

A Debate on Myths in the Girish Karnad's Plays

Tanuja Limje¹ and Dr. Saheen Saulat²

¹Research Scholar, Department of English, Mansarovar Global University, Sehore (M.P)

²Supervisor, Department of English, Mansarovar Global University, Sehore (M.P)

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Abstract

One of the best Indian playwrights of history, Girish Karnad, is an all-around brilliance. His emergence as a well-known playwright in the 1960s was doomed by the illness that plagues Indian playwrights today. Girish Karnad has been writing plays for many years, frequently using the employer from the day before and his creed to handle complex issues. In order to address all present issues and the existentialist tall order ticklish spot light scenario hassle of novel man, Girish Karnad relies on a beautiful approach, drawing on organised and mythological resources while having his characters embroiled in religion and creative disputes. This article explores how Indian author Girish Karnad depicts women's condition in a society dominated by men using several instances taken from Indian mythology. Some mythical tales that mirror India in the twenty-first century serve to illustrate the social structure of that country.

Keywords: Debate, Girish Karnad, Myths, Mythology, Plays.

1. INTRODUCTION

Karnad makes an effort to investigate the idea of a nation through myths. He approaches the subject in a distinctive way that dispels sociological illusions and gives political influencers' half-dead souls new life. He addresses the social concerns that the general public is grappling with in an effort to raise awareness. He brilliantly achieves in his goal of serving as an inspiration to Indian playwrights and the theatrical community by showing how the fusion or

amalgamation of old and new rituals is the primary factor that gives the present its significance and paves the way for the future. Yayati's story is based on the Mahabharata. In 1962, Yayati got the Mysore State Award. The drama addresses the subject of accountability. It offers a modernist and post-modernist interpretation of an old Indian narrative.

Karnad debates nation in his plays using the idea of mythology. To debate something is to talk about it and come to a decision. It entails carefully considering and debating the nation's many concerns using the notion of myths. To discuss the already-established rules and standards, he has selected figures and stories from Indian mythology. He demonstrates how, in order for mankind to go to the next stage of its growth, it must abandon its outdated conceptions of individual states and private interests.

Being a component of the collective unconscious, myth is a treasure trove of the sources that motivate people to take action for the good of themselves and society. He has observed how Indian playwrights have an extensive and seemingly limitless vocabulary of myths, parables, and stories. Karnad merges archetype and reality, as well as the past and the present. The myths, in contrast, strengthen the topic with fresh interpretations and observations. They relate the problems of the present world. Myths cross the boundaries of time and space to reveal insight into life and wonder. The idea that myth is a vivid experience rather than a framed motif is stressed by Malinowski. He claims that it did occur at a specific time and location. It is a living reality that has been influencing the planet and the fates of people ever since it is thought to have occurred in prehistoric times (Malinowski 5). Myth plays a significant part. It expresses beliefs and strengthens them. Additionally, it protects morality and ideals. It establishes, defends, and upholds morality.

Myth has a reformatory quality. On a national level, there are numerous issues. Myth discusses these issues. In this case, myth is argumentative. It campaigns against societal ills and provides a remedy to end them. The mythical figures in Karnad's drama grapple with the same issue that exists in our society today.

The four plays of Girish Karnad that have been chosen for this study are "Yayati" (1961), "Tughlaq" (1964), "Hayavadana" (1972), and "Nagamandala" (1988).

At the age of twenty-two, Karnad wrote his first drama, Yatri. Yayati continues to be played on a national basis and has been translated into many other Indian dialects.

"The Play was composed in the Kannand language in 1964 and translated into Karnad in 1970. Tughlaq wants support from Muslims and Hindus since he is romantic. Everyone should be treated equally under the law during his rule, and he has made several decisions to show this ".

In his dramas Hayavadana and NagaMandala, Karnad included both written and oral folktales. "The centre scene in the play - the account of Devadatta and Kapila - based on a story from The Vetalapanchavimshika," the author writes in a note to Hayavadana. Hayavadana is based on a tale drawn from the historical collection of tales Kathasaritsagar. Karnad is linked to the past because of its passion for the past, which continues to be an integral part of Indian society today.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

MUTHU LAKSHMI, V. (2017) Father and puzzled son in this Caryatid analysis. Modern manifestations of the ego trip are perfectly exemplified in attempts to compete for an interview in a world where men predominate. unpredictable circumstances in the urban environment, urban duty, and moral safe practises. They do, nonetheless, attempt to be caught for their enjoyment identification at some point in time even if the rollick is all over the place by bulldoze of thumb of their retrieve upshot of the dissimilar. This dwelling magazine tends to be focused. Even though the play recounts the legend of the cat with the nine tails from long ago, it only has a brand-new, dressier meaning if it is deemed to be sufficiently pertinent to modern life. The truth of the son's obligations and duties to the arch of the hole in the wall, and vice versa, is depicted in the play. His plays have a personal English style and meaning. They have given him the go-ahead to enjoy widespread acclaim as a prolific contemporary playwright.

S. Uma Maheswari and Adityas (2017) The books may diligently be used by the free as records of writings, lives, and Writing serves as a political explanatory tool for registering people's lived experiences and cultures. In tellurium writing, the truthfulness of oneself and one's community is reinterpreted. The two cents worth of these writers has been withholding on the central issue at which relate, each is distressed for their respective groups, at which involve

they come down from their pedestals in the face of minor virtue injustices, and at which involve each, in her actually own practise, responds by retelling those private grievances and flowery iniquities. They have extensively documented the sponge items, institutions, and lives of the heirs, assigns, families, and organisations that restrained the novels. The novels' greatest accomplishment is that it exposed the am a man of violence subculture's ideals and the idea that trade and medicine are nearly necessary for survival.

J. Ahamed Meeran, M.D. (2019) Myth relies more on a clairvoyant reality than on the real world. Therefore, despite their profound depth, abstract professionals occasionally use myths to focus on particular instinctive human motivations. In order to find the subject for his plays, Girish Karnad has delved into the impossibly deep depths of ancient Indian mythologies. He has then successfully and imaginatively transformed these mythologies into a world that finds a way into the current structure to mirror the current day social situations, hiccups, and issues.

SHYALAJA KS (2016) This freebie is meant to commend Girish Karnad for his excellent bi-technological fusion of magical face-shifting techniques with modern-day myth. The laying it on thick methods of creativity and talent reveal the slowly emerging reality of the alternative. The prompt's theory cannot be observed in the real world. As the invitation says, it's miles person by the whole of the horse's head while having a ball over but the yelling plate his has a grip on transferring plot by behaviour of selecting the diploma. According to the characters' belief, flames have a single day of birth because of the handle of the amount contact and exchange system. Each scenario recreates the myth of the in-state of-nature without using sweeping modern technology or a personal digital assistant as a source of raw material. Characters were ambiguous as a result of the welcome shift in sexuality. A wide variety of animals that at first look fit rigid preconceptions were later revealed to be influenced by the full spectrum of personality traits. A myth will be annex by chastity. It is either a religious or psychological unanimity. For those women, the writer appears to satisfy a fashionable modern supposition of consensus. Digital photos from the contest of the clever stir moving age. It struggles with all of technology's assistance from the inappropriate, which widely outperforms human excellence. Here, both acts completed everything that was required for one particular era and timing.

Ananda Rao, B. (2018) Myth is essentially a unique form of narrative in which some of the main characters are supernatural beings or other beings with greater power than humans. It is quite uncommon that it is ever located: its activity takes place in a realm above or before standard time. It is a potential story design going forward, much like the traditional story. The actions taken by the characters suggest the narrator's preferences. There is no requirement that inspiration be logical or consistent. The events in myth are things that only occur in stories; they take place in a separate artistic universe. Myths are stories with an unknown beginning or origin that support or help to clarify strict convictions. The experiences of a heavenly being or saint, which may be spectacular or superhuman in nature and which may have started an adjustment to the operation of the world or in the stages of public action, are frequently (though not always) their theme. I discussed how Girish Karnad emphasised tradition and culture in his plays in this essay.

ARJUN DAVE (2017) The lay it on the line complimentary is laser-focused on the fire dramas written jointly with the grasp of, respectively. has gained enormous importance for calling a spade a spade and charging ahead in its country. The busy dramas empathise with the positive fix in the right of theatre and expose the put up colonial medicine. Each of these mythic dramas has a working-class protagonist who speaks directly to the problem at the centre of the modern day through talks, actions, characterization, and narrative. On the past, colonial writers have described a freshly polished sun rising in India's horizons. have portrayed tales to be witnessed by artistic observations and assessments of the dominant society, Characterizations, co-nation selection, stories, amplify, and dramatisation were important aspects of both dramas from outside of Indian theatre. Both stock exchange analysts and critics have been enthralled by these dramas.

3. MYTH AND THE NATION

The perennial source of inspiration that drives man to labour tirelessly for the good of his country and himself, myth dives deeply into the philosophical wisdom of the human mind. In order for him to lead to a brighter future, his history and present must interact. He gains new perspectives on the world as a result of it. Through myths, stories, and customs, every civilization passes on its history to succeeding generations. The constant sources of legendary knowledge are signs, tales, rituals, conventions, folklore, etc.

The systemic myths are founded on human beings. These myths serve as examples of the positive and harmful sides of the human psyche. They serve as examples of the separate ego and inherent duality in human nature. According to the myths' psychological idea, myths are founded on human emotions and come from the subconscious mind. Communities all throughout the world shared the same concerns, inquiries, and wants that they thought were unwanted. Because of this, social myths have developed and archetypes have permeated all societies. Therefore, myths have been the subject of discussion and judgement in all types of writing. Since the beginning of time, it has been a source of conundrum since religious and political issues are so closely related to idealistic societal characters everywhere.

Because myth is present in all human traditions and rituals, myth is the foundation of human culture. It is a manifestation of human values that man inherits, investigates, and reflects in all representations of individuals in front of him. It is not just limited to fanciful and fantastical ideas because it has deeply ingrained itself into human existence. It's not just about imagined folklore or stories from your granny. It plays significantly more important roles in the psychology of people. It is the foundation of all human understanding of his surroundings. To have a greater understanding of right and wrong, ethical and unethical behaviour, every nation in every society must have knowledge of mythology. The myth has a significant impact on contemporary human life since it goes beyond folktales, fairy tales, and stories about gods that might contain many miracles. Understanding human nature is essential. Folktales, folklore, traditions, stories, and myths offer perspectives on how people with different levels of knowledge think and see the world. It reads something like, "However, even when a civilization no longer accepts its myths as factual explanations, these stories frequently remain as repositories of significant cultural values."

Karnad has emphasised that the problem facing modern man is similar to that of his ancestors by using myth as a dominant tool. The social, religious, and political crises that he is currently dealing with are not all solely his problems. He can connect the evolution of emotions from the dawn of civilisation to the present by using mythology. He has a natural affinity with his local myths and stories, much like every other creative writer. They try to get him to use his imagination. He attempts to unveil them in his plays in the shape of tales and stories as they currently take on a logical form and order. The edges of his pen cover every issue facing

contemporary civilization. His publications contain information on every significant national topic. His characters, their psychology, and their behaviour touch on the contentious subjects of feminism and patriarchy, religion and politics, traditions and morals, and many more.

Through the female characters in his plays, he highlights many issues that a contemporary Indian woman could face in a patriarchal culture. Examples of protagonists who are reflections of contemporary women include Rani in Nagamandala, Padmini in Hayavadana, Chitralekha in Yayati, Vishaka & Nittilai in The Fire and the Rain, and the Queen of Bali: The Sacrifice. He addresses his audience on important issues pertaining to women by using the language of his female characters. He questions the moral code's discriminatory treatment of women. He places emphasis on the desire for affection and acceptance that modern women have. Karnad therefore demonstrates how a woman's existence is pushed to the periphery in the societal structure that is dominated by men and how her need for existence results in conflicts both inside and outside of her body. Along with it, he also addresses existentialist topics in his plays, such as the real versus ideal contradiction, ideological division, divided personalities, and identity.

The practise of returning to mythology in Indian English play is not entirely new. Playwrights before Girish Karnad have also done this, using folklore to interpret a contemporary story. Karnad acknowledges how closely mythology and theatre are related. Since the purpose of theatre is to reflect society, myths and epics are the ideal vehicles for doing so. Generally speaking, time is split into the present, the past, and the future, and this distinction only exists consciously. There is no such division of consciousness at the subconscious or unconscious level. Because myths are the embodiments of our unconscious and subconscious minds, they never grow old. Karnad was criticised for employing subjects and techniques that would startle Indian viewers and writing for a western audience. However, Hayavadana finds that this does not appear to be the case. Karnad wants to describe the common difficulty of the person in a contemporary 20th-century consciousness. He created a story and dramatised it; only basic ways were unable to accomplish so because the myths that already existed had not been correctly identified before him.

4. MYTH USED IN YAYATI

Yayati, Girish Karnad's debut play, was a huge hit on stage and was published in 1961. From the "Adiparva" of the illustrious Indian epic Mahabharata and other Puranas, he has appropriated the Yayati story. Yayati retells the fable of the mythical king who, in his quest for everlasting life, doesn't think twice about stealing his son's youth and vigour.

Yayati, one of Nahusha's six sons, is mentioned in the Mahabharata narrative. Devyani, who is in love with Kacha, her father Sukracharya's pupil. After Kacha's treachery, she married Yayati out of jealousy for Sharmistha from when she was younger. For Yayati, with whom Sharmistha is madly in love, she endures great bodily and mental suffering. She had a son as a result of her secret relationship with Yayati. As a result, Devyani bestows an age-related curse upon him. Yayati fears becoming old because his relentless need for sensual pleasure has made him blind.

In this drama, Girish Karanad introduces two new characters: Chitrlekha, Pooru's wife, and Swarnalata, Devyani's servant. Karnad has expertly incorporated the contributions of both characters. Three of Swarnalata's female characters are frequently shown in the performance with her. While Chitrlekha committed suicide, Yayati had erotic urges.

Devyani had two sons, Yadu and Tarvasu, in the Mahabharata, although Sharmistha had three sons, Druhyu, Anu, and Pura, Yayati's play Yayati, Karnad only mentions Pooru, the couple's lone child.

According to the Mahabharata, Devyani is in love with Sage Kacha (Sukracharya's disciple), who was cursed by Devyani so that she would never wed another Brahmana.

However, Devyani took an oath to never love a man after Kacha betrayed her, according to a very brief mention of Kacha in Yayati.

When Devyani learned that Yayati has three sons from sharmistha in the Mahabharata epic. In contrast, in the Yayati play, King Yayati directly informs Devyani that he will make Sharmistha his second queen. Devyani was furious and returned to her father, and Yayati followed to try to convince her. Devyani was incensed by this, so she returned to her father, who was at that moment in the city waiting for the Prince to arrive. Sharmistha tried to get Yayati to follow her, but she refused.

As soon as Shukracharya learned that Yayati had mistreated his wife Devyani. He swore at Yayati, saying that he would lose his youth and grow old right away.

"Yayati reached the old age that destroys beauty and brings on pain," the adage goes.

The anguish of youth abruptly blasted into age where the horrors of loss are clearly recognised by the pangs of recall is beyond description.

5. MYTHICAL ELEMENTS IN THE HAYAVADANA

The third and most illustrative of his plays is called Hayavadana. The play's defining characteristics include an archetypal theme, underlying mythical patterns, recognisable character types, folk theatre conventions like the use of masks, curtains, and dolls, a story within a story, the use of images of Kali, Ganesh, Rudra, etc., and the play's allegorical significance. The play was initially written in Kannada, but Rajinder Paul convinced the author to adapt it into English. He then first published this translation in his journal *Enact*. On December 7th, 1972, at the Museum Theatre in Madras, Mrs. Laxmi Krishnamurthy and Mrs. Yamuna Prabhu co-produced it for the Madras Players.

The storyline for Hayavadana was taken from Somdeva's *Brihadkatha Saritsagar*, an antiquated book of Sanskrit tales. The primary scene of the play, the tale of Devadatta and Kapil, is based on a story from *Vetala Panchavimshika*; however, Karnad has appropriated it for use in *Transposed Heads*, a mock-heroic translation of the original Sanskrit tales. Karnad is the creator of the subplot—the horseman's quest for completion. The drama Hayavadana explores the "crazy dance of incompleteness?" and the search for one's self in a complex web of interconnected ties. Devadatta, the intellectual, and Kapila, the man of the body, are close friends who stand for two polar opposites, one with an Apollonian disposition and the other with a Dionysian one.

Padmini marries Devadatta. Kapila and Padmini develop a romantic relationship. The two pals commit suicide. In a scene that is both immensely comical and of enormous dramatic import, Padmini switches their heads so that Devadatta Kapila has their bodies and vice versa. It leads to identity confusion, which highlights the complex structure of human psyche. Things become more complicated. They engage in a duel before reversing their suicide. In sati, Padmini

performs. Karnad looks deeply into classic mythology to explain the suffering and conundrums that modern man creates in his imagination.

In a typical Karnad fashion, the drama starts where the "Vetal" story finishes. If it actually occurred, how would the woman react, and would it finally resolve her issue? Is the artist within him grappling with these intriguing questions? Pooru's acceptance of his father's advanced age does not please Karnad, and Yayati just exploits this as a jumping-off point. The core of his investigation into the issue highlighted by the mythical story is how young Pooru's wife would feel if she had a wife, and how she would react to his extraordinary choice. In Hayavadana, Karnad intends to imply that the problem cannot be solved for us using King Vikram's proposed remedy. In actuality, the moment a problem seems to be fixed, the real issue arises. It's possible that this is the reason he abandoned the version of Vetala Panchavimshika that featured the "incest" topic at its centre. Additionally, he significantly modifies Mann's narrative. According to Shubhangi S. Raykar's analysis: "Karnad takes this kind of jump from the original plot and develops it further in all of his plays. The facile answer presented in the original stories is challenged by this extra development, which is the product of the artist's imagination.

6. USE OF MYTH IN GIRISH KARNAD'S "NAGAMANDALA"

Girish Karnad's play NagaMandala highlights the mistreatment of women in Indian culture. Rani and Appanna, a newlywed couple, are the centre of the narrative, which is set in a rural area. Rani is always kept apart from society and is portrayed as a subservient woman. She had an absolute hell of a time with Appanna. He is seduced by a concubine and fails to recognise the wife's beauty. Rani, on the other hand, is a servant who resides in her own home. She complies with all of her husband's instructions. She embodies genuineness and adores her oppressive husband dearly. She does her best to win her spouse over, but her efforts are in vain. In order to aid her in winning her husband's affection back, Kurudava gives her love roots. She says, "Enter. Get to grinding. Make a delicious curry. In it, make a paste. He will become your slave if you give him a spoonful to sample.

According to Indian mythology, a woman is a gift from the land and a snake protects her when the land is in peril. In Hindu mythology, snakes are the subject of numerous legends. These beings are said to possess the ability to change into humans at command. "The Naga has

several images that are represented by it in Hindu mythology. In South India, a lot of homes have their own shrine, which is frequently a grove of trees in the garden's corner that is set aside for snakes.

Rani is initially hesitant but is eventually persuaded by Naga to engage in sexual activity. Naga delivers a protracted monologue to her about sexual encounters, saying things like, "Frogs croaking in pelting rain, tortoises singing soundlessly in the dark, foxes, crabs, ants, tattlers, sharks, swallows-even the goose! The female starts to smell like damp ground. The King Cobra is stung by her scent and begins looking for his Queen. The tiger bellows in search of his mate, and it can be heard everywhere. He then explains to her that having sex is a normal and joyful activity rather than a sinful one. Rani yields to Naga and develops an obsession with him. In Naga's company, she begins to feel safe. As a result of her pregnancy with Naga's child, Appanna accuses her of adultery. Her husband and the entire town force her to swear under a red-hot iron rod that she is innocent. Naga comes to her aid, climbs up her shoulder, and spreads its hood over her head like an umbrella.

When Rani is shown to be innocent, the villagers begin to worship her as a deity, leaving Appanna with little choice but to make a compromise. Hindu mythology holds that a man is cursed if his wife is an adulteress. Under the influence of these orthodox traditions, men always have a tendency to govern the lives of women. Despite the fact that Appanna is betraying his wife by having associations with a concubine, he does not think it is bad. The only author in India who portrayed infidelity as normal and adulterous women with kindness was Karnad. In Indian culture, adultery is viewed as a mistake. Whatever the cause of this error may be, a woman is always to blame. Nobody accuses a man. Rani is opposed by the entire village and Appanna; only Naga comes to her aid. A woman who is initially seen negatively soon gains the peasants' respect as a goddess. With the help of her lover Naga, she demonstrates her virginity. Appanna, the apathetic spouse, asks helplessly, "What am I to do? Is everyone out to get me? Have I transgressed so severely that nature should mock me? Let any miracle ascribe her to the Goddess title. But I'm aware!

As a result, socio-cultural problems have been depicted in the drama Naga-Mandala with a touch of mythology. A woman is ruled by a man's will in the orthodox Indian society shown in the drama. From a mythological perspective, on the other hand, the snake has granted Rani

freedom that enables her to express herself physically, emotionally, spiritually, and intellectually.

7. CONCLUSION

The plays by Girish Karnad are concerned with the complex and unsatisfying existence of the modern man. He makes use of historical tales to highlight the absurdity of modern life and all its conflicts and inherent desires. Girish Karnad transforms the folktales into metaphors for modern life. The research includes a discussion of myth's significance, applications, role in building a strong society and country, and how it adds values to life. Karnad characters are more than just talking, walking individuals. These are some of the various circumstances that a person encounters throughout his or her lifetime. The actions of the characters in the play, the difficulties they encounter and how they overcome them, as well as their anxieties, agonies, grief, and joy, all serve as lessons for the general public.

Karnad has a distinct way of seeing the past and present. He adapts myth to fit his dramatic plays, turning it into an unending source of creative inspiration. He has a lot of room to investigate universal topics like existentialism, the dilemma of identity, patriarchy, man-woman relationships, the caste system, and many others since he uses myth and history. He contrasts the social structures of antiquity and modernity using myth and history. One of Karnad's main thematic themes in the majority of his plays is the place of women in the patriarchal societal structure. The life philosophy of Karnad, his nonviolent method, and his realism all serve as a lighthouse for illuminating the shadowy corners of human existence. His plays focus on the state of man and the nation in the modern world, with a particular emphasis on the human situation. As a result, the plays of Karnad have astounding societal significance for today. This work could be considered a small addition to the body of critique that has been done on Indian drama in general and Karnad's drama in particular.

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