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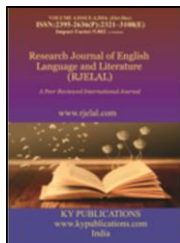
MYTHOLOGICAL STRUCTURE IN HAYAVADHANA

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ABSTRACT

The article examines Indian myth in the play "Hayavadana," by Girish Karnad. It describes a myth as a tale or a narrative with a symbolic meaning where human, non - human and super-human characters appear. Myths have also a social or collective authorship, and normative nature is their most remarkable characteristic. The play by Karnad is said to reshape an ancient Indian myth from the veralapanchavimsati to point to man's eternal quest for completeness.

Girish Karnad has been regarded as the leading dramatist so far as the use of myth and history is concerned and his plays vividly represent this trend. In all his plays are mythical, historical or legendary Karnad's approach is modern. In his play, Hayavadana, he reinforces the central problem of human existence in a world of tangled relationships.

Key words: sumbolic,normative eternal,vividly

INTRODUCTION

GirishKarnad a recipient of the Jnanpith Award, an actor, a film producer is regarded as a very significant playwright of the post-independent Indian Literature. Unlike BadalSarkar and Vijay Tendulkar, who delved into the problems of middle class man; GirishKarnad went back to myth and legends and made them a vehicle of a new vision. By using these myths, he tried to show the absurdity of life, with all its elemental passions and conflicts and man's eternal struggle to achieve perfection. Karnad's whole corpus divided into two broad categories. Myth plays and History plays.In Nagamandala, Yayati, Hayavadana and the Fire and Rain we find the predominance of mythical elements. In Tal-Danda and Tughlaq we find the pre-dominant historical structure.

MYTHOLOGY: Generally, a myth is a tale or a narrative with a symbolic meaning. Human, non-human and super-human characters appear in myths. And the presence of these super-natural agencies endows myth with a numinous character.

In Hayavadana, he seems to play with the theme of incompleteness through Padmini's strong quest for unattainable perfection . Karnad has chosen the myths from the Indian mythologies but his conception of play is quite modern, a synthesis of the oriental and the western moulds like those of Rabindranath Tagore. His use of myth demands a comparative study with those plays of O" Neill, Anouilh, Wole Soyinka, T.S. Eliot and W.B. Yeats. Karnad delves deep into the traditional myths to spell out modern man's anguish and dilemma. By his effective use of the myths, legends and stories he interprets the age-old human situation with reference to contemporary experience

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myth with a numinous character reshaping a Myth in Hayavadana

In Hayavadana, Karnad re-shapes an ancient Indian myth from the veralapanchavimsati to point to man‟s eternal quest for completeness, or self-realization. With its highly stylized action and mimicry, especially the scene at the temple of Kali and the sword fight between Devadatta and Kapila in the second act, Karnad invests the play with a significance, which brings out the emptiness of the "incomplete" human being.

Karnad does not take myths in their entirety. He takes them only in parts that are useful to him and the rest he supplements with his imagination. He combines the story of the transposed heads taken from Thomas Mann with the story of Hayavadana which is, in part, Karnad's own imagination and invention.

THE SUPERNATURAL ELEMENT

In Hayavadana, the elements of the supernatural play a significant role. The dramatist employs the conventions of folktales and motifs of folk theatre - masks, curtains, mime, songs, the narrator, dolls, horseman, the story within a story, facilitating a mixture of the human and non-human to create a magical world. It is a realm of incomplete individuals, magnanimous gods, vocal dolls and mute children, a world apathetic to the longings and frustrations, ecstasies and miseries of human beings.

Hayavadana: Hayavadana is the third successful and brilliant drama of Girish Karnad written in 1975. It is a memorable treatment of the theme of search for completeness. One of the significant of Karnard while dealing with myth is transformation of religious myths into non-religious myths.In India most of mythological stories are centered on .mythology. In Hayavadana the presence of godess Kali presents the religious sentiments of the Indian society.

Hayavadana, as the name suggests, is a man with a horse's head (Haya = horse and vadana = face; Dodiya 191). (His mother, a princess, had fallen in love with and been impregnated by a stallion.) Hayavadana is desperately seeking to get rid of this strange head when he stumbles on to the stage where the play about the transposed heads is about to be performed. The Bhagavata of the play then guides him to the same temple of Kali where the characters in the play will get their heads transposed.23This incident forms the introduction for the tale of transposed heads that follows.

The main plot of the play begins with Kapila, who finds his best friend Devadatta despondently dreaming about Padmini. Kapila goes to arrange Devadatta's marriage to her and realizes that Padmini is as clever as she is beautiful. Although Kapila is attracted to her, he nonetheless finalizes the match, and Devadatta and Padmini are married. The marriage is unhappy from the beginning. Padmini is herself attracted to the strong-bodied Kapila, and Devadatta is consumed by jealousy. A few months into the marriage, the three travel to Ujjain to a fair. On the way, they rest between two temples, one devoted to Rudra (The Howler-a form of Shiva) and the other to Kali. As in the other versions, the two men behead themselves in the Kali temple. The pregnant Padmini, afraid that she might be blamed for their deaths, then decides to kill herself. However, Kali stops her and offers to bring the men back to life. Padmini rearranges the heads so that Devadatta's head is on Kapila's body and vice versa and asks the goddess to do her magic. Kali resignedly comments that "there should be a limit even to honesty" and brings the two men back to life.

Back in the forest, Padmini finds the rough and muscular Kapila again. He is surprised to see Padmini, and she reveals her desire for his well-muscled body. Devadatta, armed with a sword and two new dolls, finds the lovers, and the two men decide to kill each other since their love for Padmini cannot be reconciled. Padmini then decides to commit Sati. She entrusts the boy to Bhagavata and leaves instructions for him to be raised both as Kapila's son and as Devadatta's son.

Here the Bhagavata ends the story, and Karnad suggests in his stage directions that the audience should feel that the play has ended. However, the frame story involving Hayavadana begins again. An actor stumbles on the stage screaming that a horse has been singing the National Anthem, while another actor leads in Padmini's son-a mute, serious boy clutching his two dirty dolls. No amount of clowning and questioning

by the actors elicits a response from the boy. Hayavadana returns to the stage, now with the body, as well as the head, of a horse. Kali has answered his prayers, it seems, by eliminating his human physical characteristics altogether. Nevertheless, he still has a human voice and is singing patriotic songs. Hayavadana begins laughing when he sees the actors and Bhagavata. His laughter and human voice infect the mute child with laughter, and the child begins to speak and laugh normally. In a cyclic transformation, the child's laughter causes Hayavadana to lose the last shreds of his human nature and he begins to neigh like a horse. Karnard thus uses the logic of myth to create a double, reciprocal exchange of functions that allows for resolution (Levi-Strauss 227). Hayavadana and the boy in effect complete each other: the one, as a human child returned to the fold of society and the other, as fully animal.

CONCLUSION

Girish Karnad is a versatile dramatist who has not only revived Indian drama in English but enlarged its scope by introducing new techniques and thematic variations unparallel in the history of the theatrical activities in India.

Girish Karnad makes use of myths, mythologies and folklore as his source for his plays, not for the glorification of the chosen myths but to relate the myths to the present and to the past beliefs found in these myths. The entire play is cast in the form of traditional Indian folk drama which took several features of ancient Sanskrit drama but adapted them to its own special needs as a popular form of art.

Karnad provides us with a glimpse of the past as well as its relevance to an understanding of the contemporary world. In conclusion it can be said that myth and folktale merge and come together and weave a rich tapestry of meaning that explore the modern predicament. Society is traditional and an individual is still governed by societal roles and norms that ensure a continuity and survival of its cultural mores.

Karnad never allows the audience to forget that his characters are human beings though they are a part of the myths. He has no respect for the ethereal and impracticable ideologies and always asserts the limitations of the human beings. He always stands by the side of the undergo. He has respect for the efforts of the man to be a superior being physically, psychologically and even spiritually. By presenting a man what he is clearly and impassionately, Karnad makes the audience to think what a man ought to be.

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