclastic ejecta cloud from Yellowstone, which covers the city in a choking cloud of thick ash. Struggling with others in the devastation, President Wilson is killed by a megatsunami which carries the aircraft carrier John F Kennedy into the White House, crushing it.

Sasha and the group plan to land briefly at Hawaii to refuel, however, the island chain has been devastated by volcanic activity. Continuing on, Sasha fears they may run out of fuel before making it to mainland Asia. They discover that the seismic activity of the Earth's surface has shifted the Chinese coast 1500 miles east and they are able to make a crash landing, narrowly escaping death by driving a Bentley out of the plane before it skids to a stop on a glacier. The plane overbalances on the edge of a cliff and plummets, taking Sasha with it. The group is spotted by the People's Liberation Army. Yuri and his sons, possessing tickets, are taken to the arks, Yuri coldly leaving Tamara and the others behind.

The remaining survivors are picked up by Nima and are taken to the arks with his grandparents .They stow away on the ark with the help of Tenzin, who had a plan to smuggle his family aboard through a rear entrance. As a mega-tsunami approaches the site, an impact driver becomes lodged between the gears of the ark's hydraulics chamber, preventing a boarding gate from closing and rendering the ship unable to start its engines. In the ensuing chaos, Yuri, Gordon and Tamara are killed, Tenzin is wounded, and the ark is set adrift. Just before he dies, Yuri is able hoist both his sons up to crew members of the ship; in doing so, he jumps to his death. Jackson and Noah dislodge the impact driver and the crew regains control of the ark before it can impact Mount Everest. After flood waters from the tsunamis recede, the arks travel to the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa where the Drakensberg Mountains have risen in relation to sea level and become the tallest mountain range on Earth.'⁶

Points of Agreement between Manumatsyakatha and the Movie 2012

- i) Both Manumatsyakatha and the Movie talks about the destruction of the world.
- ii) In both of the stories destruction of the world was predicted.
- iii) In both of the stories, destruction occurred due great flood or tsunami.
- iv) In Manumatsyakatha the flood was predicted by a fish and in the Movie it was predicted by Mesoamerican Long Count Calendar and Charles Hapgood's Theory.
- v) In both of the stories ships(arks) were made for survival.
- vi) In Manumatsyakatha, Manu survived because he was in the ship and in the movie also, only those survived who were in the ships.
- vii) Another point of agreement is , in both of the stories the ships were placed in Northern direction, that is in the Himalayas.

Points of Difference between Manumatsyakatha and the Movie 2012

- i) The first point of difference is, in Manumatsyakatha the Fish is the rescuer of Manu, but in the movie human race themselves tried to rescue them from the destruction.
- ii) In the movie, 9 ship or arks were constructed for future survival but in Manumatsyakatha there was only one ship.
- iii) In Manumatsyakatha, only Manu survived after the great flood but in the movie, many people survived after the great tsunami.
- iv) Another point of difference is, in the movie people board in the ships with necessary things required for future but Manu alone board in the ship.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it is observed that, both the story of Manumatsyakatha and the movie 2012 has many similarities between them. The Vedic civilization and the Meso-american civilization have emerged at the two ends of the Earth but both the civilization predicted about the destruction of the world. In the movie, the G8 countries started to construct the Arks for human survival, not only on the basis of the prediction but also on the reports provided by the Astrophysicist. The idea of construction of the Arks for survival of human race is similar like the advice of the Fish given to Manu. So, it can be said that, the director of the movie was influenced by the story of Manumatsyakatha found in the Vedas and taking the ideas from Manumatsyakatha, those were applied in the movie '2012'.

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