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Metamorphosis as the Crux of the Character Vandiya Devan in Kalki’s *Ponniyin Selvan*

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Abstract

Human life is inherently compared. Man compares his life to other people’s lives. He has the intrinsic moral ability to balance the evil and good thoughts that bubble up from the depths of his mind. This is how literature and art have developed throughout all cultures. They have all been created in a comparative way. Literature has been a tool for teaching people about life and how it should and should not be. Images, symbols, and recurring themes from everyday life are used to illustrate the concepts. We refer to them as archetypes. They are the archaic pictures from global mythology that predominate in everyone’s minds. The journey of the hero is one such motif that has been predominating in the literary genre. This style totally maintains the hero’s quest as its foundation. They are fiercely patriotic toward their respective national identities. The great heroes of any nation are represented by their characters. Characters from the film “Ponniyin Selvan” such Aditya Karikalan, Arulmozhi Varman, and Vanthiyathevan are well-known for their quests, adventures, feuds, fights, and wars. Their quest and triumph serve as ideal illustrations of the hero archetype’s journey. In Kalki’s Ponniyin Selvan, the transformation of the character Vanthiya Devan is extra ordinary. Thus, the present paper explores Vanthiya Devan’s transformation and achievements in the novel and film.

Keywords: Heroes, Ponniyin Selvan, Vanthiya Devan, Adventures, Transformation.

Introduction

On September 9th, 1899, Ramaswamy Ayer Krishnamurthy was born. He was a well-known Tamil author of novels. Many languages, including English, have translations of his writings. He writes under the pen name Kalki. He began his work as a subeditor for the magazine “Navasakthi.” He then quickly joined “Vimochanam.” He co-founded the magazine Kalki with his friend Sadasivam after gaining competence in other journals. He served as this magazine’s editor up until his passing on December 5th, 1954. The two most well-known books of Kalki are Parthiban Kanavu and Sivakamiyin Sabadam, which paint a vivid picture of the Pallava era in the seventh century A.D. The imperial Cholas are described in detail in His Magnus Opus Ponniyin Selvan. He has added authentic details from epigraphic, inscriptional, and numismatic sources from Tamilnadu and Sri Lanka to his novels as a result of his thorough research. Kalki continues to be a genius for writing on both historical and non-historical events.

Kalki had focused on the old Pallava, Chola, and Pandiya kingdoms, who had engaged in several internal conflicts to maintain their dominance. He uses his hilarious sensibility to take the readers’ enjoyment of his stories to the next level. He has received honours for his devotion in writing historical fiction that are just as significant.

The protagonist whose life is made up of a number of clearly defined adventures may be the hero. Such unexpected things happen to Aditya Karikalan, Arulmozhi Varman, and Vanthiya Devan in their daily lives and during their adventures in Ponniyin Selvan. Karikalan experienced a similar tragedy in his life; it was a fire accident caused by his enemies when he was a little child, leaving him with a burned leg. As a result, he was given the name “Karikalan” in Tamil, which translates to “Charred Leg” in English. The river saved Arulmozhi, who was referred to as “Ponniyin Selvan” (‘Ponni’ is Tamil for “Kavery”). Vanthiyathevan encounters numerous obstacles in his voyage, including traps and puzzles. They all provide as clear examples of the hero archetypes and their traits. He must leave his kingdom, but once he has proved his manhood by finishing the mission, he will return. The qualities of a hero include bravery, tenacity, honour, and the ability to endure suffering and even risk his life for the greater good. He enters a strange and challenging environment in search of it, leaving the familiar one behind.

A drama of epic proportions, Ponniyan Selvan-1 is at its core a love story that’s set against the spectacular sweep of the Chola dynasty. It is about romance and falling apart of Aditha Karikalan (played by Vikram), the prince of Chola dynasty and Nandini (Aishwarya Rai Bachchan), who is an orphan.

Magnificently directed by Ratnam, Ponniyan Selvan-1 draws you into its drama just moments into the film, transporting you to the battlefield, to the emperor’s court, to Nandini’s private chamber, and most importantly, into the mind and heart of Nandini’s himself, where he grapples with betrayals, insecurities and revenge.

Transformation of The Character Vanthiya Devan

One of the central figures in the book Ponniyin Selvan is Vandhiyadevan. The soul of Ponniyan Selvan-1 however, lies in the superlative acting. The film belongs to Karthi. The actor oozes confidence and delivers a career-best performance. He gets under the emotional skin of the character and makes it his own. I cannot think of any other actor who could play this better. He is portrayed by author Kalki

Krishnamurthy as a valiant, daring, and sarcastic warrior/prince who subsequently rises to the position of Commander for Southern Troops during the rule of Uttama Chola. Vandiyadevan, even though the second protagonist of the novel after Ponniyin Selvan himself, frequently gives the impression of being the novel’s main hero due to his deeds. He served as the bodyguard and close personal friend of Aditha Karikalan in Kanchi, who sent him to invite Aditya’s father in Thanjavur to the freshly constructed golden palace in Kanchi. He also served as Kundavai’s dependable guard in Pazhayarai. His impulsive and hasty actions endanger himself and others, yet he manages to escape them by cunning and luck. He is Princess Kundavai’s boyfriend. The sister of Kandamaran, Manimekalai, only loves him in one direction. Through him, the author presents the majority of the characters to the reader. Many readers of this novel appreciated him greater than the main character, Ponniyin Selvan, for his attitude and character.

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In order to bring back the younger prince Arulmozhi Varman to Tamil Chola Kingdom, Vanthiya Devan, an aide of Aditya Karikalan and benefactor of Kunthavai and Arulmozhi, must undertake a daring voyage. He has overcome numerous challenges, deceives the Pazhu brothers, and learns about their plot to steal the throne from them. He learns the truth about Nandini’s evil intention to have the crown prince Aditya and his family killed by using the Elder Pazhuvetaraiyar. He makes all-out efforts to avert the crown prince’s murder, but he is forced to stay behind and watch Kunthavai and Arulmozhi until the

very end. His quest is successful and ends with him feeling content.

His sense of adventure was one of the qualities that made the readers like this character. He eagerly engages in each new activity, disregarding the potential outcomes. When we first meet him, he is an energetic young man who has no concern for anything outside of himself. As the story goes on, we grow to love his special brand of charm and eagerly anticipate the chapters in which he meets Kundavai. He goes through a lot of adventures in Thanjavur that put his sharp thinking to the test. He pulls off a daring escape by using his own unique brand of charm, cunning, and oratory. The ultimate test for him was undoubtedly meeting Nandini, and he passes with flying colours. He not only succeeds in deceiving her but also manages to avoid being hurt by her alluring charm.

Vandhiyathevan and Kandhanmaran were initially close friends in Ponniyin Selvan's story. Kandhanmaran wanted Vandhiyathevan to wed Manimegalai, his sister. Manimegalai's brother, Kandhanmaran, used to speak highly of Vandhiyathevan, and interestingly, after hearing his words, Manimegalai began to develop a crush on him. The moment they met, Manimegalai was in love with Vandhiyathevan. Despite the fact that he ignores Manimegalai, she can't conceive of any guys to replace Vandhiyathevan. She strives to save him and used to aid him.

Ponniyin Selvan, in some ways, is Vandiya Devan's journey through deceit, intrigue, love, adventure, friendship, murder, and secrets. The plot against the Crown Prince Aditya Karikalan that the Pazhuvetrays are devising is where it all starts for him. If he had not learned the full details of their scheme at Kadambur, he might have continued to Thanjavur and possibly wound up in the Padala Sirai, while life would have most likely continued as usual for the rest. But he also helped preserve the Chola kingdom and numerous lives with that single deed.

His spirit of adventure was one of the qualities that made me like this character. He eagerly engages in each new activity, disregarding the potential outcomes. When we first meet him, he is an energetic young man who has no concern for anything outside of himself. As the story goes on, we grow to love his special brand of charm and eagerly anticipate

the chapters in which he meets Kundavai. He goes through a lot of adventures in Thanjavur that put his sharp thinking to the test. He pulls off a daring escape by using his own unique brand of charm, cunning, and oratory.

He occasionally displays a tender side as well. He is extremely sensitive to the reality that he is an impoverished orphan with very little material possessions. One of the most essential traits that all protagonists must have is courage, and Vandhiya Devan possesses it in spades. We discover him laughing while being tossed around in a violent storm and tied to the deck of a burning ship. In order to avoid getting burned, he is prepared to plunge into the sea, but for one final time, he wants to take in the awful glory of the stormy sea. His unwavering spirit is what has drawn our attention. No matter what happens, he has the ability to pick himself up and live life to the fullest. This is what enables him to break out of jail and seek out a fresh adventure in Eezham, despite the fact that doing so means shattering his hopes of winning Kundavai's hand in marriage.

A companion like Vandiya Devan should be useful if we find ourselves in a difficult situation. The likes of Kandan Maran, Azwarkadiyan, Senthana Amuthan, Aditya Karikalan, and Arul Mozhi Varman will undoubtedly heartily support this claim. He protects Kandan Maran from the treacherous guard, yet he doesn't seem affected when he is suspected of betraying his master. He assumes Arul Mozhi Varman is on the opposing ship and dives into the water to pursue it. To warn and save Aditya, he braves the criticism and rebukes of Parthibendran, Kandan Maran, and the Pazhuvur brothers. Finally, just as he is about to flee for his fresh start in Eezham, he sacrifices his life to spare Amuthan (a needy young man who had once aided him) from Pinagapani's homicidal plans.

There are four leading ladies in Ponniyin Selvan namely Manimekalai, Kunthavai, Nandini, and Pungkuzhali. Each has a distinct relation with Vandhiyathevan. With Manimekalai, Vandhiyathevan had the greatest chance of finding love. Manimegalai is a good-hearted woman and her love that is worth preserving. The expression "love has no eyes" refers to the blind love. Before even seeing him, Manimegalai fell in love. Although she hid it

from her brother, her acquaintances in the palace were aware of how much in love she was with Vandhiyathevan. Most of the time, she would refrain from telling him how much she loved him. She sincerely loved him, so when Kandamaran informs him that she would be married off to someone else, he feels somewhat relieved. She is brave and vulnerable and a mixture of the lovely and the sad. She thought of Sundarapurasan as Vanthiya Devan as built up by her brother. At the end, she eventually dies in the arms of her beloved which remains a great impression in the minds of the readers.

When he first encounters Nandini and Kunthavai, he is astounded. According to Vandiya Devan, Nandini is the epitome of beauty when he first sees her in her garden castle, and by this point, we are aware that she is not a defenceless woman being imprisoned despite her will in Pazhuvetarayar's palace. She is a strong woman in and of herself. With her attractiveness, she tries to entice Vandiya Devan and subvert his will. The fact that she tried to do that shows that it had success on others, however Vandiya Devan, despite not being completely immune to beauty, is able to ward it off due to his intelligence. He declines her offer to work for her entourage and then shows her the communication from Aditya Karikalan. The one exception in her environment was Vandiya Devan, who not only managed to withstand her attraction but also charmed her into falling in love with him. Although she sincerely falls in love with Vandiya Devan, the holy vow she made on Veera Pandyan's body hangs around her neck like an albatross. She uses Vandiya Devan as a convenient target and never wavers in her desire to kill Aditya Karikalan, but if the Chola court had found him guilty, she would have ultimately freed him, just as Kundavai had threatened. Thus, the greatest test for him was undoubtedly meeting Nandini, and he succeeds with flying colours. He not only succeeds in deceiving her but also manages to flee.

Kundavai was the most powerful and charming princess in Ponniyin Selvan. Although she is aware of Vandiya Devan's exploits, his romantic interest in her is unaffected. In an effort to control her feelings of desire towards him, Kundavai asks him to bring her brother to Sri Lanka. In order to liberate

Nandini from the Pandya Abathuudavigal's clutches and warn her about her origins, she urges Vandiya Devan to first tell Aditya Karikalan. Despite her best attempts, Nandini exacts retribution, leading to the death of Aditya Karikalan. Even though she laments her brother's passing, Vandiya Devan's alleged involvement in her brother's murder leaves her feeling heartbroken and desolate. She finds herself worrying at the idea that he was waiting for trial in the dungeons but is unable to openly support him.

The strange and hilarious part is that he then asks Poonguzhali to marry him. Poonguzhali's persona caught our attention right away in the first chapter of the book. Near the end, she consents to marry Sendan. When it comes to Vandhiyathevan, he is a true romantic who never misses an opportunity to coquet with a woman. But Kalki does a great job of portraying the fact that his true love was exclusively for Kundhavai. He would only think about Kundavai whenever he was in a dangerous scenario, such as a cyclone. Although Vandhiyathevan was a man who seemed to fall in love with every other woman, his true love was for the "Ilayapiratti Kundavai Devi."

Thirumaliyappan, whose birth name is Alwarkadiyan, is the main character in Ponniyin Sevan. He first appears in the first few pages of the book wearing a thirutumuzhi, sandalwood all over his body, the Vaishnava holy symbols naam on his forehead, bow on his head, and kruntadi on his hand. Vandiyadeva, who is thought to have been Vasara's introduction, would have met Vasara when he began the novel's discussion of Saivism and Vaishnavism. Nambi, an Alwarkadian, was a devoted Vaishnavite. The book will be more engaging due to Vandiyadevan and Nambi's relationship, disagreements, and conflicts. The travelling character is a very gifted individual who serves as Vandiya Devan's friend and Nandini's adopted brother. He offers Vandiya Devan advice while he is travelling in the Chola land without knowing anyone there, gives him information about Nandini like a trump card, assists and saves Vandiya Devan at the appropriate moments, and ultimately becomes the primary catalyst for adoration between Kuntavai and Vandiya Devan.

Vanthiyathevan succeeded in finishing his voyage despite not being a king like Arulmozhi. He had the attitude of a hero. As a result, it is possible

that these archetypes represent comparable mental functioning patterns that may have been incorporated into the construction of humans. In order to better understand the positive traits of the human mind and to create an optimistic society, more research can be done on such works that come from various nations and civilizations.

Manimegalai's passing and the lasting effects has on Vandiya Devan are how Kalki closes the book. When we read the phrase "he will not be that carefree youngster ever again," we can't help but feel depressed. And that's partly why we reread the novel so frequently. We find it impossible to envisage Vandiya Devan in a setting without humour and merriment. Many people were unable to comprehend why Kalki would finish such a fantastic novel in this way when it was originally released, but that's the nature of an epic, and not everyone's story has a happy ending.

Thus, the transformations of the character Vandhiya Devan from the beginning of the novel as exceedingly brave, daring, and amusing and at the end as a matured and wise man after the death of Aditya and Manimegalai, is the distinguishing feature of Kalki's works. He creates personalities in a captivating manner. We witness his character grow throughout the course of the book in a variety of ways. One of the key elements that keeps a reader engaged and adds interest to a story is character

development. There, Kalki imparts numerous lessons that readers like us can take away. Ponninyan Selvan-1 is an engaging, involving movie-going experience, and proves once again why Ratnam is one of India's finest filmmakers. The film will be celebrated for years to come. The filmmaker finally brings his dream alive with a spectacular adaptation.

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