

From Raja Rao's novel *Kanthapura* (1938):

1. They say the Mahatma will go to the Red-man's country and he will get us Swaraj. [...] And Rama will come back from exile, and Sita will be with him, for Ravana will be slain and Sita freed, and he will come back with Sita on his right in a chariot of the air, and brother Bharatha will go to meet them with the worshipped sandal of the Master on his head. And as they enter Ayodhya there will be a rain of flowers. Like Bharatha we worship the sandals of the Brother saint.¹
2. [...] and we are soldiers of the Mahatma, and *this country is ours*, and the soldiers are ours and *the English they are not ours*, and we said to ourselves, a day will come, a day when hut after hut will have a light at dusk, and flowers will be put on the idols, and camphors lit, and the last Red-man leaps into his boat, and the earth pushes him away, through our thatches will a song rise like a thread of gold, and from the lotus navel of India's earth the Mahatma will speak of love to all men. – 'Say Mahatma Gandhi ki jai! – 'Inquilab Zindabad, Inquilab Zindabad!' [...]²

From Raja Rao's novel *The Serpent and the Rope* (1960):

1. [...] somehow I always thought of a house white, single-storied, on a hill and by a lake – and I would go day after day to the University and preach to them the magnificence of European civilization. I had taken history, and my special subject was the Albigensian heresy. I was trying to link up the Bogomilites and the Druzes, and thus search back for the Indian background – Jain or maybe Buddhist – of the Cathars.³
2. India would never be made by our politicians and professors of political science, but by these isolate existences of India, in which India is rememorated, *experienced* and communicated; beyond history, as tradition, as the Truth.⁴
3. Where I ask you, does history stop, and where do you begin? You can go back through biological constructs and though it be difficult to know yourself you can think yourself a dinosaur, an orang-outang, a bison, heifer or nightingale. [...] You cannot escape time. But you can escape yourself.⁵

¹ Rao, *Kanthapura* 189.

² Rao, *Kanthapura* 174. Emphasis added.

³ Rao, *The Serpent and the Rope* 15.

⁴ Rao, *The Serpent and the Rope* 352.

⁵ Rao, *The Serpent and the Rope* 196.

From Raja Rao's novel *The Chessmaster and His Moves* (1988):

1. Europe in having conquered the world, lost itself (like Greece after Alexander), and India having lost the world, found itself, and thus makes the world Gandhian perhaps. It's always, as I repeatedly said to myself, *the fight between zero – and infinity*. You go forward conquering the world you have created – a tautological statement, but on the other hand, you go into yourself and see the world as yourself. *History defeats itself*, but truth, as the indian [sic] epigram says, *truth alone is victorious*.⁶

From Raja Rao's novel *The Cat and Shakespeare* (1965):

1. I saw nose (not the nose) and eyes seeing eyes, I saw *ears curved to make sound visible*, and *face and limbs rising in perfection* of perfection, for form was it. *I saw love yet knew not its name but heard it as a sound, I saw truth not as a fact but as ignition*. I could walk into fire and be cool, I could sing and be silent, I could hold myself and yet not be there.⁷
2. The Hitlers are in us, like objects in seeing. We think there is Hitler, when Hitler is really an incarnation of what I think. You are bad because I am. You are good because I am. The sun is because I see. You do not suffer because you are the British bubo. Ah, brother, you too be British” – and he guffawed.⁸
3. To be or not to be. No, no. (*He looks at the cat.*)
A kitten sans cat, kitten being the diminutive for cat. *Vide* Prescott of the great grammatical fame.
A kitten sans cat, that is the question. (*He turns the cage round and round.*)⁹

Cited Works

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⁶ Rao, *The Chessmaster and His Moves* 377. Emphasis added.

⁷ Rao, *The Cat and Shakespeare* 101. Emphasis added.

⁸ Rao, *The Cat and Shakespeare* 26.

⁹ Rao, *The Cat and Shakespeare* 73.