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Girish Karnad as a Modern Indian Dramatist
A Study

B. Reena, M.A., M.Phil.

Girish Karnad as a Modern Indian Dramatist

A Study

**Dissertation Submitted to the
University of Madras**

**In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Philosophy in English Literature**

**By
B. Reena**

**Under the guidance of
Dr. N. P. Ravikumar, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.**

**Post-Graduate and Research Department of English
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Chennai 30 October 2006**

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Certificate

I hereby certify that the dissertation entitled Girish Karnad as a Modern Indian Dramatist – A Study submitted by B. Reena for the award of M.Phil. degree is a record of research work done by the candidate under my supervision during the period of her studying the year 2005-2006 and that the dissertation has not formed the basis for the award of any other Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or other similar title and that this dissertation represents independent work on the part of the candidate.

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I hereby declare that this dissertation entitled Girish Karnad as a Modern Indian Dramatist – A Study is a record of first hand research work done by me during the period of my study in the year 2005-2006 and that this dissertation has not formed the basis for the award of any other Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship, or other similar title.

Place: Chennai

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Date: 31-10-06

(B. Reena)

Abstract

Girish Karnad is a Modern Indian Playwright and is one of the most outstanding practitioners of performing arts. He has acted in movies, directed and produced movies, documentaries and television serials in Kannada, Hindi and English. This dissertation is a modest attempt to study Girish Karnad as a Modern Indian Dramatist

Chapter I

This introduction chapter deals with the origin and development of Indian Drama in English. It also discusses Girish Karnad's creative and performing abilities.

Chapter II

This chapter deals with the estranged relationship between the husband Appanna, the wife Rani and the Cobra in *Naga-Mandala*.

Chapter III

An attempt is made in this chapter to fix *Tughlaq* in the Modern Indian context, which is the second play of Girish Karnad. *Tughlaq* is a historical play on the life of Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq of the fourteenth century India . It also deals with Ironical and Satirical elements in this play.

Chapter IV

This chapter concentrates on Karnad's next play *Hayavadana* , which is richly symbolic and spectacular. It focuses on the story of a love triangle between Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini.

Chapter V

This chapter analyzes the qualities of Girish Karnad that made him a Modern Indian Dramatist.

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PICTURE OF GIRISH KARNAD

(Removed for easy downloading of the dissertation)

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The root of the theatre in India goes back to ancient times. In the beginning, for many decades drama formed a part of the life of the common people as music, dance, storytelling and tableaux during festivals or on special occasions. Subsequently its different forms were adopted by the upper stratum of society and continued as such for more than thousand years. The theatrical activity with elements of music, dance and acting had been in vogue in our country for the least when Mohan Banerji wrote about the persecuted or dramatic sciences illustrative of the present state of Hindu society in Calcutta,

Drama caters to a heterogeneous audience .It depends largely on popular taste and current fashion for its success and sustenance. But this argument does not hold good in the case of drama in English by Indian writers for it is always meant for a select elite audience. There is always a special audience, a category for plays in English in this country. We have considerable stage techniques and many other sophisticated devices for lighting and acoustic effects.

Our knowledge about the initial, primitive stage of theatrical activity is very meager. But we can safely assert that in India, as in other culture, the theatrical activity began with primitive magical, religious or social rites, ritualistic dances, festivals etc. Today, many tribes in different parts of the country perform rituals related to birth, death, puberty, marriage, food gathering, hunting. Prayers are offered to goddesses and primordial forces, in which the dramatic or theatrical elements are prominent. In the rites and ritualistic activity related to yajnas of the vedic age, many situations and actions had pronounced theatrical aspects.

There are frequent references in vedic literature to song, dance, musical instruments and also to people connected with these activities like the Gandharva, Suta, Shailush, Kari, Apsara, and also Veena player. Later a musical renering of the lives of the heroes and other eminent persons of the community originated. Most of the requirements of the early dramatic forms thus appeared in the form of ballads or mere story telling passed on through generations. “In Valmiki’s **Ramayana**, of Suta & Magadha, dance & drama in the Mahabharata to dramatization of the Ramayana in the **Harivamsha** Purana, and about the actor and dance, drama and music in the Bhagavata Purana and Markandeya Purana are standing examples”. (*Indian Theatre, Tradition, Continuity and Change*. Nemichandra Jain, 1992.)

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Apart from this theoretical speculation about drama and theatre, the image of Indian theatre tradition which emerges from the extensive, dramatic works in Sanskrit is no less amazing.

The Sanskrit dramatic works depict different mental states, emotions and ideas, desires and aspirations, strengths and weakness, basic moral and social questions as well as individual predicaments. They also present a many-layered, fascinating picture of the social, political, economic and cultural life of those times. Plays like Madhyama Vyayoga, Urubhanga, Swapnavadatta, Pratima, Abhijnan Shankunthala, Vikramorvarshiya, Mrichchhakatika, Mudrarakshasa, Uttaramacharita, Ratnavali, kundamala, Bhagawadejjukiya are glorious works that would bring credit to any literature. For their keen insight, delicate aesthetic sense, structural skill, variety, dramatic and theatrical quality of the language, and excellence of their poetry, they have a distinct place in world dramatic literature.

Bhasa himself, who is considered to be the earliest playwright, has written plays based on the Ramayana and the Mahabharata- Pratima, Abhisheka, Madhyama Vyayoga, Urubhanga, Karnabhara- as well as on stories from popular tales or almost imaginary events and episodes – Swapnavasavadatta, Pratijna Yaugandharayana, Avimaraka and others. Similarly, Malavikagnimitra of Kalidasa, Mrichchhakatika of Shudraka, Malatimadhava of Bhavabhooti, Mudrarakshasa of Vishakhadatta, are plays making extensive use of historical data, extensive use of historical events and characters.

The Kalidasa plays are different from the Bhasa plays. All three of them are essentially love stories. In Vikramorvashi and Abhinjan Shankuntala, there is love between a man and an Apsara (divine nymph) and a man and an apsara born woman respectively. Here it must be mentioned that Kalidasa has given the available mythical episodes a new form and meaning according to his own creative purposes. In these plays, social and moral contexts are suggested through the emotional states and deep internal agony of the characters. But the human emotions in their different states are treated with such an imaginative insight and sophistication that a unique blending of poetry and theatre is achieved. From this point of view, the plays of Kalidasa remind one of Shakespeare's plays, however, in Shakespeare the situations and feelings are more theatrical while in Kalidasa, the dramatic organization of a variety of human emotions and feelings in their variety overshadow the situations.

In fact, in the Sanskrit dramatic literature, the extraordinarily imaginative rendering of mythological and other popular tales reveals many levels of human experience, social relations and individual responses. Such a wide and sensitive presentation of life in the Sanskrit plays is not accidental. It is based on a very

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profound philosophical outlook, a comprehensive world-view and a highly developed aesthetics that has come down to us as the theory of the Rasa.

The Indian view of life does not accept that a human being is a puppet in his hands of inscrutable, mysterious, blind, supernatural forces, condemned to struggle, but destined to face a pre – determined tragedy. That is why in Sanskrit plays, instead of the usual exposition of any gradually intensifying real or imaginary personal predicament or sense of sin, we have a portrayal of the joys and sufferings, success and failure.

It is for this reason that Sanskrit plays, unlike Greek drama, defy categorization into tragedy and comedy. Instead, they are categorized according to social and mental status of the protagonists and their consequent actions.

Since the Sanskrit plays regard drama as a form of make believe, and not reality, their treatment of time and space is imaginative and not realistic or conditioned by the so-called unities of time and place. To indicate the change of time and locale, sometimes a character mentions the change, or it is communicated by the conventions of the movement of the actors from one stage area to another.

Unfortunately, no other accounts of actual presentation of the Sanskrit plays are available. Sanskrit theatre is based mostly on Bharata's *Natyashastra* and some latter commentaries on that work, or, to an extent, on the structure of the available plays and the internal evidence of their stage directions. Many directors have tried to recreate the Sanskrit plays on the stage by various methods. But, on the whole, this entire exercise is still in its initial stages, and it would be very proper to come to any definite conclusion on its basis.

During the post-independence period, drama had not made much headway as poetry and novel. It had got its own problems, not shared by the other literary forms.

Some notable playwrights of the present period are Asif Currimbhoy, Pratap Sharma, G.V.Desari, Gurucharan Das and Girish Karnad. Their plays are successfully staged in Europe and the United States of America. The first Five Year Plan after Independence encouraged the performing of arts as a means of public enlightenment and The National School of Drama was established in Delhi. Institutions were founded in big cities for imparting training in dramatics. The National Drama festival was started in Delhi by the Sangeet Natak Academy in 1954.

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According to the Indian view of life, the purpose of Drama and theatre was to create a feeling of pleasure or bliss (Rasa) by delineating different situations, mental status and feelings of human beings. The purpose of western drama on the other hand, was to reveal the struggles of life in their various forms. The western Drama and theatre entered India as elements of the culture of the conquerors, which, in a well-planned manner deliberately tried to prove that when compared to the western the Indian culture was inferior, trivial and undeveloped.

The Indian English drama is not considered to be popular like the Indian English novel. Many writers have not taken much interest in writing plays, so it lacked in both quality and quantity. The reasons attributed for the insufficient amount of Indian Dramas are the unsuitability for stage production, the lack of creativity among the dramatists to use the Indian myth and historical heritage.

Translations paved the way for the growth of Indian Drama in English. This enabled the readers to get aware of the different culture and tradition followed in different regions in India. Creativity is enhancing in the writers, both in their themes and the presentations. In spite of a work written in his own language, a dramatist is celebrated for his dramatizing skill and style. Prominence was given to the works produced with Indian dramatic tradition-history legend Myth and Folklore. Dramatists like Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Vijay Tendulkar and Girish Karnad became popular not only in Hindi, Bengali, Marathi and Kannada, but also in all the Indian languages of modern Indian theatre by their innovative works and presentations of plays on the stage.

British drama influenced the Indian English drama in the early twentieth century, giving rise to many theatrical groups. The department of drama was established in major universities giving a good scope to drama in Indian language plays produced in recent years are complex according to its relationship to modernity as well as tradition. The works of Habib Tanvir, K.V. Panikkar, B. V. Karnath, Ratan Theyyam, Badal Sircar and Girish Karnad celebrate the modern Indian nation's cultural heterogeneity. Their plays exhibited a visible and desperate development, both in terms of performance aesthetics and politics of representation. They differed from their predecessors in the choice of subject matter and dramaturgic practice.

The playwrights returned to the past as an immediate response to 'westernization' in India. Even though, some Indian dramatists in their works returned to the past, they failed to portray the 'pure' Indian tradition in their works. They tried to recover some of the fading performing arts. In order to bring back a sense of history that is wider and more relevant to the majority of the people living in rural areas, these playwrights renovated the old forms. "Tradition to these dramatists is not a fossil creature to be exhibited in a museum, but a rich cultural treasure left unnoticed" (Nanda Kumar, *Indian English Drama* 225.).

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Contemporary Indian dramatists attempted to cross cultural boundaries across time, going 'back to the past' in a metamorphic sense to retrieve ancient traditions by creating them in their dramatic productions and the last few decades have undergone translations from the regional languages in English . This increases the quality of writing drama in totality. The epics and classics when translated in English becomes an important part in Indian English literature. Translated texts when taught to the students, increased their creativity and English translations popularized the Indian tradition among the scholars. Translations of regional drama served as a pillar for the emergence of 'national theatre' into which the streams of theatrical art seem to converge.

The translations have forged a link between the east and west, north and south and they contributed to the growing richness of contemporary creative consciousness.

From different regions various old forms such as Khyal, Manch, Bhagat, Svang, Nautanke, Tamasha originated manifold forms of music, dance and mimic action are the common features found in them. The unity in the art form during the ancient period is exhibited by the similar elements found in all folk form.

Some notable playwrights and directors such as Utpal Dutt, Badal Sircar, C.T.Khanolkar, Sadanand Rege, Amol Palekar, Vijay Tendulkar, Satish Alekar and, Mahesh Elkunchwar contributed much to the growth and development of play scripts and 'transhistorical interculturalism'. They also juxtaposed various strands of Indian culture simultaneously in their works.

The context of some is drawn from Indian mythological episodes, folktales, historical events, and contemporary social situations. Sometimes the stories echoed popular Muslim or the western legend or tales. Some were created with an innovative use of structural elements in their plays in order to suit the contemporary theatre. These created a stir among the audience giving rise to their successful career. To mention some of them in Kannada, 'Hayavadana' by Girish Karnad and Kumar Swami by Chandrasekhar Khambar. A revolutionary or a new wave in Sanskrit literature, writes G.K.Bhat, 'appears to be either impossible or absurd' (Reddy Venkata.K. Dhawan., *Flowering of Indian Drama* 20)

The search for Indian theatre, neither rejected the west to make it national nor constructed a modern theatre ignoring the infinite manifestations of our rural and the folk theatre compared to the Indian English poetry, Drama in India successfully continued to experiment to suit the taste of the audience. Drama extended itself to the people, it being the combination of several arts including the art of spoken word, not like the poetry, which stood within a confined circle.

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Modern Indian dramatic writing in English is neither rich in quantity nor on the whole, of high quality. Enterprising Indians have for nearly a century occasionally attempted drama in English but seldom for stage production. (K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar. *Indian writing In English*,226.)

Independent Indian theatre paved the path for a group of young directors and actors who created better theatre to prove their talent, avoiding the native and rudimentary professional theatre and the congenial atmosphere encouraged many playwrights to create plays to present a new type of drama for the fulfillment of practical demands of the stage. The freedom struggle gave a new opening to the dramatist and he handled historical characters to project the breakdown of communication.

The central themes of many of Badal Sircar's plays possess a sense of utter meaninglessness in our existence, which leads to a state of metaphysical anguish.

While Badal Sircar makes the society specially the middle class, feel guilty for being indifferent towards man and his problems, Vijay Tendulkar, the avant-garde Marathi playwright, harps upon the theme of isolation of the individual and his confrontation with the hostile surroundings. Both the playwrights express their anguish at the prevailing social conditions and the role of man has to play in these conditions. The plays *Sakharam Binder* and *Ghasiram Kotwal*, made Tendulkar a popular playwright, as experiments of an intense and deeper impulse and not just a matter of superficial innovation.

In the words of Chandrasekar Khambar the six fundamental elements in Kannada old Dramas are as follows

1. Prelude: the ritual involving the deity;
2. Make up: the priest disguises himself as the deity;
3. Chorus and music: two singers with drums and cymbals accompanying the priest actor's dance;
4. Dance: which is the spiritual and physical re-enactment of what they sing;
5. Theme: the story of the deity sung by priest and chorus.

Kannada is flourishing in almost all branches of literature and modernity is noticeable in various phases: progressive, Navya and Navodaya. The most important writers of contemporary period are P. Lankesh , Nisar Ahamed, Girish Karnad , Chandrasekar Kambar and U.R.Ananthamurthy.

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The Kannada theatre and drama came into existence almost simultaneously. Most of the early playwrights wrote for very popular professional troupes. Great actors dominated the professional theatre and both the rural and the urban spectators went to see their favorite stars. Dramatist Bellave Narahari Sastri was the only exception to attract the audience in his own way.

In 1882, a troupe of Parsee players called, The Balewala Company, visited the royal court of Mysore. The company made use of spectators and even sophisticated devices in its productions. The first ever professional theatre in Karnataka is Sri Chamarajendra Karnataka Nataka Sabha. The changing social conditions in the twenties, made new values and outlook possible in Kannada Drama.

The emergence of two giants T.P.Kailasam and Adya Rangacharya was fortunate. Both studied in England and were influenced by the serious and ironic comedies of George Bernard Shaw and tragedies of Henrick Ibsen. They have left a deep impact on the theatre since their plays made great demands on the audience and required their participation in the action on the stage. Drama came to depend less on the plot than on the total experience provided by the production as a whole. They substituted real men and women and their earthly trials and tribulations with the emphasis on human relations.

As a publisher, playwright, actor, director and administrator and the chairman of Sangeet Natak Academy, “Girish Karnad has assumed a variety of roles in his eventful career, but his true identity, as he has himself said, is that of a dramatist, a man of the theatre”.(Jain Nemichandra, *Indian Theatre: Tradition, Continuity and Change*, 56)

Girish Karnad, Ragunath, son of Ragunath and Kasibai was born in 1938 in Maharashtra with Kannada as his mother tongue. He worked as an assistant manager (1963-1969) and as manager (1969-1970) at Oxford University Press, Madras. He was Director of the Film and Television Institute, Pune (1974-1975). In 1999, Karnataka gained a rare literary distinction when Jnanapith award was awarded to noted playwright Girish Karnad. Karnad was made Chairperson of the Nehru Centre in London.

Karnad is a modern Indian playwright who successfully staged his plays. Karnad takes up a theme from Indian history for it had a relevance to modern times. According to Karnad, a play realizes its full potential only through presentation in stage. He says, “When a story excites me, I want to share the excitement with others. As I analyze the components of its fascination, the form of the play gets shaped (The Hindu 2 July – December 1998.)

Karnad is a man of theatre. He has been actively associated with the stage and has written plays with an eye to their production. Karnad’s plays are appreciated for an absorbing story, an intricate play, a logical dialogue, an impressive spectacle, a beginning, middle and a neatly tied up conclusion. He is faithful to the sources in presenting characters and episodes .There might have been anachronisms and deviations

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here and there. He takes care to conform to the spirits of the subject matter and at the same time the treatment of it is in keeping with his own ideas.

In an interview, Karnad observed that he was incapable of inventing stories and therefore he turned to myth, old literature and historical episodes. "Karnad has tried to depict that: Myth and folktales in a patriarchal society represent primarily the male conscious forces and wishes and are patriarchal constructs and" man-oriented". (Kurkoti, D.Kirtinath, *Contemporary Indian Drama* 32). In these stories, a woman's experiences, inner feelings, fears, anxieties and Psychological problems are not given much expression.

Karnad is influenced more by Henrick Ibsen, an outstanding figure of his age in dramatic art and whose works became the model for many dramatists since the late nineteenth century. Karnad has acquired much of the deftness of Henrick Ibsen; hence he allows symbolism to permeate his plays. By using symbols and myths, he manipulates an accretion of different meanings.

Karnad's plays reveal a healthy tension between tradition and contemporaneity. He goes back to local and old practices, which were part of his childhood environment. Karnad's return to the roots is a reaction to the usual social irrelevance of modern Indian Drama. His style is simple and the dialogues are suited well for the Indian sensibilities and ethos.

Karnad's works in the theatre reveal two outstanding qualities: a continuous experimentation with dramatic form and a deep involvement with the human condition in its contemporary as well as universal manifestation. His plays explore the human psyche and its social environment sometimes taking for their theme traditional puranic themes.

When Karnad wrote his first play **Yayate** (1961), critics hailed him as the morning star of modern Kannada theatre. He described himself as belonging to the first generation of playwrights to come of age after India became independent.

Of his nine plays, six are based on myths and legends, two on history and only one on contemporary 'émigré' experience. Many critics felt that he is not deeply rooted in Kannada culture. In fact Karnad himself accepts that, in a way, he is not as involved in Kannada culture as the other writers of his generation. His Sarawat community, which has always remained peripheral and the members of which speak Konkani at home and Kannada in public, could be partly responsible for his being an 'outsider' in Karnataka.

Unlike his contemporaries, who develop deep into the problems of middle class society, Girish Karnad goes back to myths and legends with a view to making them a vehicle of a new vision. By employing the various myths, he shows the absurdity of modern life with all its elemental passions and conflicts and man's eternal struggle to attain perfection.

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Karnad discovered himself as a dramatist under the influence of Jen Anouilh whose 'Antigone' served as a model for his first play *Yayati*, and *Tughlaq* owed a great deal to Albert Camus' *Caligula*. Yakshagana, the most popular form of Drama in North and South Karnataka was a natural choice and he used it in *Hayavadana*. He continues his experiment in *Naga-Mandala*, where he makes use of two stories told to him by A. K. Ramanujam. Karnad states.

"A plays can only be contemporary as the playwright. If the writer does not have contemporary convictions or it is not committed the plays will not be contemporary" (Kurkoti, D. Kirtinath *Contemporary Indian Drama*).

Karnad has given the Indian theatre a richness that could probably be equated only with his talents as an actor-director. His contribution goes beyond theatre: he has represented India in foreign lands as an emissary of art and culture. Karnad in all his plays moved away from tradition. Karnad used many techniques for the success of his plays. They are mainly conventions and motifs of folktales and folk theatre, masks, curtains, dolls, the story within the story. These elements have not been used much by the other playwrights, while Karnad emphasized them in his works. About his style and technique Kirtinath Kurkoti writes.

"An intellectual playwright whose work has the tone and expression of a great Drama. He has the genius and the power to transform any situation into an aesthetic experience the quality of which to use Joyce's vocabulary would be 'static' rather than 'kinetic'". (Kurkoti, D. Kirtinath *Contemporary Indian Drama. Indian Drama Collection of Papers*, 108)

Dialogue is the most important element of the drama, for words put on the page are put on the same as words put on the stage. Dramatic speech has its origin and basis in common conversation. But it gets weight and pressure when put in a context. Girish Karnad gives importance to the dialogues in his plays to convey the meaning clearly. For this reason, he translated some of the words from Kannada to English.

Karnad's practice of drawing source from myths and tales lends the play an immediacy of appeal. Another important fact is that since the audiences are familiar with the theme they curiously watch or read the play, to know the perception and focus handled by the dramatist.

"Karnad's theatre foregrounds the power of mythical imagination which exhibits his creativity". (Jain Nemichandra, *Indian Theatre*, 238.) For Karnad, drama is essentially a ritual and consequently his plays contain properties, modes and techniques of the traditional Indian theatre and are non-representational in Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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form and technique. As the stage is the space for celebration, there is an extensive use of song, dance and mask in his plays for spectacular effect. Reality undergoes a magic transformation, a miraculous shape shifting in the theatre in the theatre. It is characterized by a sense of mystery.

“While I was writing a play, I saw it only as an escape from my stressful situation. But looking back I am amazed as how much precise the myth reflected my anxieties at that moment, my resentment at all those who seemed to demand that I sacrifice my future...The myth had enabled me to articulate to myself a set of value that I had been unable to arrive at rationality.”

(Joshi, R.G. *Myth in Indian Drama* 238.).

Myths preach moral values directly. But Karnad’s treatment of it in his plays is different. He used myths as a framework for some of his plays. Girish Karnad believes that the usage of myth, folklore and moving back to the traditional themes are the resultant of western concept, which came with colonization. Karnad took Indian library and mythology liberally to tackle contemporary themes in his plays, when he started as a dramatist, later moved to folk-theatre.

Karnad can be compared to Shakespeare in utilizing the sources for his plays. Shakespeare borrowed sources from Greek legends, Holinshed chronicles, Plutarch and Roman history. He handled the themes in his own style to mock the society to revive the political situations and to transform the people to be aware of the political situations and to transform the people to be aware of the political unrest. According to him, all his plays are like a test-game. With his logic, he develops each scene. He inspires and excites everyone with his presentation of possibilities especially in the end. Karnad follows the ancient Sanskrit tradition while Shakespeare followed the Greek tradition. Regarding this, Karnad says,

“Just as you can’t go through carnatic music without learning Thyagaraja, if u want to write plays you have to go through Shakespeare read the Greek, study Kalidasa and Bhasa (Ramnarayan, Gowri)”Joshi,R.G. *Myth in Indian Drama*, 21.

Karnad admirably succeeded in his attempt to show the Indian playwrights as well as the world Theatre Community at large how our past and present can coalesce to give present-day existence meaning and to theatre activity a direction. For *Yayati*, he was given the state award. In 1972, he received Sangeet Natak Akademi’s award for playwriting. For *Hayavadana*, Bharatiya Natya Sangha honored him with Kamaladevi award.”His plays have pioneered a style, which unites the elements of traditional Indian theatre, such as ‘Yakshagana’ and strikingly modern sensibility for contemporary socio-political realities”(Naik.M. K. *Dimensions of Indian English Literature*.73)

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President's Gold Medal for the best Indian film for *Sanskara*, National Award for excellence in direction for *Vamshavriksha* (shared with B. V. Karunath), National Award for the best script for *Bhumika* (shared with Shyam Benegal, Satyadev Dubey-78), Golden Lotus for best non-feature film for *kanakapurandara* (89), Homi Bhaba fellowship for creative work in the folk field of theatre (70-72), Karnataka Sahitya Academy for the most creative work for *Naga-mandala* (92), Sahitya academy award for *Tale-Danda* (94) and so on.

Frenny Prakash in his critical study writes about Girish Karnad as: "He is a man of large presence for larger than his physical frames and his novelty; anyone can be caught by his charisma, the resonant voices the persona and his dramatic flair. Karnad the challenging dramatist sums up the modern Indian English Drama". He says it is not untrue the modern writer feels, alienated from one's background from one's language, for he has personally undergone this experience and today stands as a witness before us. Karnad's plays are existential in theme. In *Hayavadana* the absurdity is the chief source of humour. In it humour and satire are predominant both in the main plot and the sub-plot." (66)

Karnad's acquaintance with colonial history brought a disgusting temperament within him due to the imbalance between native and alien theories of art. This made him to consciously adopt Kannada local forms. However, this suggestion carries a tri-dimensional and a polemical analysis. In the first place, he attempts to oppress the dominance of western form over native arts. Because of this alien interference the native individuality of Kannada art is completely buried. On the other hand, the colonial imperialism made the westerners gain an authorization from the local population by surpassing the establishment of native culture. In the second place, Karnad strongly condemns the luxury of the western theatre, which stood as an impermeable hindrance for proletarians and lower class people to enter into the world of dreams.

Karnad's experience with the Yakshagana theatre made him feel the ignorance of his people with the modern technology. So, he intended to compete with the popular forms by exhibiting that rustic beauty of Kannada local forms. This made him to establish great familiarity in Indian literature. This study conducts a detail analysis on the prosperity of native forms. It also ponders over certain themes and contents of two chosen texts, to highlight the significance of Karnad's prodigy and on the richness of native cultures.

Karnad uses myth in order to emphasize the beauty of our traditional forms. India follows almost a similar tradition throughout and mythological stories are popular among the people. Karnad took the known content and presented it in his own style. He doesn't stick to a particular traditional form; he uses all local motifs and conventions of Karnataka in his plays. In order to reach the local mass, he gave typical Karnatic names to his characters.

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This research study not only deals with the myth, but the perception of myth and folklore in a creative process by Girish Karnad.

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PICTURE OF A SCENE FROM NAGA MANDALA

(Removed to help download the dissertation easily.)

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Chapter II

NAGA MANDALA

Naga-mandala of Girish Karnad presents the deplorable state of women in Indian Society. The play is written in two acts with a prologue. The playwright says in the prologue that man is a bundle of weakness, he is either not aware of them or he cannot get rid of them. The man fails to realize the significance of this prediction. He takes it literally and breaks into a laughter because he thinks that keeping awake one night is not a task, failing to realize that keeping awake will rather be a Herculean task for a man who dozes off the month, which can be the last night of his life also, he awakes up to the fact that he has to do something to avert his death.

He comes to dilapidated temple with an unidentifiable statue to pass his last night. But this temple is a favorite haunt of the flames that come from different houses so exchange notes on the present conditions of the society. The first flames come from the house of a miserly fellow who retires to bed early to save spending on lamp oil. The second tells in which the old mother has died neglected and third flame tells about the story of Rani whose predicament reflects the human need to live by fiction and half-truths. The drama is enacted in a temple at night, in the presence of three naked flames, in front of a man cursed to die within a few hours. The new flame has a different story to tell. The old mistress has seen young women dressed in a Sari coming out of the room in, which her husband is sleeping. However this story also comes to the temple and desires that it should be heard by somebody who can pass it on to others. Flames cannot do it because they are non-living objects. Thus the prologue describes the aberrations of man and woman to give the message that men in general are slaves of passion and are asleep to the hard realities of life.

According to Karnad the sources material of Naga-mandala is from a folktale, which he heard from A. K. Ramanujan. The folktale is about a prince whose extreme mistrust of women prevented him for loving any woman, and whose encounter with a woman's desire for love has Ramanujan writes about this tale as many as forty variants. The central theme of all these tales is, Ramanujan remarks,; "the narcissism" of the self-involved hero, "who undergoes a test put to him by the wife, in order to survive. The psychological inadequacy that the young man is caught in prevents his self-transcendence, causing acute lack of understanding and communication between him and a woman. (A. K. Ramanujan, "The Prince who

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married his own left hand”, Aspects of India, ed. Margaret Case and N. Gerold Barrier New Delhi:Manohar,1986,2-10.)

The existential problems found throughout Karnad’s play are more comprehensive. Naga-Mandala is not only about the male difficulty to trust and love women. It seems to be about the socialization process of both men and women, particularly in the Indian marriage which is more often than not, the first experience of sex and love for most people.

Act I presents the story of a young girl named Rani, who is the only child of her parents. She is also called Rani because she is the queen of long tresses. When her hair was tied up in a knot, it was as though a black cobra lay curled on the nape of her neck. Her father finds a match for her and gets her married to a young man who is rich and his parents are dead. Rani’s husband Appanna, proud and jealous, illtreats her, coming home only during lunch and staying away with a concubine at night. Kurudavva a best friend of Appanna’s mother is blind but her regard for her deceased friend outweighs her disability. She tells her son Kappanna. ‘He keeps his wife locked up like a caged bird’. Kurudavva is moved with pity. She asks Rani not to worry and sends Kappanna to bring the roots, which produce the magical quality of love in the heart of the man that eats them. Kappanna gives the roots to Rani with the instruction. “Grind it into a nice paste and feed it to your husband and watch the results. Once he smells you he won’t go sniffing after that bitch. He will make you a wife instantly”. According to Kappanna’s instruction she pours the paste into the curry. She pours this curry into the ant-hill. As she turned out of the ant-hill a cobra lifts its hood, hissing out of the ant-hill. Thus the cobra comes to love Rani.

The second Act presents the love story of Rani and the cobra. Appanna has brought a dog to keep the blind Kurudavva away from his wife. The dog is tied to the door. The cobra assumes the shape of Appanna to make love with Rani. He comes every night when Appanna is away. Rani gets confused on observing the nature of Appanna. Appanna becomes angry when he comes to know of the pregnancy of Rani. When Rani is in the position of proving her loyalty and chastity to the villager, she takes the cobra in her hand. The cobra does not bite her, but slides up her shoulder and spreads its hood like an umbrella over her head. The crowd gets stunned while the elders declare her as a God, a divine being. Appanna asks her forgiveness and takes her fondly into his arms. Rani gives birth to a beautiful son, but Appanna knows the fact that he is not the father of the son. The cobra, could not bear the separation, ties a tress of Rani’s hair around his neck and strangles itself to death hiding in her hair. The dead cobra falls to the ground when Appanna combs her hair, Rani who now understands all about the cobra. Appanna accepts the wishes of Rani as he takes her as an incarnation of the goddess. The playwright’s vision of the human and non-human worlds is revealed in this play.

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Naga-Mandala, the play by Girish Karnad has a title in English, which means 'Play with a Cobra'. In this play the cobra plays the role of a lover as the original husband refuses to love her through this play Karnad reveals that he is a modern dramatist in proving that the cobra is better in loving which is a human passion whereas a man is worse in treating his wife who is so innocent.

The plays open with a prologue, which describes the place, where the idol is unidentifiably broken. A man, who sits inside, yawns. By giving the realistic pictures the author attacks the public officers, and politicians who lack interest in social affairs.

The different flames are introduced as characters and they are interested in gossip. M.Sarat Babu's remarks about one of the flames says:

FLAME 4: my master had an old, ailing mother. Her stomach was bloated, her back covered with bedsores. The house stank of cough and phlegm, pus and wine. No one got a wink of sleep at night (Girish Karnad *Nagamandala: Woman's secret Longings and Sacrificial sufferings*, 145.)

This is a direct attack on people who are not clean. The people do not give importance to the aged who are unable to do any favour of work for the younger generation. The writer Sarat Babu examines the subject of social deformity, which is found in Naga-Mandala.

On pursuing the opening of the story of Rani, Dr.S. Subhash Chandran remarks.

Rani cannot comprehend the

Situation since Appanna cannot be so

Affectionate and compassionate. Yet she

Willingly suspends her disbelief and enjoys

The concern and affection Naga who is

In the guise of Appanna. She feels happy and secure in

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his company. He lays her gently down on the bed. He becomes a cobra and leaves (*Indian Literature Today*.195).

NagaMandala probes into the female and male development and their adjustment with the society roles which are entrusted to them by the traditional society. Each flame is a female, a storyteller, sharing with the others her observations and new experiences. The author himself, enter into their conversation and listens to a “new” tale that has just escaped from an old woman’s head.

Through the identification of the flames with young, sprightly and vocal women, Karnad used his creative ability in a particularly female context in the Man-oriented folk tale.

Karnad says, a “distinctly woman’s understanding of the reality around her, a lived counter point to the patriarchal structures of classical texts and institution”. (Girish Karnad *Nagamandala: Woman’s secret Longings and Sacrificial Sufferings*, 17)

In this story of marriage and love, Appana’s behavior is emotional. In fact the emotional aspect of his personality seems to be underdeveloped and also treats the Rani as a prostitute in an unfair manner. Whether the relationships are computer and satisfactory Rani and Appana are strangers to each other. Appana treats her with contempt, aggression and mistrust. He locks her in the room, the old lady Kundavva and her son Kappana attempt to become friendly with Rani.

Rani begins to build a world of stories around herself. She imagines herself to be a princess locked up by a demon. “So the demon locks her up in the caste then it rains for seven days, and Rani says “come, Rani, let us go” (NagaMandala Text Book,35)

Next day Appanna comes in the morning. He unlocks the door and step in Rani comes out running and laughing and she feels Appanna has changed for the better. In the second act Karnad should use of his knowledge of disguise of cobra in the form of Appanna with audience. This makes Rani gets confused. And thus Karnad handled the theme tactfully proving that he is a modern dramatist. Suppose, Rani has identified the cobra, her mating with him raises a question of chastity. But Rani happily enjoys the company of the cobra, since she is an innocent female character. The audience enjoys the play and they feel that Karnad shows his modern views in the play.

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Karnad reduces the tension created in the minds of audience by the cruel behavior of Appanna towards Rani. That shows that Karnad uses modern techniques. This creates a kind of suspense and thrill in the audience. The dramatical situation gets increased when Rani feels sorrowful and says that she can say nothing if he spins a riddle like this. Now the cobra knows that his identity will be revealed unless he suppresses her reason and intuition by using patriarchal authority.

Cobra: (seriously) I am afraid that is how it is going to be like that during the day. Like his at night, don't ask me why?

Rani: I wan't (Naga-Mandala Text Book,63)

Karnad exposes the paradoxical nature and behavior of Appanna and it shows how the man's culture suppresses the intellect of the woman and also Karnad tells about the man's freedom in doing whatever he likes. Karnad laughs at the family lady's innocence. Sometimes innocence can be considered as bliss. But ignorance is always dangerous. Karnad shows that Rani has more ignorance, which is always dangerous. Karand also says that Rani is more ignorant than innocent. Since she has continual sexual relationship with cobra, she becomes pregnant and she feels happy that Appanna will not go to the concubine's house. When Rani becomes pregnant the dramatist gives a serious turning point to the play.

The significance to the title of the play comes not from any human character, but from a snake. The story of the cobra suggests that the play not merely dramatics the folk tales in modern interpretation. Snakes are also the symbols of human maleness and strength. The play is interspersed with the analysis, observations and narrations, which continually reminds the spectator that he is only "watching a play".

Observing this shocking but natural truth, Rajinder Paul comments in his reviews that:

Naga has his duels with the sentries and keeps on visiting Rani in the night. Rani duly become pregnant and informs her husband. Her husband calls her name in front of the village elder and that he says had not touched her. The villagers told her to put her hands in the ant-hill. If cobra doesn't bit her then it is proved that she is a chaste, other wise she is dead any way (Naga-Mandala play with a cobra)

In the previous night cobra asked Rani to become emotional. Though he is a human being Appanna gets nervous and starts shouting. Even she does not feel guilty and does not think that he deserves it. Karnad

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shows that Rani is a typical Indian lady who craves for love of man and in the intensity of their passion they accept any man who come in to their life. Karnad shows the irony that Naga is true to his love though he is not a man. But Appanna is not a genuine husband to Rani. Indian epic does not permit a woman to have extra marital relations even if the woman is a deserted wife. Naturally, Rani could get shocked if she realizes that she has copulated with a cobra.

While Naga asks Rani to speak the truth she continues:

Rani: What truth? Shall I say my husband forgets his nights by next morning? Shall I say my husband brought a dog and a mongoose to kill this cobra and yet suddenly he seems to know all about what the cobra will do or not do? (Naga-Mandala play with a Cobra,34)

At last Rani takes the cobra in her hand and declares ‘since I came to the village. I have held only two-my husband and this cobra. I have not touched any other of the male sex. Nor have I allowed any other male to touch me’ Here the audience laughs and wonder at the effective dramatical statement which is possible only on the part of a real genius. Here we could see the dramatic irony since the truth is hidden from Rani. This is conveyed very effectively as well as convincingly to audience. People call her a “Goddess. Immediately people start falling at her feet. This drama is found not only in books but also in real life. Some people have the habit of making others fall at their feet.

Karnad gets irritated with the people who are very dual in judgment. Elders appreciate Rani to a great extent after she proves her innocence. The play here proves that people are very firm in their false beliefs. Even Appanna starts appreciating her. When she is questioned by the husband, people start questioning her but they start accepting the dramatical truth once it is proved.

Since the end seems incomplete, Karnad prolongs the story. Cobra comes and has a look at Rani. By narrating this, the playwright attacks the people who do think before doing. Here cobra has used the human instinct and Appanna has used the animal instinct.

Karnad finds out the satirical approach on the social evils, which take place in the society. The story has two ends. One is that after the cobra dies, Rani gets the permission from Appanna for their son to perform the rituals for cobra. This is the dramatic and it is accepted. The other end is that Rani allows Naga inside the third stress of her hair. The modern dramatist gets intensified now. Karnad laughs at the ignorance of the people, because Karnad comments all his views to make the play interesting and enjoyable. Karnad and Naga-Mandala bring out the human nature effectively.

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In Naga – Mandala, Karnad has rejected the value of emotional identification. According to Bertolt Brecht, these conventions then allow for “Computer seeing”.

Rani - Naga-Mandala, can be seen as a metaphor for the situation of a young girl in the bosom of a joint family where she sees her husband in two unconnected roles- as a stranger during the day as a lover at night.

The significant part in Naga-Mandala is kurudavva, the blind woman. She is connected with the plot of the play because the cobra falls in love with Rani through her magical root; but we can easily identify similarities between Goddess Kali of Hayavadana and Kurudavva in the sense that as goddess Kali helps Padmini in enlivening Devadatta and Kapila in the same way Kurudavva gives solution to Rani’s problem. But the entire story’s movement towards the fate or a result of human error is a matter of debate. In Naga Mandala Karnad has delved below the surface to reveal the burning core of mental or spiritual reality.

The play is a folk drama, because the cobra is regarded as possessing magical powers. It leaves the audience to reflect and the social law which discriminates a woman from a man and which demands a wife’s faithfulness ever to her callous husband.

Since neither Rani, nor Appanna nor the cobra is chaste. The world may ponder over the dominant the idea of a husband’s happiness as incompatible with purity. It uncovers the injustice of the patriarchal society.

The name Appanna means” any man”. It comments on any man who tries to enforce chastity on his wife.

The notable features of this drama are use of a chorus and music. The flames sing all the songs. Flames are the metaphors of the women of the village who have gathered at this time of the night to tell tales and sing songs.

Karnad very cleverly and effectively used the shape shifting as another device. Shape shifting in Karnad is not merely a central structural strategy, but a means of reviving the ancient and sacred function of drama as ritual. Naga-Mandala has several examples of shape shifting. The main one is the cobra assuming, the form of Appanna to make love to Rani. The flame takes on human shapes to gossip at the temple after they have been “put out” in the houses.

Karnad further says: “Only a society which is honest enough to face the implications of this division squarely could produce meaningful drama of it” (84).

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Karnad seems to be torn between his western mind and his affinity towards his religion, his mythology, which is very well reflected in Naga-Mandala as well as in Hayavadana.

Karnad writes that his English translation of the play must be “seen only as an approximation to the original”. Karnad admits Brecht’s influence on his play. He observes:

“And it must be admitted that Brecht’s influence, received mainly through his writings and without the benefit of his theatrical productions, went some way in making us realize what could be done with the design of traditional theatre”(14).

Though Karnad doesn’t fully exploit the Brechtian artifice of Epic theatre in Naga-Mandala, he claims that the play strikes a departure from the emotion- based world of traditional values.

In Naga-Mandala, Karnad attempts at instilling an “alienation” effect by deriving the material of the play from the folk tales, and also by using the “non-naturalistic techniques” of the traditional Indian theatre. In Naga-Mandala, Karnad has rejected the value of emotional identification and catharsis.

The play Naga-Mandala, as the name suggests, revolves around a woman and a serpent. Martin S.Day (1984) states that there exists a theory that serpents impregnated the mothers of great men in history such a Scipio Africans Alexander the great and Augustus Caesar. He also says that snake myths are found extensively in Brahnamanism and Buddhist writings.

Girish Karnad like any other modern dramatist makes extensive uses of myths in his plays to condemn socio-cultural evils, which have deeply eroded the personal life of woman. Karnad wanted to explore the social-injustices perpetrated on innocent, ignorant Indian women.” The author seems to say that Matriarchy which according to Bachoten’s theory of Mother Right is the lost paradise of mankind, will come again. Indian women were forced to accept t Chastity as a social value which was invented by patriarchal culture, which enslaved woman since ages. Sita undergoing the fire ordeal to prove her chastity to Rama has been a cultural guide to the Indians. Every Indian family tied their daughter to patriarchy by imparting upon them that chastity was more important and any deviation from it becomes a social stigma. Innocent women who were subjected to the violence of their sadistic husbands were made to tolerate their husbands because they were afraid of social stigma. Therefore many modern dramatists wanted to abolish these wrong concepts, which afflicted the Indian society.

Karnad’s **Naga-Mandala** deals with deeply psychological problems faced by modern Indian women in the present social milieu. This play powerfully portrays the anguish faced by women in the modern society.

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Chapter 3

Tughlaq

Girish Karnad's *Tughlaq* is an historical play which deals in depth about the last five years of chequered reign of Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq. This play was originally written in Kannada 1964. Karnad was persuaded to translate it into English by Alyque Padamsee. This play was first staged at Bhalabai auditorium at Bombay during 1917. This play is the second one of Girish Karnad and it was a great success on the stage. The audiences were able to enjoy this drama without paying much attention to its rich and complex symbolism and the subtle weaving of its different motifs. The play has an interesting story, an intricate plot, scope for spectacle, and uses dramatic conventions like the comic pair, Aziz and Aazam, to which theatre audiences responded readily. This drama appealed to the Indian audience due to the fact that this reflected the political mood of disillusionment which followed the Nehru era of idealism'. Regarding this Karnad himself has commented, "Tughlaq is also alienated at the interpersonal level from the individuals around him" (*The Plays of Girish Karnad*) 144

The play, which is more than a political allegory, has puzzling qualities, which reflects the character of Tughlaq. All the other characters in the drama have complex personalities. This play has an 'elusive and haunting quality'. In spite of the fact that the theme of the play is drawn from the history the author's treatment is not historical. The use of 'Prayer for the Murder' in the drama reminds one of what Tughlaq did to his father. The author has built up the play on opposites. 'ideal and the real' the divine aspiration and deft intrigue Karnad did his best to dramatize the history of Sultan, Muhammad-Bin Tughlaq the fourteenth century impractical king who become tyrannical and Machiavellian in its activities. The rude stubbornness of the king negated the very basis of idealism. The author in this drama clearly brings out the mental shift of the king from a 'benevolent ruler to a tyrannical shrieking head'. In this context it will be apt to point out that "Karnad maps Tughlaq progressive alienation from society, more significantly within the self in existential overtones. He infers that the protagonist is liberalism is cramped because of its alienation with time. Tughlaq was born at a wrong time and at a wrong place. The existential angst that permeates the text as another is a geography from an alienontology. The shift from an idealist king to a tyrant has the mapping of Camus in *Caligula*, which voices concerns borne out of Camus' own lived in Algerian Experience".(Girish Karnad, *Three Plays*, Oxford:(97).

The playwrights centers the actions of the play around 1327 in Delhi and then on the highway from Delhi to Daulatabad and finally in and around the fort in Daulatabad five years later. Karnad meticulously sticks on to authentic historical sources while delineating Tughlaq's scholarship visionary zeal is dream innovation methods and religious tolerance. Karnad depicts the character of religious tolerance. Karnad depicts the character of Tughlaq, based on historical texts. He presents the character of Tughlaq in an unbiased manner.

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This play basically deals with the tragedy of the limits of human power. Tughlaq's regime is considered to be one of the spectacular regimes of history. Tughlaq is a firm ruthless monarch who indulges in patricide and fratricide, but it is most to the credit of Tughlaq that he was the founder of paper currency. It is said that Tughlaq was born a head of times. He was a visionary who introduced the token currency. Karnad has portrayed Tughlaq as a bundle of contradictions. Karnad has made a clever use of Tughlaq paradoxes for dramatic success. He has brought out the dramatic beauty of the play by using paradoxes of Tughlaq to the maximum extent possible.

In the opening scene Tughlaq is portrayed as a man totally estranged from the society, is not understood in the proper perspective because his ideas were far above the reach and comprehension of the people around him. Tughlaq did not have religious tolerance. The Hindus and Muslims looked at him with askance. They were unable to understand the broad minded religious tolerance of Tughlaq. All his confidence-building measures were not appreciated. All his attempts to bring about an understanding between the two varying communities brought distrust. The changes brought about by Tughlaq pose a great threat to the time honored conventions. Tughlaq's frustration at the people's non-comprehension is understandable. When he says "But how can I spread my branches in the stars while the roots have yet to find their hold in the earth?"(89). Tughlaq is frustrated because his idealistic dreams could never reach, because they lacked the firm support of his people. He is fully aware of his mental predicament when he says, " But how can I explain tomorrow to those who haven't even opened their eyes to the light of today?" Tughlaq (39)

Tughlaq not being a pragmatist fails to foresee the emotional attachment of the people to their native land when he proposes the shifting of state capital from Delhi to Daulatabad. He could not even foresee and take necessary precaution against the possibility of counterfeiting when he introduces token copper coins. His failure to win people's contradiction gradually brought him disillusion. This disillusion finally leads to a psychological state of existential alienation. He is also totally estranged from the persons around him. His 'inter-personal alienation' manifests in two ways.

1. He treats people as objects and not as human beings.
2. He is unable to have any meaningful communication.

In scene three, we find Tughlaq as an ace schemer who is able to manipulate Sheikh Imam-ud-din to act according to his pre-arranged plans. Diabolically he gets rid of his enemies – Sheikh Imam-ud-din and Ain-ul-mulk at one stroke. According to Christine Gomez in her essay Karnad's Tughlaq is an alienated protagonist. In Tughlaq's relationship with others there is very little genuine communication. Most of the time he seems to be play - acting, thus revealing his alienation from others at the interpersonal level. He

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seems to be giving a performance all the time Striking a series of historic stances and poses. In the very first scene Tughlaq tries his best to impress his people by playing the role of a just and impartial ruler.

In Karnad's *Tughlaq* Muhammad is at war with himself though basically a visionary. He loves chess, rose garden and enjoys the poems of Sadi, he reads much Greek and he is very much aware of "Greek in me" (21) He speaks of his vision –of finding a 'new world, a world I had not found in Arabs or even the Koran." He builds a Utopia in his visions. His visions are like "the visions, which lead Zarathustra or the Buddha." He is constantly talking about "tomorrow," "a new future." Muhammad tells the young watchman in Scene Eight:" Nineteen. Nice age! An age when you think you can clasp the whole world in your palm like a rare diamond. I was twenty-one when I came to Daulatabad first, and built this fort. I supervised the placing of every brick in it and I said to myself, one day I shall build my own history, like this, brick by brick....

Suddenly something happened – as though someone had cast a spell. The torch, the gate, the fort and the sky – all melted and merged and flowed in my blood stream with the darkness of the light. The moment shed its symbols, its questions and answers, and stood naked and calm where the stars throbbed in my veins, I was the earth, was the grass, was the smoke, and was the sky" (67).

In the first scene of the drama Aziz and Aazam are introduced for the sole purpose of dramatic irony. The real identities of these characters in the play are known only to the audience. Only towards the end of the play Tughlaq finds out the truth. Scene two presents the conversation between the step-mother and the Sultan. The king is very much desirous of going to great heights and he faithfully expects his people to share their worries with him. He receives the shocking news of the march of Ain-ul-mulk with his army and the arrival of Sheik Imam-ud-din. In this scene we are introduced to Barani the historian and Nazib, a politician. Tughlaq decides to move to Kanauj and he trusts nazib to look after the administration. Apart from this he has invited Shihab-ud-din, prince of Sampanshater to be in Delhi, when he moves out to Kanauj.

In the third scene, we find Muhammad and Sheik Imam-ud-din in front of big mosque. Sultan has come all the way to listen to Sheik, which is indirect way of preventing people who came to attend the meeting. When the Sultan tries to invites the Khans, Amirs and Sardars to the meeting, Imama-ud-din says:" what's the point my addressing a gang of boot lickers? I want to speak to the people who are willing to act, who are willing to do something." *Tughlaq* (163)

In the scene four, takes us back to Sultan's palace. The death of Imam-ud-din in the battlefield is narrated. The kingdom of Avadh has been given to the Ain'ul'mult. A state of mourning has been announced by the

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Sultan. In the fifth scene Ratan Singh and Shihab-ud-din attend the secret meeting arranged by the Amirs and the royal courtiers. A plan was hatched to kill Sultan at the time of prayer.

In the sixth scene Barani informs the Sultan that descendent of the last Khalif is going to visit him and Shihab-ud-din compliments Muhammad on his wisdom.

“Indirect satire is cast in the form of a narrative instead of direct address, in which the objects of the satire are characters who make themselves and their opinions ridiculous by what they think, say and do, and re sometimes made even more ridiculous by the author’s comments and narrative style”.(Abrams 155)

Muhammad: You know, since Sheikh Imam – ud- din died I have been asking myself just one question. I am a King. I wear the royal robes. I have honored myself with the title of sultan. But what gives me the right to call myself a king?

(The Amirs are baffled.)

Am I a king because I am the son of a King? Or is it because I can make the people accept my laws and the army moves to my commands? Or can self-confidence alone justify it? I ask you all of you what would you have me do to become a real king in your eyes?

(Silence) (181)

Though the King asks the Amirs to suggest him, they are not ready to reveal their opinion. They know very well that the Sultan does not mean what he says. In order to reduce the embarrassment of the situation one of the Amirs breaks the silence by saying that the visite of Abbasid will wash away the sins of Delhi. Immediately Muhammad retorts that, when Abbasid arrives in India, they will be in Daulatabad. He further announces that there will be copper currency in the state and it will run along with the silver dinars. They have the same value as the Silver dinars have. At that time, Shihab-ud-din expresses his doubt of the same value of a copper coin, Muhammad replies as follows:

Muhammad: It’s a question of confidence. A question of trust!

The other day I heard that in China they have paper currency paper, mind you and yet it works because the people accepts it. They have faith in the emperor’s seal on the pieces of paper (182).

Amir1: (Whispers to the next man.) I told you he’s mad! (182)

So the Amirs have started criticizing the Sultan’s behavior openly. As soon as the prayer starts Shihab-ud-in and the Amirs draw out daggers. Instantly the Hindu Soldiers drag the Amirs away and leave. Shiab-ud-in reveals the fact that he is informed of his plan of murder by Ratansingh. Here the Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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feeling of revenge is exposed through the Hindu character against his Muslim Brother. From the beginning the sultan tries to solve the disunity between the Hindus and the Muslims. But it has not been achieved till the end. While the whole critical incident goes on, the sultan continues his prayer without any interruption.

In this scene we once again see Aziz and Aazam. This scene serves as a dramatic relief. The character of Aziz is used by the dramatist solely for the purpose of horation satire which can be defined as follows:

“In Horation satire the character of the speaker is that of an urban, witty, and tolerant man of the world, who is moved more often to very amusement than to indignation at the spectacle of human folly, pretentiousness, and hypocrisy, and who uses a relaxed and informal language to evoke a smile at human follies and absurdities-sometimes including his own (Abrahms 154-155)”

Aziz is a standing typical example of Horation satire. In a camp, a Hindu woman is kneeling before Aziz who is dressed as a Brahmin. She is crying for her ailing child to be taken to a doctor. She promises to return the next day. But all her appeals fall on the deaf ears of Aziz who wants his palm to be greased. Even Aazam's advice fails. Aziz tells Aazam that he has denied her permission because the child will not survive. Though this is the striking fact, it pricks the mind of the audience. Then he starts reading books. While he continues reading, a man and a woman with six kids arrive. They are asked the reason for delay. Since they have given a decent burial for two corpses, they come late. On hearing this, Aziz asks him whether they were Muslims before burying them. He questions:

Aziz: And what if they were Hindu, pray? You know they don't bury their dead. You'll be in troubles if someone finds out. Actually I ought to send you back to dig them up again. It's against the orders to insult or cause harm to Hinduism (189).

The dramatist laughs at the absurdities of the people. He launches a triade against people who try to defend the since they were commeted. Aziz opens Ghiyas-ud-bundle and prepares to make his entry into Tughlaq's palace as the grandson of Khalif. So with the disguise of Aziz, the dramatic irony continues. Here the dramatic irony increases suspense in the minds of the audience and they are curiously waiting for the revelation of truth to Muhammad. The pathetic murder of Abbasid and Karnad brings out the deteriorated condition of some spiritual people and their cruel end. Though Abbasid is a spiritual one, he is not able to save himself. But Muhammad had expected that he would save the people of his kingdom. So this irony is brought out effectively and Karnad may want the common people to brood over this fact and change their opinion.

In scene eight the audience is confronted with another juxtaposition of the kings 'earlier idealism and present degeneration'. This becomes a structural device and this technique gets repeated in scene ten. At the closing of the eight scene Barani evokes Tughlaq idealistic past and appeals to him 'to recapture the ideals once again' and put an end to tyranny and cruelty. Barani tells Tughlaq

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“Your majesty, there was a time when you believed in love, in peace, in God. What has happened to those ideals?... Why this bloodshed? Please stop it.” (56)

He drives home the fact that the negation of god has brought an mental diseases to Tughlaq Barani makes a plea to Tughlaq refuses to accept this idea as it would mean acknowledging that he committed mistakes in the past. “But for that, I’ll have to admit I’ve been wrong all these years. And I know I haven’t. I have something to give, something to teach, which may open the eyes of history, but I have to do it within this life. I’ve got to make them listen to me before I lose even that” (56)

Scene nine brings in a kind of dramatic relief where in we find Aziz and Aazam talking to each other. They meet Shiyas-ud-din. In this scene Aziz tells some ‘Honest things to Aazam Shiyas-ud-din.

“If you remain virtuous throughout your life no one will say a good thing about you because they won’t need to. But start stealing and they’ll say:’ what a nice boy he was but he’s ruined now. Then kill and they will beat their breasts and say:’ heavens! He was only a petty thief all these day. Never hurt anyone. But also!’ then rape a woman the chorus will go into hallelujahs: ‘He was a saint and look at him now....(197)”

In tenth scene Tughlaq is seen as looking out of his window from the Fort of Daulatabad. The step-mother who steps in very much concerned about the sorry state of affairs of the county. The ruthless kill’s starvation death disturbs her. Muhammad is equally confused and frustrated. He accepts his mistakes and his failures, when tries to find out the murderer of Nazib. The step-mother tells him that she has killed Nazib, because she found him as the reason for the deterioration of Muhammad. This attack is very much essential to Muhammad. This direct satire even pleases the audience. Muhammad is reaping what he was sowing in the past Muhammad announce death for her. As soon as the step-mother has been dragged away, the Sultan prays to the Almighty and pleads:

I started in search of you. Why am I like a pig rolling in this gory mud? Raise me. Clean me. Cover me with your infinite mercy. I can only clutch at the hem of your cloak with my bloody fingers and plead. I can only beg-have pity on me I have no one but you now. Only you. Only you... you...you (205-206)

In the eleventh scene, Ghiyas-ud-din Muhammad is announced. He will bless and purify Daulatabad. The strong irony here is Aziz has come as Ghiyas-ud-din. And he is full of lies, hypocrisies, cruelties, selfishness and tactfulness. Muhammad believes that the kingdom is going to be purified by a man of

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impurity. The situational irony reaches its height while Muhammad falls at the feet of Aziz for getting blessings. This is a real punishment for the Sultan who has committed so many sins continuously. While Muhammad enjoys the arrival of the Ghiya-ud-din, people have got frustrated since their basic needs are not satisfied. People talk

Another : She says someone killed her child

First man: Who killed the child?

Second man: I didn't hear properly. Probably the sultan

First man : Who else will her child (210)

Scene thirteen concludes scene of the play. Aazam is found murdered. Barani wants to leave the place. Muhammad questions the identity of Aziz who confesses his guilt. Acknowledging Aziz's genius Muhammad appoints him as an officer in the army. The call of prayer is heard. Sultan feels sleepy, frightened. He is unable to understand where he is actually. The play ends with tragic irony. At the end of the plays as Barani passes out of his life Tughlaq reaches a dead end in complete exhaustion. Barani, all I need now is myself and my madness-madness to prance in a field eaten bare by the scarecrow violence. But I am not alone, Barani. Thank heaven! For once I am not alone. I have a companion to share my madness now the omnipotent God! (Tired) (76).

Many of the characters like Nazib, Barani, Aazam and Aziz highlight elements in the characters of Tughlaq. Nazib is seen as former identities. He was attacked by a social consciousness of Islam. So he says "I became a Muslim. Islam worried about this world, I said it'll bring the kingdom of heaven on earth. But I know now – it won't work. There's only the present moment and we must grasp it firmly". (77) Barani fearlessly points out Sultan degeneration from idealist to tyrant. He is gentlest and the mildest men. This speech of Barani throws light on Tughlaq's detached use of Violence for a specific purpose – to fulfill a mission in life. Though he is in the whirlpool of violence and bloodshed, he is able to maintain his objectivity and is not sucked into the vortex says Christine chomes. "Aazam and Aziz, the comic pair derived from the Akara Makara tradition" says U.R.Anantha murthy, Introduction, *Tughlaq* (7).

"Karnad's play Tughlaq is an excellent work of art with an intricate plot, subtle irony, copious satire, delicate symbolism." Says K. K. John in his *A Reassessment of the Character of Karnad's Tughlaq* (121).

This work of Karnad is open to more than one interpretation. A play is more than a political satire; Tughlaq struggle begins with his assumption of power as Sultan of Delhi. The chieftains, Sultan of Delhi are always on their wings to browbeat Tughlaq and whatever Tughlaq does he is only in the interest of Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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self-defence. The enemies of Tughlaq are men with Vested interest. Ain-ul-mulk's aim is to capture the throne of Delhi. Imam-ud-din and the chieftains of Delhi are seeking to enhance their power and influence by making the state subservient to Islam. Tughlaq has been endowed with the world vision.. He wanted to bring about secular state whereas his opponents were fantastic. Tughlaq viewed that religion should play a positive rule in enhancing the happiness of the people. Karnad as a modern Dramatist clearly brings out the conflicting ideologist. Tughlaq is accused of unpardonable crimes. He was held responsible bloodshed and murder. His activities brought in untold misery and people who were close to him doubted his mental stability. During his conversation with Sheikh Imam-ud-din, Tughlaq says:

“I have never consciously tried to go against the tenets of Islam”. When the Sheikh accuses Tughlaq for putting religious men behind prison bars, he bluntly tells him: “they tried to indulge in politics – I couldn't allow that” (20) he further says: “My Kingdom has millions of Muslims, Hindus, and Jain.” (20)

Tughlaq always struggled to keep his high ideals intact. At this point it would be nothing that the theme of the play dates back to early Fourteenth Century, when Europe hardly came out of its dark age. This play is acclaimed by critics for its depth and range. This play is not a mere political allegory. According to K. Ratna Shela Mani, “*Tughlaq* has been compared to Camus's *Caligula*, for both these plays present a tyrant using his power absolutely, indulging in wanton and senseless cruelty. Yet, neither play can be called historical fact in both of them.”(The Betrayal Motif in Karnad's *Tughlaq*)”, (140)

Fascination for the play greatly arises out of complex personality. Most of the characters in the play admit that Tughlaq has power learning intelligent and talent. Though he is an idealist, is also impulsive by nature. The sustained interest of the play is due to subtle weaving of intricate themes. One motif, which unites the entire thirteenth scene, is the theme of betrayal. We find betrayal of ideals, trust and of friendship. Betrayal gains multiplicity of meanings. It is the prime factor that leads on despair and disillusionment. Betrayal of religion is also evident in the play. Tughlaq goes on to declare and decrees that “there will be no more praying in the Kingdom..... Anyone caught praying will be severely punished.”(44)

This causes mental tension of his subject and his alienation becomes complete. He is treated as a rebel against god. Apart from this he is also depicted as a man estranged from society. He wants justice and brotherhood in a society which is suspicion ridden. The people are deeply ridden in suspicion that they fail to comprehension the sultan.

Ratna Shela Mani says, “Tughlaq is also alienated at the interpersonal level from the individuals around him.”(144)

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Karnad the modern dramatist in his *Tughlaq* has attempted to analyze the contemporary India and its politics. In this play Karnad deals very deftly the Hindu-Muslim conflict and the unity is stresses in this play. Great souls like Gandhi tried to bring about harmony between Hindus and Muslims. Karnad in his *Tughlaq* points out that idealism and politics do not go hand in hand. Tughlaq failed in his attempt to bring out Hindus-Muslim unity.

Cover Page of Hayavadana, deleted for easy downloading of the dissertation.

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Chapter IV

Hayavadana

Girish Karnad is one among the Indian dramatists and his plays have been super hits on the stage. Girish Karnad gives a special attention to his play, and he gives success to the management of stage. His play Hayavadana begins with stage directions. When the curtain rises, the whole stage is empty except one chair and one table in the back portion of the stage. Bhagawata and the musicians sit on the table and a mask of Ganesha is placed on the chair. The prayer to Ganesha, sung by Bhagawata and the musicians make a proper beginning in Hindu tradition.

Bhagawata starts telling about the introduction of the situation, place, characters and action. He introduces Devadatta, Kapila and the city of Dharampure, ruled by King Dharameshela. Devadatta is fair in colour. He has proved his talent in debate on logic and love. He is the only son of the ironsmith Lohita who is to the king's asmoury as and to a chariork's wheel. His complexion is dark and plain to look.

Next the chorus is introduced. Bhagawata, actors, dolls and also the incompleteness of human beings is also introduced in this act. They all act as chorus. After that, all the actors appear on the stage. First on the stage he has heard a horse speaking man's language. Hayavadana is the most important character to the audience. He introduced such a character in his play. Then we hear the story of the incompleteness of man from the horse's mouth.

In Act II, Girish Karnad introduces the two dolls to comment upon the changes that have appeared in the character of Devadatta and Padmini, after the interchange of heads between Devadatta and Kapila. Both were in love with Padmini; Padmini also loves both of them. She loves Devadatta for his handsome face and is attracted towards Kapila for the sake of his physical appearance. Kapila and Padmini go to the temple of goddess Kali, because to find an opportunity to offers his head to the Goddess not in devotion, but in disgust at the love. Moving between Kapila and Padmini, Kapila's search of Devadatta and finding his head cut off from the body, he cuts of his own head. Unknowingly, she joined the head of Devadatta on Kapila's body and Kapila's head on Devadatta. Padmini desired a fusion of the two people for her husband with this new combination. But it is the head that ruled over the body naturally. After sometime this body loses its vigour. The changes that come over the body is to be highlighted in scenes; that's why Girish Karnad introduces the two dolls in the second act.

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Girish Karnad first brings the two dolls to the house. They could observe the Devadatta character and also the same experience of Kapila. The two dolls play the role of chorus in telling the audience that it is the head that matters, not the body. Padmini, while living with Devadatta's head and Kapila's body get a dream of Kapila. Since the doll can see what Padmini is dreaming about, the dolls find that a man has come in the dream of Padmini, but not her husband. She sees in her dream a man who is rough like a laborer once again. She gets Kapila in her dream. Devadatta suggests that the servant can sleep in the house for the security of Padmini. But she rejected it because she has an idea to see Kapila in the forest in the absence of Devadatta.

As the play began with the episodes of Hayavadana, it closes also with the episodes of Hayavadana to complete the symmetry of the plot. Hayavadana was asked to go on the pilgrimage for completeness of his form and in the end of the play, he comes in the form of a complete horse. His return symbolizes the completion of the pilgrimage for completeness. Thus the plot is rounded with appearances of Hayavadana and it also provides a proper ending with Hayavadana's achievement of completeness. The drama has achieved a great success because it has a proper beginning, middle and an end.

Girish Karnad Hayavadana is based on Thomas Mann's story titled "Transposed Heads", which in turn is based on one of the versions of the story in *vetal panchavimshati*. (The plays of Girish Karnad: The Development of Girish Karnad as a dramatist) But Karnad draws heavily on Thomas Mann's story. But he uses the story to explore the theme of human identity in a world of tangled relationships and a struggle for perfection.

In Hayavadana Karnad wants to suggest to us that for us king Vikram's solution does not solve the problem. Infact the real problem begins when it appears to be solved. That could be the reason why he dropped the version of *vetal panchavimshati*, which had the 'incest' themes. At the same time he makes significant departures from Thomas Mann's story too. The sub-plot of Hayavadana is entirely different from Karnad's invention. In the play the stories of the sub-plot throughout supports the main plot.

Hayavadana is an enigmatic play. Kirtinath Kurkkoti says, "Karnad's play poses a different problem, that of human identity in a world of tangled relationships" (*Contemporary Indian Drama* 53). Another critic U. R. Anantha Murthy in his *A Note of Karnad's Hayavadana*, comments about theme like incompleteness in a comic mode." A few paragraphs later he says, "The play tries to create an illusion in us that the head determines the being of man" Page No.56.

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At the same time S. Sharma says that “completeness is a humanly impossible ideal as suggested first in the story of Hayavadana and later in the transposition of head. Finally he achieves its aesthetic goal” (The development of Girish Karnad as a Dramatist: Hayavadana). Anantha Murthy points out that Devadatta is the least “individuated” character. But this is explicable in terms of the thematic design of the play. (A Note On Karnad’s Hayavadana. Karnad Girish, three plays Naga-Mandala Hayavadana, Tughlaq 93) Veena Noble Dass observes. “His agony is the agony of the artist who is deeply aware of the sterility and horror that is life” (Three Plays of Girish Karnad, 64).

In Hayavadana, as in *Shankuntalam* and *Mrichhakatikam* the description of Padmini’s affinity with nature resonates with erotic emotion. Hayavadana in exploring the realm of love, Erotic man – woman, Male bonding, Parent- child, offers us insight into the desires, hopes, fulfillment and frustration it breeds. Karnad’s Bhagavata is the mediator. He fulfills many roles in the play from being the key to the play and a detached observer to the confidante of the heroine. The speeches of Bhagavata are resonant with image making that at the outset build upon the stage of Hayavadana invokes a representational mode of projecting female body as a sexualized object. Padmini’s presentation is through her changing circumstances from the figure of a heavenly beauty to a figure.

In drawing Padmini, the playwright takes an irretrievably compromised position of a man bound to patriarchal concept of womanhood and in the process the play regains the ingredients of a court drama. Karnad’s Padmini is not allowed to attain the greatness of Kalidasa’s *Shakuntala* who embodies the ideals of not only a woman’s respect for self esteem but who also in her endurance posits the great illustration of the maternity principle.

Hayavadana is resonant with multilayered social messages and also tempts us to see it as a volatile autonomous being. Most critics have tried to come to terms with the problem of “incompleteness” that the conflicting situation and also the personalities in the play depict. Padmini’s free floating volitional and volatile consciousness demands a perfect man for her. Hayavadana nonetheless makes us encounter in Padmini a “Spirited” “embodied” mind and more significantly illumines the notions of female subjectivity as embodied in her. Padmini is a transgressive erotic agency and a woman who desires to create a space beyond the pre-fabricated identity.

In Act II of Hayavadana, the questions raised “To whom Padmini belongs” could have been solved. Padmini’s arrival drives in men the knowledge of the agony of love. The mixed up heads create multiple problems since Padmini as a lawfully wedded wife must go to Devadatta because as a mother the paternity of her child is dependent on whom she chooses as a husband. The days of bliss and happiness with Kapila have to reach a state of denouement. Padmini would like to accomplish the union that allows

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an undifferentiated unified body and mind. One may assume that Hayavadana's aesthetic – visionary wants to break the notion of the character Padmini as a sexualized object. In the body Karnad's Padmini seeks the corporeal ground of her intelligence in her perennial quest for fulfillment.

Karnad, through the confusion of the identities reveals the ambiguous nature of human personality. Hayavadana, in many ways re-minds us of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. When Hayavadana begins, a mask of Ganesha is brought on the stage and the Bhagavata sings about the Lord who is the Master of success and perfection.

Naik, M. K. observes Padmini's failure of the attempts and comments:

“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 woman and man. Integration cannot be achieved by trying to reconcile but by accepting cheerfully the fundamental disharmony in human life”. (Dimensions of India English Literature, 85)

Sharma and Anantha murthy also say that Karnad fails to identify as a modern Indian dramatist because he confused the audience for a few seconds in Act II.

Vinod. V. B. remarks about the second wave of seeking in Padmini, when Padmini sends Devadatta for a fair and goes to the forest in order to meet Kapila. Kapila does not want her arrival first. There arise so many “why”? Questions in a series. Karnad comments that people are satisfied with questions and they do not bother much about seeking answer for their questions.

Karnad tries to find out the answer for many unknown questions, despite the physical identity crisis and the sense of alienation. Hayavadana seems to be superior to all the major and minor characters in the play. Horse head appears to symbolize plain common sense and with the blessing of kali he is converted into a full horse. By a strange coincidence, he meets Padmini's son at the end of the play. It is during his amusing meeting with the little boy that Hayavadana loses his voice and starts neighing. The completeness of a horse is attained and irony is revealed though the play successfully.

Robert Browning comments about Girish Karnad's play Hayavadana, “And thus we half-men struggle”. He also feels that the theme of the play is memorable because it shows the fundamental ambiguity of the human condition. Robert Browning suggested the theme of the play itself in phrases such as “search for

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complete men” and “this mad dance of incompleteness”. He says that the main plot of Hayavadana is based on the “Story of the Transposed Heads” in the Sanskrit *vetala Panchavimsati* is “that one of the two, on whom her husband’s head was fixed, was her husband, for the head in the chief of the limbs and personal identity depends upon it” (*Three plays Naga – Mandala, Hayavadana, and Tughlaq* 43).

The modern source of the plot of Hayavadana is Thomas Mann’s long short story. “The Transposed Heads” which the author himself called a ‘Metaphysical jest’. Thomas Mann who got the story from Limmer changes and elaborates it further making it a vehicle for the expression of his favourite idea: The ironic confrontation between opposites in human life. In this story he talks about the two opposed forces: the spirit represented by Shridaman, the Brahmin husband and the flesh symbolized by the cow head Nanda, his friend, the wife Sita being the feminine principle. Thomas Mann develops it further by showing how initially Sita is extremely happy at the transposition of heads for it gives her exactly what she wants, her husband with an intellectual’s brain and a strong, working class body. But the original story ended with the two youths being restored to life.

Naresh Guha noted that the symbolism of the names ‘Shridaman’, the husband it literally means the ‘subduer of beauty’ and his son, ‘Samandhi’ is one who concentrates and his blind to the appeal of the flesh.

Naresh Guha comments on Nanda’s Character. He says that Nanda is named appropriately in more than one way, for it was the name of Krishna’s foster father and he was a cowherd; and secondly ‘Nanda’ literally means ‘happiness’.

Thomas Mann himself points out the significance of his version of the story thus “ The world is not so made that spirit is fated to love only spirit, and beauty only beauty, Indeed the very contrast between the two points, with a clarity at once intellectual and beautiful, that the world’s a bliss no longer divided but whole and consummate. ‘The tale of our’ is Bart on illustrate of the failures and false starts attending the effort to reach the goal” (A Note on Karnad’s Hayavadana, 73).

Karnad is not a prolific writer and he is very much against writing in haste. Usually the idea of a play incubates in his mind for a long time and it is only when the total action of the play is clearly before his mind’s eye that he starts writing a play. The stories in *veta pancharimshati* and *samdeva’s Brihatkatha Saritisagar* are basically the same except for a few alterations. In all his plays Karnad borrows from the Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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original story and he develops it further. In the story yayati as it appears in the adiparva of the Mahabharata, puru's acceptance of her father's old age smoothly resolves the story. In fact the real program begins when it appears to be solved. With the theme of "incest" theme at its core, the sub-plot of Hayavadana is entirely Karnad's invention.

Hayavadana is an enigmatic play. Kirtinath Kurtkoti wrote a brief introduction to the English translation published in 1975. He says:

"The original play poses a oral problem while man used it to the mechanical conception of life which differentiates between body and soul. He ridicules the philosophy, which holds the head superior to the body. The human body, Mann argues, is a fit for instrument for the fulfillment of human destiny".

Another critic U. R. Anantha Murthy in his "A Note on Karnad's Hayavadana" says about the theme: "The play exposes the audience to a significant theme like incompleteness in a comic mode," R.S.Sharma in a lively note says:

"That completeness is a humanly impossible ideal is suggested first in the story of Hayavadana and later in the transposition of heads, he says that the theme of the play has two aspects, a socio-cultural aspect and a metaphysical one. In the socio-culture level the play suggests that the Apollonian always asserts it and subdues the Dionysian in our socio-cultural life. The collective wisdom of society is a passion. Padmini's predicament is the predicament of a modern, emancipated woman in our society who is in torn turn between two polarities, a woman who loves her husband as well as someone else for two different aspects of their personalities. Devadatta and Kapila's friendship obviously evinces out their fascination for the aspect, which each one of them lacks. (Vinod, V.B.Drama Criticism of Life Girish Karnad's Hayavadana)

CHAPTER V

Conclusion:

Modern Indian drama reveals two main tendencies both natural to a historical development. One is that Indian playwrights have gone back to tradition for their themes and techniques and the other is making use of what are considered modern trends in the theatre. Karnad tries to make an attack on Nehruite idealism, which is a striking parallel. Karnad's sensibility is fine and he is deeply affected by the creator in him so we could view the dramatical note in this play.

Karnad in his plays tries to evolve a symbolic form out of tension between the archetypal and mythic experience and a living response to life and its values. Karnad does not take the myths in these entirely. He takes only parts of them that are useful to him and the rest he supplemented with his imagination to make his plots clear.

Karnad's plays have new directions as compared to other playwrights in Kannada literature. Karnad's studying proposes to show concern as much with the metaphysical image of Indian art tradition as with finding in Karnad's theatre a continuous renewal of form and its representational and philosophical meaning. Karnad's transformation from metaphysical into the contemporary discussion and history into trans historical perspective is not exclusively linked to the western philosophical matrix as has been the criterion taken by some critics. Karnad's deep reverence for his native tradition of drama does not proceed from any ideological or nationalist agenda. The three plays show the experimenter as a consummate theorist of drama in the contemporary times and who needs to be seen as having assumed not only the burden of making new artifacts, but also the responsibility of offering new justification.

Karnad's plays tries to evolve a symbolic form and a tension between the archetypal and mythic experience and a living response to life and its values. Karnad is the most important dramatist of the contemporary Kannada stage. He shows the Kannada theatre's richness that could probably be equated only with his talents as an actor director. His stage plays show the depths to which the mythical theories could be taken in order to recreate a contemporary consciousness. He also shows to the Indian theatre community and to the world theatre community our present day existence and meaning. The story of the completeness of Hayavadana is in a lighter tone but the pathos of it is touching.

Karnad's Hayavadana that is based on the story of Thomas Mann has gained a mock-heric dimension. The human body can be considered as a fit instrument, for the human destiny. Hayavadana is noted for its bold experience in dramatic technique. The play consists of two plots, Main-plot and sub – plot. Sub-plot of the horseman depends on the significance of the main theme of incompleteness by treating it on a

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different plane. The main- plot is searching for completeness. In fact, the question of identity crisis is as the core of the main plot and the sub – plot and consequently it acts as a link between the two leading plays. This chapter is an attempt to have a fresh look at the play and see how Karnad employs the theme of identity crisis in the play.

The chapter “Hayavadana” discusses Karnad’s one of the earliest plays that accomplishes a remarkable renewal of Indian dramatic traditions. Hayavadana is also a bold experiment in dramatic technique, which holds a revealing lesson for all practitioners of Indian English drama. The modernity of the theme, is, paradoxically enough, admirably matched by its dramatic modes.

Lord Ganesha is to be worshipped in the beginning of Hindu tradition. Hence the writer says, his prayer to God. This play deals with the theme of completeness and also praying to lord Ganesha is the embodiment of success and completeness. Karnad says that the perfection of man has nothing to do with his physical appearance. In this play the incomplete Hayavadana seems better than the complete human character such as Devadatta, Kapila and Padmini.

Goddess Kali is shown as very careless, quick – minded and she grants the prayer of Padmini half way. Moreover, she is presented as a sleepy and bold Goddess. So even God and Goddesses have not escaped the eyes of Karnad. The dilemma of the female character is exposed through Padmini – The flash back of Hayavadana is purely dramatical.

The German playwright Bertolt Brecht is considered as a lyrical dramatic and satiric poet of fierce intensity. Karnad has got the influence of Brecht. So Karnad is much interested in satires. The theme of the plays is “illusion of reality”. Karnad makes use of masks for the characters in order to bring reality in the plays. Karnad applies dramatic views by making the audience understand the passions of Padmini for Kapila. This mean mind of Padmini helps women to understand what not to do in the marital life.

Kathakali motif energizes the dramatic climax of the play – this will be a dance, fight into death.

(Music starts. The fight is stylized like a dance. Even Padmini’s reaction is like a dance).

The description of Bhagavata evokes the kine aesthetics of the dance movement.

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Like cocks on a pit

We dance he and I

Foot woven with foot

Eye soldered to eye (II, 130)

Karnad has the genius and the power to transform any situation into an aesthetic experience. This is the main theme of the play *Hayavadana*.

Girish Karnad's next play is *Naga-Mandala*. The story shows a young woman in the bosom of a joint family. A woman sees her husband into two unconnected roles such as a stranger in the day time and as a lover in the night time. Appanna's harsh treatment of his wife and Naga's endearing treatment of Rani. Rani in *Naga-Mandala* has sex with Naga in the guise of her husband. The drama here rises with the doubt about purity of Rani. *Naga-Mandala* is reviewed by a critic as follows.

Naga-Mandala retells a folk tale with added focal points with the result he re-creates it into a treatise on the unresolvable tension between the male and female principles.

The story tells about the married life of Rani and Appanna. Rani's desire for identity gets negated by her husband, Appanna's infidelity. The indifference of her husband is countered by Naga. The cobra in the ant-hill falls in love with Rani as she pours magic roots given to her by Kurudavva. Naga transforms himself into Appanna and visits Rani at night. But with the birth of her son, Rani faces problems of acceptability where Karnad's complex vision surfaces an issue of identity crisis and a re-mapping of logic on the illogical plight of contemporary living.

The nativist and ethnic positions adopted by Karnad need to be worked within the same module chosen by the artist for the influence of the non-native traditional era. Karnad admits Brecht's influence on his play. He observes:

'And it must be admitted that Brecht's

Influence, received mainly through his writings and without the benefit of his theatrical productions, went some way in making us realize what could be done with the design of traditional theatre'.

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Though Karnad doesn't fully exploit the Brechtian article of Epic theatre in Naga-Mandala, he claims that the play strikes a departure from the emotion- based world of traditional values. In Naga-Mandala Karnad has reflected the value of emotional identification and Catharsis. According to Karnad," the position of Rani in the story of Naga-Mandala can be seen as a metaphor for the situation of a young girl in the bosom of a joint family where she sees her husband only in two unconnected roles as a stranger during the day and as lover at night. Karnad proves to be a Modern Indian dramatist in Naga-Mandala, Hayavadana and in his other dramas with the use of sharp situations making the play a grand success.

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