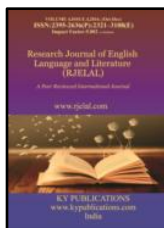




GIRISH KARNAD'S HAYAVADANA : A THEMATIC STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The playwrights like Girish Karnad, Vijay Tendulkar and Badal Sircar induced a new vigour and life into the Indian Drama with their novel themes and bold experiments on the stage from 1970 onwards. Among them Girish Karnad occupies an important place in the galaxy of Indian English dramaturgy, and classical and folk conventions in his plays. He expresses a different view, however, stating that what is surprising and upsetting about India is its total lack of plays despite the original traditions. There is no theatre in India and no meaningful tradition.

Girish Karnad has been creating a rich and vibrant drama in tradition and yet suited to modern stage. He is highly influenced by the folk art forms of India. The growth of Indian theatre has a queer history. Modern Indian theatre emerged under British influence in three cities that were founded by the British and had no previous Indian history.

The play *Hayavadana* which is regarded as a symbol of synthesis of the western dramatic techniques and Indian themes. It reflects the psyche of an Indian. Karnad's play in a characteristic way begins where in vital story ends. "Home would the women take it if it really happened and would it ultimately solve the problem for her" are the fascinating problems the artist in him faces. Karnad takes this kind of leap from the original story and develops it further. The theme of the play has two aspects, a socio cultural aspect and a metaphysical one. At both levels it shows the conflict between two polarities (namely Apollonian and Dionysian) as the vital truth of human experience.

As in *Hayavadana*, Karnad prepares his audience to enter a world of make believe even in Naga – Mandala with the introduction of flames and a story, who take human forms keep the narration going. By depriving the play with any sort of realism, Karnad takes the audience altogether into a metaphysical sort of realism. Karnad takes the audience altogether into a metaphysical world.

KEYWORDS : Hayavadana Haya, Thematic, Metaphysic world, Apollonian and Dionysian.

Introduction

Born on May 19,1938, in Mathern, Maharashtra, Girish Karnad has become one of India's brightest shining stars, earning international praise as a playwright, poet, actor, director, critic

and translator. As a young man studying at Karnataka University, Dharwar, where he earned international literary fame, but he thought that he would do so by writing in English. Scholarship and went on to receive a Master of Arts Degree in

Philosophy, Politic and Economics . He would eventually achieve the international fame he had dreamed of, but not for his English Poetry. Instead, Karnad would earn his reputation through decades of consistent literary output on his native soil.

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The central theme of the play highlights the problem of Padmini's Perennial quest for completeness : her search for the perfect combination of the body and the spirit manifested in Kapila and Devadatta respectively. Devadatta is very intelligent, handsome and a scholar and poet. Kapila is rough, rugged and the embodiment of bravery and manliness. While Devadatta symbolizes the intellectual and spiritual, Kapila stands for the physical and the material. In M.K.Naik's words " Padmini's plight suggests woman's vain attempt to unite man as intellect and as flesh in order to further her creative purpose. But these two aspects of the Masculine personality are basically at war with each other and hence the attempt ends disastrously in destruction for both woman and man " (196).

Thus the play explores the complex psychosocial dimension of the problem of human identify crisis, as different from the moral aspect of the Indian story and the philosophical purport of Mann's story. in both tangled and untangled relationships. The play reveals the essential ambiguity of human personality, which is apparently shaped or shattered by human environment. Fundamentally incomplete and imperfect, the human beings search and strive for attaining the unattainable ideal of completeness and perfection. They usually trend to seek the assistance of some supernatural beings or the other to succeed in their endeavor. However, these external agencies, in their effort to help, seem to cause and complicate the identify crisis of the seekers further, leading the latter to tragic and, or comic ends. Padmini, for instance, ruins herself and all her relations. Even the child that she leaves under the Bhagavata's care is not normal because of her own compulsions. Hayavadhana, does not bring destruction to himself as Padmini does not suffers the drastic consequences of his

search for completeness by going down the ladder of the existence from man to horse. The best solution for the problem of identify crisis then according to Girish Karnad, is reconciliation with ones's own self and the environment.

The subplot of Hayavadana deepens the significance of the main theme of incompleteness by treating it in a different plane. The importance of his addition is clear from the fact that the play derives its title from it – Haya means horse and Vadana means face or mouth. Hayavadma story runs thus, Hayavadhan's mother was a beautiful princess of Karnataka. When she came of age her father decided that she should choose her husband. So princes of other kingdoms in the world were invited and they all came from China, Persia, Africa but she did not like any of them. The last one to come was the Prince of Araby. Hayavadan's mother took one look at the handsome prince sitting on a great white horse and fainted. Her father at once decided that this was the man and all arrangements for the wedding were made. When Hayavdhana's mother woke up she said that she would not marry the prince but marry the horse. No one could dissuade her.

Ultimately, she was married of to the white horse. She lived with it for fifteen years. One morning she woke up and there was no horse, in its place stood a beautiful celestial Ghandharva. Apparently, this celestial being had been cursed by Kubera to be born as a horse for some act of misbehaviour. After fifteen years of human love he had become his original self again. Released from his curse, Gandharva asked Haryavadana's mother to accompany him to the " Heavenly Abode" (9) . But she did not agree. So he cursed her to become a horse herself. Hayavadana's mother became a horse and ran away happily and his father went back to his " Heavenly Abode" (9). Only the child of their marriage was left behind and that was Hayavadana himself. Hayavadana wishes to get rid of his horse head. Thus the subplot throughout supports the main plot. The story of the horse – headed man who wants to shed the horse head and become human "provides the outer panel – as in a mural –

within which the late of the two friends is framed" (Karnad 347).

As per the advice of the Bhagavata, Hayavadhana goes to the Kali temple, a motif which establishes a firm link between the main and the subplot, and threatens to chop off his head. Once again as in the main plot, the goddess's ambiguous boon creates another problem while solving one. In response to Hayavadhana's prayer "make me complete" (68) the goddess makes him a complete horse, not a complete man and in addition to this Hayavadhana still retain his human voice. His liberation is complete when the five-year old son of the woman in the transposed heads story, asks him to laugh and the laughter soon turns into a proper laugh, Hayavadhana himself, in turn, brings about a welcome change in the boy, who is predictably abnormal, for he has forgotten how to laugh.

Hayavadhana's laughter brings the smile in the child's face. Thus the horse – man's search for completeness ends comically, with he becoming a complete horse. For the friends and Padmini, completeness lay in death, for Hayavadhana, achievement of perfection is in another kind of death – the death of his human appendages of body and voice. The two threads of action woven together in Hayavadana, unitedly present a theme which may be summed up as totality of being to be achieved through the integration of the self and the wholeness of personality. And the integration cannot be achieved by trying to reconcile the irreconcilable, but by accepting cheerfully the fundamental disharmony in human life.

Conclusion

One usual criticism of Karnad's plays is that though they have been great success on the stage. they do not provide exciting reading unlike the plays of masters like Bernard Shaw. Karnad is an Indian writer in English and he has succeeded in creating a proper Indian atmosphere. He has introduced a number of words from the Indian language into his English. He has suitably Indianized his English, In *Tughlaq* he freely uses Arabic and Indian words for creating the atmosphere of fourteenth century India when *Tughlaq* reigned. For Example 'Sulthan' Jiziya., Kazi-

I-Mumalik' dhoobi' 'dar-ul'islam and the Muezhin's call for prayer has been twice given in Arabic. Karnad has successfully paraphrased some typical Indian expression into chaste English. In *Hayavadana* he uses Gandharva, Ganesha, Kali the names of Indian gods and goddesses, Yakshagana and Kathalali – the Indian dance styles, rishi Kalpavraksha, pativrata, sati and so on.

The researcher wants to examine the above issues in this study and wishes to prove that the playwright is a gifted son of India who Indianized the literary form of the Drama.

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