

A Familial Relationship in Girish Karnad's Hayavadana and the Fire and the Rain

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Abstract:

Girish Karnad's play Hayavadana deals with the theme of incompleteness. Karnad has tried to illustrate incompleteness with Divine, human and animal figures. Ganesha has the elephant head and the human body. The transposition of heads does not give Devadatta , Kapila and Padmini completeness. Only Hayavadana, who had the horse head and the human body, achieves completeness. He wanted to become a complete human being, but he becomes a complete horse. Karnad has presented the play Hayavadana with the myth of Ganesha and a character's yearning for completeness is projected with eternal thirst.

This work is constructed on the frame of the famous Indo -Anglian writer Girish Karnad's translated Kannada play The Fire and the Rain which heavily borrows from the myth of Yavakri from VanaParva of the Mahabharatha. This paper attempts to reveal the male hegemony that surface in Girish Karnad's play. This story revolves around a seven year long sacrifice which is to be conducted by Parvasu who is the Chief Priest of the village. The paper highlights the pathetic condition undergone by the women characters in the play, Vishakha and Nittilai. Their oppression at the hands of the men forms the crux of this study. We can also visualise how the patriarchal order undergoes subversion by these tormented women.

Introduction:

Girish Raghunath Karnad was born on 19 May 1938. He is a contemporary writer, playwright, actor and movie director in Kannada language. He is the latest of seven recipients of Jnanpith Award for Kannada , the highest literary honour conferred in India.

For four decades Karnad has been composing plays, often using history and mythology to tackle contemporary issues. He is also active in the world of Indian cinema working as an actor, director, and screenwriter, earning numerous awards along the way. He was conferred Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan by the government of India.

Girish Karnad was born in Matheran, Maharashtra, into a Konkani – speaking family. His initial schooling was in Marathi. As a youngster, Karnad was an ardent admirer of Yakshagana and the theater in his village.

He earned his Bachelors of Arts degree from Karnataka University, Dhawad, in 1958. Upon graduation Karnad went to England and studied at Lincoln and Magdalen colleges in Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, earning his Master of Arts degree in Philosophy, political science and economics. Karnad was a Visiting Professor and Fulbright Scholar in Residence at the University of Chicago.

Karnad is most famous as a playwright. His plays, written in Kannada, have been widely translated into English and all major Indian languages. Karnad's plays are written neither in English, in which he dreamed of earning international literary fame, nor in his mother tongue Konkani. Instead they are composed in his adopted language Kannada. When Karnad started writing plays, Kannada literature was highly influenced by the renaissance in

Western literature. Writers would choose a subject which looked entirely alien to manifestation of native soil.

he return to India , Karnad worked with the oxford university press at Chennai. He left the job in 1970 become a full time writer. even before that , his very first play Yayati was a hit. The play , which chronicles the adventures if mythical characters from the mahabharata , was an instant success and was immediately translated into several Indian languages.

In a situation like that Karnad found a new approach like drawing historical and mythological sources to tackle contemporary themes. “Tughlag” his best loved play, established Karnad as one of the most promising playwrights in the country. A large number of his Kannada plays have been translated by Dr.Bhargavi Rao. Hayavadana is based on transposed Heads , a story by Thomas mann. According to K.R.S.Iyengar , In all his three plays yayati , Tughlag, Hayavadana be the theme , theme, historical ,mythical, or legendary – karnad’s approach is modern , and he deploys the conventions and motifs of folk art like masks and curtains to project a world of intensions, uncertainties and unpredictable denouements . And all his plays are conspicuous for the dept employment of irony and crisp dialogue.

His directorial debut came with the movie Vamshavruksh, based on a Kannada novel by S.L.Bhairappa. The movie won several national and international awards. Before this Karnad acted in a movie called Samaskara, based on a novel by U.R.Ananthamurthy and directed by Pattabhirama Reddy. That movie won the first President’s Golden Lotus Award for Kannada movies include Tabbaliyu Neenade Magane , Ondanodu Kaaladalli, Cheluvi and Kadu.

His Hindu movie include Utsav Godhuliand the recent Pukar. A recently acclaimed movie by Karnad is Kanooru Heggaditi, based on a novel by Kannada writer Kuvempu. Karnad has also acted in several other movies and received critical acclaim.

He has been criticized by the eminent Kannada novelist S.L.Bhairappa for being untrue to history in order to curry favor with the establishment.

Karnad’s awards include the Mysore State Award for Yayati, the Government of Mysore Rajyotsava Award, President’s Gold Medal for the Best Indian film for Samskara, the Homi Bhabha Fellowship for Creative Work in Folk Theatre, the Sangeet Natak Akademi (National Acedemy of the Performing Arts) Award for Playwriting , the Kamaladevi Award of the Bharatiya Natya Sangh for the Best Indian Play of the Year for Hayavadana, the National Award for Excellence in Direction for Vamsha Vriksha , the Mysore State Award for the Best Kannada Film and the Best Direction for Vamsha vriksha, the President’s Silver Medal for the Second Best Indian Film for Kaadu, Padma Shri, the National Award for the Best Kannada Film for Ondanondu Kaaladalli, the National Award for the Best Script for Bhumika (shared with Shyam Benegal and Satyadev Dubey, The Filmfare Award for the Best Script for Godhuli , the Best Bengali Film Journalists Association Award for the Best Actor in Swami, the Kaarnataka Nataka Akademi Award, the Nandikar, Calcutta Award for Playwriting, The Golden Lotus for the Best Non-Feature Film for Kanaka Purandara, the National Award for the Best Non-Feature Film on Social Issues for The Lamp in the Niche, “Writer of the Year” Award from Granthaloka Journal of the Book Trade orTaledanda,Karnataka State Award for the Best Supporting Actor in Santa shishunala shareef , the Karnataka sahitya akademi Award for the most creative workofNagamandala,the B.H Sridhar Award for Taledanda ,the sahitya Akademi Awar for the best play Taledanda,the Booksellers and Publishers Association of South India Award , the National Award for the Best Film on Environmental Conservation for Cheluvi, a Special Honour Award from the Karnataka Sahitya Akademi ,the Sahitya Akademi

Award for Taledanda ,and the Gubbi Veerana Award, and the Jnanpith Award. He also served as Director of the Film and Television Institute of India, President of the Karnataka Nataka Akademi , Indian Co –Chairman for the Joint Media Committee of the Indo -US Sub - Commission on Education and Culture, Visiting Professor and Fulbright Scholar in Residence at the University of Chicago, and Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi of Performing arts.

He has played the role of Karadi, the Sootradhar (narrator), for several stories in the popular audiobook series for Kides, Karadi Tales. He has also been the voice of APJ Abdul Kalam, President of India, in the audiobook of Kalam’s autobiography by Chakha Audiobooks Wings of Fire.

Characters in ‘Hayavadana’

1. Devadatta
2. Kapila
3. Padmini
4. Bhagavata

The Theme of The Novel “The Fire and The Rain”

The story of Yavakri deals with the misapplication of knowledge and spiritual powers that human beings receive from the gods after great penance. Yavagri, the son of sage Bhardwaj, acquires the knowledge of the Vedas from Indra after undergoing penance for ten years. He misuses this divine knowledge to take revenge on Raibhya, an intimate endowed with spiritual powers. Yavakri, Bhardwaj’s son, nurses grievance against all for he feels that his father does not receive the respect and recognition which he deserves. Bhardwaj cautions his son Yavagri against the misuse of knowledge. His fears prove well founded. To him knowledge is the instrument for taking revenge. They first think that Yavakri does is to corner Vishakha, Raibhya,s daughter -in-law and he molests her. Raibhya also take revenge on Yavakri. He creates a demon, a Brahma Rakshasa, and a spirit resembling Vishakha and sends them to kill Yavakri. The death of Yavakri makes Bhardwaj to curse Raibhya that he will be killed by his own son. Bhardwaj kills himself in remorse. Raibhya eldest son, Parvasu, mistakes the deerskin, his father is wearing, for a wild animal and killed him. Parvasu, a learned man also misuses his knowledge and he falsely accuses his elder brother, Arvasu of patricide and Brahminicide. Arvasu begins his own penance and worships the sun God for attaining knowledge and enlightenment. The sun god for greets him a boon. Arvasu asks the sun God to Yavakri, Bhardwaj and Raibhya to life. They come to play and forgets his evil act. When Yavakri comes to life, the gods reprimand him for his folly and ask him to follow knowledge in the right spirit.

Conclusion :

The present study makes an attempt to critically examine the way Karnad makes use of Familial relationship and myth in his plays. In other words, the study analyzes in what way Karnad deploys some of the unnoticed episodes selected from myths, legends and folktales in his plays and how he makes use of Familial relationship to show its relevance to the contemporary issues. After having examined the selected plays of Karnad from mythical point of view, it attempts to draw certain conclusions. His plays serve as a critique on the vices, drawbacks and limitations of contemporary Indian society. Besides, they express his disliking for hypocrisy, corruption, duplicity, treachery and violence. While depicting the drawbacks and vices of both an individual and society, the playwright’s humanitarian approach and his

commitment to human values are clearly perceptible. In his writing, there is a perfect synthesis of Eastern and Western dramaturgy, classical and folk conventions with which he creates a rich and vibrant drama rooted in tradition but with an immediate and resonant contemporary voice. To put it in other words, it can be said that he draws all the sources for his dramatic art from the Indian mythology and history.

His writing is invariably rooted in the Indian consciousness; and by adopting Western dramatic techniques, he reinterprets the modern life and times. He uses tradition to question its appropriateness. The study basically attempts to explore how Karnad uses myth and Familial relationship in his plays to highlight the different issues of present day society.

His plays portray certain existential themes namely the quest for identity and meaning in an uncertain and often incomprehensible world, search for completeness, the illusion of friendship, the isolation and alienation of man and the difficulty of communication. Apart from this, his plays also throw light on other contemporary issues like man-woman relationship, patriarchy, problem of caste system, conflict between violence and nonviolence and different manifestation of human passions like love, hatred, anger, sex, lust, sacrifice, treachery, evil, etc. As a gifted playwright like Shakespeare, he discovers source materials from myth and familial relationship and skillfully employs them as metaphors for contemporary situations.

The thesis investigates eight selected plays of Karnad from mythical and familial relationship point of view. They are: Hayavadana (1971) and Agni Mattu Male (The Fire and the Rain) (1995).

The research is divided into five chapter. In the first chapter, the biography of the author, scope of the topic, significance of the topic, area of study, method of study and division of chapters are listed out.

In the second chapter, the major characters of the selected novels, themes and myth of the novels are clearly dealt.

The third chapter deals with a familial relationship in Hayavadana. The opinion of the researcher that Karnad aims at presenting the conflict of the ego to prove that men should provide some kind of free space to woman. Karnad presents Padmini as a modern woman who is aware of her equal rights in social life therefore she behave like a modern woman.

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