

## Reflections of the greatness of Indian philosophy: Special reference with T. S. Eliot's Poem The Waste Land: An Overview

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### Abstract

Indian philosophy can include many concepts as: Swarg (Heaven), Narak (hell), Dharma (Religion) Karma (Act), Reincarnation, Renunciation, Meditation, Dukkha (Sorrow) with almost all of them focused on the ultimate goal of liberation of human soul through various ranges of human practices i.e. Moksha. India is the land of great Spiritualists, Saints, Prophets, Rishis and Maharishis. The great spiritual soul in the world as: Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, Lord Buddha, Wardhaman Mahaveer, Guru Nanakji and many other great, immortal spiritual souls borned in this pious land. As like great above immortal souls, great holy books: the Ramayana, The Mahabharata, the Upanishada, The Gurugranth sahib consist of the Indian spiritual philosophy and Literature. The Indian epics the Mahabharata and the Ramayana show symbolic conflict between the 'Good' and the 'Evil' and the ultimate victory of the good over the evil. The epics have been serving as a great guide for whole humankind because of moral vision and idealism. This research paper is a humble attempt to study the role of Indian literature and human values in human Life in the great world popular eminent poet, T. S. Eliot's poem 'The Waste Land'.

**Keywords:** moksha, spiritual, philosophy, literature, holy

It is very prestigious and gainful achievement of Indian mythological and cultural greatness that the entire life experiences and teachings of Indian Rishis and Maharishis is deeply rooted in the love of humanity and the spirit of serving mankind. Rabindranath Tagore, a great Nobel Prize winner Indian writer expresses his views about humanity as: "When Man's preoccupation with the means of livelihood became less insistent he had the leisure to come to the mystery of his own self, and could not help feeling that the truth of his personality had both its relationship and its perfection in an endless world of humanity." (Tagore, 56). Modern great philosophers like Dr. Radhakrishnan who was a great teacher and who has been honored with the position of being the president of Indian democratic secularism and he has left no stone unturned in bringing dignity to Indian politics. He wrote big volumes like occasional speeches and 'Writings of Radhakrishnan'. He also wrote a voluminous book titled

'The Hindu View of Life'. He also mentioned their philosophy of 'Giving' as he said 'Great men are like Lamps, destruction for themselves, and light for others'.

That is why a great writer, critic, poet, philosopher, T. S. Eliot has digested the very greatness of Indian spirit. As a result he has incorporated the philosophy of sacrifice, kindness and pity. Also he has embraced the philosophy of self control. There can be no other recommendation or appreciation more than Eliot embracing Indian depth of literature and life style. T. S. Eliot has been profoundly influenced by Indian mythology and Upanishad to the extent that such a man of great wisdom recommends the wisdom of India for the spiritual salvation of modern humanity which lost its roots and mooring. It is marching ahead aimlessly like a drifting paper boat. Rabindranath Tagore writes: 'But according to the Upanishad the sole pursuit of the infinite leads to a deeper darkness. For the absolute infinite is emptiness. The finite is something. It may be mere cheque-book with no account in the bank. But the absolute infinite has no and not even a cheque-book.' (Tagore, 60).

T. S. Eliot, the greatest poet of the world expresses his view about the greatness of Indian philosophy in his poem, The Waste Land. Then spoke the thunder DA means Datta: What have we even? It means to 'give.' This is very important message of the thunder to all humanity, this message is we must give ourselves over to some noble cause and in modern times man has become self centered. It has become practically impossible that modern men would ever be ready that they will do something unofficial for others. This is the reason that great martyrs and even saints are now rare, for they are not honored in the modern waste land. Such greater men do not get earthly name and fame, wealth and prosperity but it is only due to such great men and their dedication to society that spiritual values survive and humanity can become happy.

Second DA means Dayadhvam which mean to sympathies. This quality, in modern times, is totally missing because the modern man survives only for the self. He has become prisoner of 'The Self'. So the need of the hour is to come out of this prison of the self by way of

at least imagining the sorrows of the others then only there can be welfare of human society. In all religions, particularly in the Hindu scriptures this aspect of compassion has been given greater emphasis through the repetition of the word 'Da'. God commanded to all men to come out of the prison out of 'The Self' and feel sorrow and sufferings of others. But such moments are rare in the life of human. Such sympathy is very essential for spiritual regeneration. As Santwana Haldar writes in his book about Eliot: "In the Bruhadarnayaka Upanishad, the source for Eliot, three virtues are brought together under the three das which are based on the voicw of the thunder. These are Dama, or self restraint, dana or self-sacrifice and Daya or compassion. Prajapati conveys the messege to the three classes and hopes that by the practice of the three injunctions the three classes would free themselves from the evils of craving, greed and anger." (Haldar, 56).

The thunder spoke to the people the third time, and the same word 'DA' was repeated, the DA spoken now means Damayata which mean self control indicating a discipline. This self control over our passions and desires is a must. S. R. Sharma in his book on Swami Vivekananda writes: "We found ourselves mere slaves in the grand of others; we were dragged down and down! And we make a fresh determination: "Henceforth, I will be master of myself; henceforth, I will have control over myself." But the time comes, and the same story once more! Again the same is caught and cannot get out. The bird is in the net, struggling and fluttering. This is our life" (Sharma, 80).

Lord Buddha also recommended this self control and suggested that the root cause of all evils is only desire. It is only through this self control that life can run smooth and safe. In this respect Eliot compares the floating of boat and said that when the pilot of the boat is well trained and skilful in the same manner the journey of life become safe when men have acquired self control. This self control can be achieved under the spiritual guidance and discipline. Thus, the section ends not on the note of despair but with a message of hope for the inhabitants of modern, barren and desolate land. Waste Land and hopes that modern man may succeed in achieving spiritual tranquility then would be- Shantih Shantih Shantih. And so suitably that those words cannot be replaced as in the following lines:

These fragments I have shored against my ruins  
 Why then Ile fit you. Hieronym's mad againe.  
 Datta. Dayadhavam. Damayata.  
 Shantih Shantih Shantih. (Lines-430-434)

This is the great achievement of great Indian philosophical attitude as well. Eliot, whatever lines and words are used,

they are the bottom of the heart. And he was possibly convinced that to the present complexities of modern life and confusing undercurrents of today's lifestyle, there is no alternative except choosing and believing teaching of shantih, peace and prosperity in Indian philosophical bend of mind. This is really a unique contribution of Eliot's literary contribution to the people of the world. Whatever that he said through his writing is the higher level of Indian religious teachings. He could say this only after very complete study of the Upanishad, the Geeta and Scriptures. But to the non-scholastic common day-to-day life of people, present realities, a direct contrast to what he said shantih, shantih, shantih. In practical reality we are witnessing narrow, diabolic and destructive meaning of thought in all section of politically influenced which is prejudiced and farce.

There are many poets like W. B. and T. S. Eliot who have written about Indian spiritual philosophy with zeal and interest. Eliot's poem The Waste Land successfully presents Indian spiritualism special reference with the Upanishada. Therefore, it is high time for all of us to give a very serious thought about Indianness in all walks of life - economic, cultural, social, political and daily routine experiences of life and above all literature throbbing heart of Indian reality. The purpose of this research article is to bring to the light for readers constructive values for better human survival. This is how the study of this poetic masterpiece from a master mind, Eliot, becomes very essential with deeper meaning of human existence will be found missing. In modern times we required only such wisdom which alone we sustain the greatness of Indian cultural and humanistic heritage. It will be a great relief and remedy for modern spiritually burning and bleeding humanity.

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