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# Myth And Folk Narratives In Hayavadan

*Dr. Alka Sharma*

S.D. College Ambala Cantt

ABSTRACT :

Myth and history, when in the hands of Karnad, serve as instruments not just for investigating the past but also for contemplating the possibilities that the future seems to offer. The protagonists of Karnad's works are given a voice so that they might fight back against the oppression that is imposed by the patriarchal society. There is a sense that the protagonists of Karnad think and behave in a manner that is modern. Plays written by Girish Karnad are more successful when they include elements of mythology. In Hayavadana, he skillfully employs the themes and tenets of Indian mythology, folktales, and folk theatre, such as masks, curtains, dolls, and the story-within-a-story, to conjure up a strange world of imperfect people, gods who do not care, talking dolls, and children who are unable to speak. This world appears to be unaffected by the joys and sorrows. He transforms the drama into an insightful and thought-provoking exploration of the yearning that man has for a life that is both rewarding and gratifying.

**Keywords:** Myth, Oppression, Patriarchal, Folk Tales, Conjure, Yearning, Gratifying.

There has been a significant amount of progress made in the field of English literature by Indian authors writing in English. The influence of this literary movement may be seen in a variety of literary genres, including poetry, fiction, and theatre, despite the fact that it originated in English literature. Numerous young writers who are enthusiastic about their work and have innovative ideas are finding their way into all types of literary genres. Therefore, it is not possible to get a comprehensive understanding of Indian literature just by examining the literature that is produced in Indian English. While it is true that it is required to study Indian literature in English, it is also vital to study Indian literature in English, which means that our regional literature translated into English is also necessary. These literary masterpieces are closely connected to one another in more ways than one.

A unique body of work that contributes to the range, depth, and intensity of Indian literature, Indian writing in English has left its colonial heritage and become a distinct literature in its own right. Education from the West had a significant and long- lasting impact on the social structure of India when it was under British control. Poetry and the book in English become the two most prominent forms of literary expression. On the other hand, Indian English drama was in a horrible shape up until the 1970s. With the arrival of playwrights like Girish Karnad, Vijay Tendulkar, and Badal Sircar in the 1970s, the dramatic scene experienced a shift. These writers introduced contemporary issues and bold experimentation to the theatre, which resulted in the dramatic scene undergo a metamorphosis.

There was a significant impact that Western drama had on Indian English drama throughout the 1970s. During this time period, a number of playwrights stated that they had been influenced by the works of Sartre, Camus, Pinter, Beckett, Ionesco, Pirandello, and Brecht. Indian playwrights who are aware of both Indian and Western customs, such as Girish Kamad, Badal Sircar, P. Lankesh, Chandrashekhar Patil, and Chandrashekhar Kambar, have made significant contributions to the development of contemporary theatre. Girish Karnad, Vijay Tendulkar, and Badal Sircar are three contemporary Indian

theatre playwrights who are considered to be among the most renowned in the field. The extraordinary quality of Karnad's literary works lies in the fact that they include elements of history, folklore, folktales, and mythology. He considers the present in relation to the past and makes an attempt to comprehend the past by establishing links to the present. He does this by looking at the recent past.

Karnad, a contemporary playwright who has garnered a great deal of recognition, is a product of the extensive literary tradition of Kannada. Not only is he a well-known novelist, but he is also an exceptionally talented screenwriter, director, and director of photography. Because of the tremendous contributions he has made to the fields of literature, culture, and the arts, he has been honoured with a number of honours on both national and international level.

Some of the plays that he has written that are particularly noteworthy are Yayati, Hayavadana, Tughlaq, Tale-Danda, Bali-the Sacrifice, Naga-Mandala, and The Fire and the Rain. Within his plays, Karnad has incorporated and reinvented parts of mythology in order to make them more suitable for a modern context.

Myth and history, when in the hands of Karnad, serve as instruments not just for investigating the past but also for contemplating the possibilities that the future seems to offer. When it comes to Karnad's Three Plays, "the vitality of folk theatre stems from the fact that, even though it appears to support conventional values, it also possesses the ability to challenge those values, turning them completely upside down."

Drawing inspiration from the legendary setting, Karnad develops characters who are both modern and new. He provides the women with the opportunity to express their feelings and desires without the need to be concerned about the patriarchal society in which they were brought up. The patriarchal Indian culture ultimately results in men having the upper hand over them. Legendary stories from the past are brought to life by Karmad. Therefore, in order to cope with the reality that we live in today, he creates modern settings and characters. The protagonists of Karnad's works are

given a voice so that they might fight back against the oppression that is imposed by the patriarchal society. There is a sense that the protagonists of Karnad think and behave in a manner that is modern. Karnad is one of the few authors who is able to properly indigenize his writings while also providing a modern representation of the Indian female character. Not only does his artwork parody western society, but it also appropriates it for his personal benefit.

Hayavadana is a drama that was first written in Kannada in 1970 and then translated into English by Karnad in 1971. It is Karnad's third play, and it is a two-act drama. After being awarded the Kamala Devi Chattopadhyaya Award for best play in 1972, the play was an immediate smash when it was performed on stage.

Furthermore, it was recognised as the best Indian playwright of the year by the recipients of the Sangeet Natak Award. Hayavadana was initially published in Enact in 1971, and it was published by Oxford University Press in 1975. Since then, it has seen a great deal of success when it has been performed in a number of translations and adaptations all around the world.

Utilising traditional themes in this play is a successful test of the technique. There are a great number of academicians who believe that it is Karnad's most important and representative work. According to P. Dhanavel, Hayavadana is the most important work in the history of Indian play. He said that it "is to Indian drama what James Joyce's Ulysses is to the Western novel". The primary plot of Hayavadana (1971) is inspired from Thomas Mann's The Transposed Heads (1955), which is based on the ancient Sanskrit tale Brihatkathasaritasagara, which was compiled by Somdeva in the eleventh century together with other stories. The playwright describes the process by which the Hayavadana story began to take shape in his ideas on the subject.

I remember that the theme of my play was The idea for Hayavadana started to take form in my head when I was in the middle of a debate with B.V. Karanth, who would eventually become the play's producer. The disagreement was about the relevance of masks in Indian theatre and the relationship between theatre and music. In The Transposed Heads, a series of tales that are collectively referred to as the Kathasaritasagara, Thomas Mann established a narrative that serves as the basis for the theatre."(Hayavadana, 90)

The concept that the head is superior to the body is called into question by Mann via the use of a Sanskrit narrative that provides a moral dilemma. In order to examine identity in a society where relationships are indistinct, Karnad improves on the methodology that Mann used. In addition to attempting to demystify pre existing values and ideas, the play presents a number of different points of view that will hopefully stimulate conversation on the basic, generally acknowledged principles of life. This is made better by the merging of three different levels of experience- divine, human, and animal as well as the coming together of the living and the dead on a single plane .

The telling of folktales and legendary stories is suitable for people of all ages.

It is impossible to differentiate between the mental make-up of a modern man and that of his ancestors. As a consequence of this, the problems that our ancestors encountered are still present in the millennia that have passed, although with minor modifications.

All of Yakshagana's essential elements are present in the play, but with adjustments made for the contemporary stage, subject matter, and audience. The ceremonial worship of Ganesha, the "mangal-murti," opens the play. The performance is directed by the Bhagavata, or narrator commentator, who also sets the scene and introduces the characters. All of the action is stylized, and some people wear masks. Songs are frequently utilised to illuminate the character's inner feelings. A dramatic feeling is produced via the employment of mime and dancing moves. There is a war in every Yakshagana drama. While there isn't a fight in Hayavadana, there is a duel between the two buddies. The action moves on and the stage is established with painted curtains. The front curtain of Yakshagana is used to display the characters. Karnad even uses the talking dolls, a staple of the traditional puppet show, to create a surreal world in which different points of view are presented and the animate and inanimate merge. A valedictory prayer and the traditional bow to the audience mark the play's conclusion.

It is observed that Karnad also follows the same story as narrated in The Transposed Heads. However, he makes some significant changes in the names of characters and other details and introduces a subplot of Hayavadana to reinforce the human predicament. Shridaman, Nanda and Sita of Mann's story become Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini respectively. Devadatta is a common name for any stranger. Kapila means 'the dark one and the meaning of Padmini is the lotus pond, the abode of Goddess Lakshmi. In Vatsayana's Kamasutra, Padmini is a name given to a special style of feminine beauty. Now, naturally, the question comes up in our mind what exactly does Karnad want to achieve by changing the names of the characters and by introducing a subplot of Hayavadana? Devadatta, Padmini, and Kapila are not the names confined only to the individuals.

They are, in fact, archetypal names and stand for every man/ woman. In other words, they are representatives therefore their story could be a story of any person. So by changing the names, Karnad has on the one hand ,been able to make them universal and timeless.  Karnad is attracted to the myths, histories and folk stories for personal reasons. This autobiographical dimension is indubitably evident in Yayati, Tughlaq and Hayavadana. Next, he is excited by the universal characteristics of certain recurrent archetypes problems, characters, situations, themes and so on. Hence, the personal and the social, the past and the present, commingle in Karnad's plays which will ever remain relevant to mankind.

The invocation of Ganesha assumes significance in another aspect too. According to Jacob George, "The figure of Lord Ganesha which represents a perfect blend of three different worlds of experience the divine, the human and the animal - becomes central within the frame of the sub-plot too, since it foreshadows the character of Hayavadana."

The major plot of the play takes place in the city of Dharmapura which has a grand and heroic atmosphere- an important feature of Yakshagana. The introduction of the lead characters serves to enhance this grandeur. The protagonists are towering figures. The Bhagavata introduces the story of the two young men living in the city of Dharmapura  .

They include Devadatta as one among them. Devadatta is the sole child of the famed Brahmin Vidyasagara, and he has a bright complexion, a beautiful built, and an intelligent mind that is unmatched . As a result of his ability to captivate the most talented poets in the world with his wit and poetry, as well as his ability to defeat the most influential pundits in the Kingdom via arguments that are founded on logic and love, Devadatta is considered to be the darling of Dharmapura.

It is well known that Karnad is noted for moving beyond such tight classification, despite the fact that the first depiction of Kapila seems to be stereotyped. Kapila is a hero in his own right, despite the fact that he is farther down on the social hierarchy. Throughout the course of the performance, Kapila's strength grows to the point that he nearly overtakes Devadatta by the time the show comes to a close.

Kapila who is the only kid of Lohita, the ironsmith, who is comparable to the axle that is attached to the chariot wheel in the King's armour. He is unrivalled in deeds that require bravery and commitment, as well as in strength, dancing, and physical power, despite the fact that he has a basic and dreary look. The fact that Devadatta and Kapila are such consummate companions has caused the whole world to be in awe of their connection. When the world observes these two young men walking hand in hand through Dharmapura, it is reminded of Lava and Kusha, Rama and Lakshamana, and Krishna and Balarama. The line "Two friends were there one mind, one heart" is used in order to introduce the primary characters, as stated in the aforementioned source, which, in addition to showing their connection, is repeated in a manner that paradoxically indicates that a catastrophe is about to occur. The body, or the heart, is represented by Kapila, while the mind, or the soul, is represented by Devadatta. When seen as a whole, they seem to be the embodiment of completeness; nevertheless, when assessed on an individual level, they are still incomplete.

During the time when the Bhagavata is in the process of presenting the play's key characters, an odd figure that has the head of a horse and the body of a man suddenly appears on stage. As he sits on the floor, he conceals his head by placing it between his knees. Using the head of the horse, the Bhagavata makes an effort to take Hayavadana's mask from his body. He does this with the aid of one of his actors. After some time, they would realise that the head in question is not a mask but rather a genuine head. Hayavadana explains to them , "I've been trying to get rid of this head my entire life." I thought to myself, "You, with all of your kindness and punya, if only you could pull it off, I would be satisfied." Then, he proceeds to tell them the dreadful story of how he came into the world:

My mother was the Princess of Karnataka. We were married. She has a great beauty for her age. As soon as she attained the age of majority, her father was of the opinion that she should be able to choose her own partner. The invitation was sent to princes from all over the world, and each and every one of them turned there, from China, Africa, and Persia respectively. However, she did not find any of them to be likeable. The very last person to arrive was the Prince of Araby. When my mother first laid eyes on that gorgeous prince riding his magnificent white stallion, she immediately passed out.

The wedding was decided upon by her father, who was under the impression that the Prince of Araby was her first choice. Every single one of them, however, was taken aback when they found out that she had made the decision to marry the horse rather than the prince. Hayavadana continues the story by stating that in the end, she got married to the white horse. She mentions this in the continuation of the tale. He had her as his flatmate for a period of fifteen years. When she begins her day, she discovers that the horse has vanished! Gandharva, a magnificent heavenly entity, took its position as the new ruler of the universe. It would seem that the god Kuvera chose to condemn this Celestial Being with the fate of being born as a horse due to certain misdeeds that they had committed. After fifteen years of being loved by humans, he had returned to the person he had been before. After being released from his affliction, he made a plea to my mother that she accompany him to his Heavenly Abode.

However, she would not do that. In her statement, she said that she would only come if he transformed back into a horse. As a result, he cursed her. The spell he cast upon her transformed her into a horse. With a joyful expression, my mother changed into a horse and raced away. Afterwards, my father went back to his heavenly home. I was the only one who remained behind; I was their married child.

As a consequence of this, Hayavadana makes the pathetic assertion that he has had a difficult time identifying himself ever since he was born. In the subplot, Karnad relates the story of the gandharva, which is told in the manner of a folktale, and how a curse forced him to transform into a horse. In a very inventive way, Karnad blends the protagonists of the main story with Hayavadana's frenzied search for completion in the story. There is a subplot in Hayavadana that Karnad totally conceived of and created. During his discussion of the story's thematic relevance, Mohit Ray makes the following observation: "The story of Hayavadana introduces a sub-plot an original invention of Karnad and it is thematically integrated to the main plot, so far as the theme of the identity is concerned." The fact that the title is derived from Hayavadana's story or subplot demonstrates the thematic relevance of the title. Hayavadana is the character who brings up the question of identity in the most dramatic and real manner throughout the whole of the play. Due of the presence of the subplot, Karnad is able to approach the problem from two different perspectives: the metaphysical and the sociological. To put it another way, Karnad addresses the philosophical conundrum that is presented in the subplot, as well as the moral challenge that is presented in the main story.

The female chorus helps the writer communicate the universal human yearning to feel whole by offering a clear indicator of the sort of female character he is depicting. This is done in order to convey the message that the writer is trying to convey. When it comes to Hayavadana, the chorus is not the voice of conventional wisdom as it would be in Greek plays; rather, it functions as an externalisation and objectification of Padmini's powerful emotions. Because of this, it becomes an integral component of the protagonist's character .

 Padmini unintentionally places Devadatta's head on Kapila's body because of her latent desire for her body. Additionally, she is released from the guilt of breaking her society's established morals as a result of the "mistake."

Dolls are a folk-drama device used by Karnad to support the play's technical and thematic elements. The Bhagavata's story would not have allowed for the physical representation of Devadatta's transformation. The dolls are the ones who watch as Devadatta's body gradually changes.  It is thus evident that the body is shaped by the mind since it is loose. Devadatta and Kapila thereby reclaim their original bodies despite having their heads switched.

When all is lost and the three characters are ready to die at the conclusion of the play, this particular song haunts them. In the end, Padmini, who strives to be the best of both men, gives up. She is missing Kapila right now. For over a year now, she has been able to enjoy Kapila's virility. As she becomes weary of Devadatta, she begins to fantasise and dream about Kapila. She remembers "that unwashed sweaty smell of Kapila" with nostalgia. She has her husband travel to the Ujjain fair one day so they may buy dolls for their kid. She then meets Kapila and her child there and asks everyone she meets the locals, pilgrims, hunters, tribesmen-how to go to the jungle. When she first sees Kapila, she tells him the kid is his, that it is the offspring of that corpse with "the mole on the shoulder" When Padmini initially arrives, Kapila is angry and begs her to go so they may live peacefully with Devadatta. She remains in the location. She believes that she had to embrace Kapila "completely." Her physique is fairly acquainted with Kapila's since it used to belong to Devadatta. Although his intellect has to be familiar with her before Kapila can feel "complete," his body is fully acquainted with her. Consequently, she informs him: Your body Karnad has done an excellent job of addressing the age-old problem of identity and the search for fulfilment via the medium of the folk theatre genre in his acclaimed work, Hayavadana. In this section, he explores the ways in which Brecht's theatrical training inspired him, especially with regard to his use of indigenous dramatic traditions. "I read the basic Western canon," Karnad says, "including the Greek plays, Shakespeare, Shaw, O'Neill, Anouilh, Brecht, Beckett, Sartre, and Camus." Karnad also mentions that he reads the works of other authors. The approach that Brecht used in the past had a significant impact on me. The Mukherjees, ages 34-35 Karnad and Brecht's many theatrical methods are, for

the most part, comparable. Also, Karnad is never content with just repeating or representing an event; they are always demanding more. In order to achieve his objective, he intends to reconsider the situation and approach it from a contemporary and ingenious standpoint. Through the skillful use of Brechtian techniques into his folk-inspired theatrical designs, Karnad is able to bring the audience from the realm of illusion to the real world. In spite of the fact that Hayavadana and Naga-Mandala are folk plays, they make extensive use of Brechtian strategies; in addition, the other plays show indications of similar influence.

Karnad rids the myths or folktales of their spatial and chronological dimensions, while at the same time bringing them into relevance and making them suitable for his theatrical purpose. Not only do his legendary individuals become archetypes, but they also represent universal human characteristics while living in a contemporary environment and answering contemporary concerns. In Karnad's plays, myths are recreated on current lines, with the tale functioning as a parallel and a contrast that spans whole epochs rather than simply particular people. This implies that the myths are remade on modern lines. In this way, Karnad methodically eliminates from myth any components that do not suit his aims and makes minute adjustments to the narrative. Tragically, the protagonists of Karnad's mythical and historical plays frequently meet a terrible end, despite the fact that they emerge as great and heroic characters.

Therefore, Kamad has provided a complex depiction of Indian culture and the traditional value system via the use of stock characters, music, dance, masks, talking dolls, comedic interludes that seem to be unrelated to one another, and the blending of the human and non-human worlds.

What makes Kamad's dramatic approach stand out is the fact that his storylines are very well crafted. The coherent effect of the plays is achieved by the interplay of all elements, including language, style, location, and characters.

Karnad favoured the use of the traditional and well-known regional theatrical forms that had been using the indigenous languages of the people and had their own aesthetics, while also taking into consideration the requirements of the contemporary audience. The most difficult obstacle, on the other hand, was finding out how to take use of these customary frameworks in order to revitalise his work in an urban environment. During this time, the well-known German playwright Bertolt Brecht came to his aid and became his spokesperson. As a result of the influence of Brechtian writing. Kamad had a strong awareness of the theatricality, creativity, and underlying energy that are inherent to Indian theatre. Through this experience, he gained a deeper understanding of the vast potential that lies within the non-naturalistic methods of our traditional theatre. "Brecht's influence went some way in making us realise what could be done with the design of traditional theatre," Karnad adds, acknowledging that Brecht had an effect on his dramatic works. Karnad also claims that Brecht's influence affected his dramatic works. The majority of this effect must be attributed to his work.

Karnad is influenced by all of the aspects of Brechtian philosophy, nevertheless, he discovers them in his own theatrical background and uses them in an appropriate manner. "Karnad makes constant search for a 'theatrical vision, form and language which would be nearer to the consciousness of our common people and yet artistically meaningful," according to Nemichandra Jain. He presents a more comprehensive and perceptive assessment of the internal tensions that are inherent to the human experience, as well as the inherently explosive ironic conditions that are present. Due to the fact that he has the right grasp of the practical demands of the theatre, he is able to transform any condition into an experience that is artistically beautiful.

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