

Optimistic Peculiarity in Karnad's Hayavadana and Tughlaq

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Abstract:- This paper deals with the life of Indian sovereign Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq and Hayavadana is memorable of the theme of search for success, celebrates sensuality from woman's point of view. It is a persona totally separated from the society. While he is sacred by heart but his ideas are far above the reach and conception of the common people. All religions are significant contribute by him but both religions doesn't able to understand obviously minded and tolerance of Tughlaq and all his well thinking for public is beyond the non-comprehension of the people and so both Hindus and Muslims burst into violence and cruelty for the completion of his optimistic plans.

Most important reason for this enchantment is the advantage of theatrical devices. In the play religion is presented with many symbols like chess, prayer, python, sleep, vulture, rose, and tree. His plays open up new vista to look at the glorious heritage of myths, legends and all such precious pearls that India possessed.

Keywords: Public are broad mind and tolerance of Tughlaq and his entire well thinking for public.

I. INTRODUCTION

Girish Karnad, being a man of theatre and a playwright of Indian society draws the plots of his plays from Indian history and Karnad presents them in such a way with the urgency to consult dramatic representation. Karnad creates a kind of bold experiments with modern devices like the symbolism, irony and humour which are the integral parts of his dramatic technique.

Drama is defined as a literary form meant to be enacted on stage by actors before an audience. More than two thousand years ago, the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, offered an apt definition of drama as and, imitation of action in his works *The Poetics*, written in 335 B.C. According to him, "The aim of drama is to instruct and delight the spectators by the artistic representation of human emotions and passions" (Sreerekha, 3). It is a representation of carefully selected actions by living people on stage. One cannot take action out of drama as, it is an art that requires performance on stage for its full effect. The action of the drama is not real but action imitated or represented. It can be highly physical or psychological. The various elements of drama are the language, the setting, the gestures, the costumes, the make-up, the dialogue. Careful combinations of these elements contribute to creating meaning to a performance.

HAYAVADANA

Hayavadana is the third booming and brilliant drama of Girish Karnad written in 1975. It is a memorable treatment of the theme of search for success, celebrates sensuality from a woman's point of view. The noble features of this drama are the use of chorale and music. In the play, all the songs are sung by the flames. The flames are the metaphors of the women of the village who have gathered at the time of the night to tell tales and sing songs.

TUGHLAQ

It is the second play of Girish Karnad and published in 1972. It was also originally written in his mother tongue, Kannada and later on it was translated into English by himself only. In fact, this play is sufficient to earn for Girish Karnad an assured place among the Indo-Asian dramatists. It is the play about the life and political career of Sultan Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq of the 14th century India. Karnad deviates from history when it is essential to create artistic and a dramatic effect. Karnad's main aim is to highlight the contradictions in Sultan's complex personality, who is both visionary and man of action, devout and irreligious, generous and unkind, human and barbarian. Tughlaq's close associates-Barni, the scholarly historian, and Najib, the practical politician, represent two aspects of Tughlaq's personality. Aziz and Azam are two opportunists who take the best possible advantage of Tughlaq's ideal politics and befool him. Tughlaq has contemporarily. It reflects as no other play, perhaps does the political mood of disillusionment which followed the Nehru era of idealism in the country. This play is noticeable for consummate and flawless technique, precision and compactness, irony and paradox and symbolism and modernity. The Tughlaq's character has been delineated with psychological depth and intensity. It has been translated into many languages.

MARITAL MALICE IN HAYAVADANA

Girish Karnad has taken the plunge into the unfathomable depths of age-old Indian mythologies to look for the subject matter of his plays and has successfully and artistically converted them into the world, which fits into the present framework to reflect the present day social dilemmas, hiccups, and problems.

Karnad's third play *Hayavadana* was published in 1970, exactly six years after *Tughlaq*. It is a masterful cross section of human and societal problems with humanistic approach. It reveals the conflicts and the storms brewing in human mind because of differences brought about by clashes due to the forces of nature and social compulsions, love outside and beyond matrimony, giving birth to children and man's crisis in attaining the unattainable.

One of the chief features of *Hayavadana* is that the plot of the play is based on the myths. Karnad has borrowed the theme from Katha Saritsagara originally but the present work is from Thomas Mann's retelling of the Transposed Heads. He has added the subplot on *Hayavadana* himself. It has also the myth of Yakshagana. Man's maniacal pursuit of perfection is fleeting. Karnad has understood this very well and successfully focused it in *Hayavadana* through the characters of the three worlds: Divine, Human and Animal. The quintessential teaching of the Bhagavad-Gita comes before our minds while pondering over the characters of Padmini, Kapila, Devadatta and *Hayavadana*. Man's majority of the problems are because of his ignorance about the real nature of the Self. It has been clearly and correctly stated in the Bhagavad-Gita that

Every basic problem arises from the fundamental human problem of the inadequate self. Unless one discovers oneself to be an adequate self, life continues to be a problem. Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita reveals that

any human being-in fact, every being is a complete adequate self. The sense of inadequacy arises from the ignorance of the real nature of the Self. The knowledge of the self will eliminate the sense of inadequacy.

(Radhakrishnan, 72)

When one discovers oneself to be a full and complete being, the conflict and the grief vanish. Happiness becomes natural and life is much more than worth living. Before we examine the mythological aspects and issues in *Hayavadana*, it would be profitable if one tries to study the sources of the play. As stated above the story of *Hayavadana* comes partly from Thomas Mann's story titled Transposed Heads, which in turn is based on one of the versions of the story in Vetala Panchavimshati. Shridaman, a Brahmin by birth but Vanijya by profession, and Nanda, a cowherd and blacksmith, are very close friends. Shridaman falls in love with Sita whom he happens to see when the two friends are traveling together. Nanda laughs at the idea but agrees to act as a messenger of his friend. Sita accepts the proposal and marries Shridaman. Some months later while Shridaman, Nanda and Sita are traveling together in a cart to a house of Sita's parents they lose track, come across a temple of Kali and take a halt. Shridaman visits the temple alone and overcomes by an incredible urge, offers himself to the goddess as a sacrifice. Nanda goes in search of his friend, finds what has happened and afraid of the charge that he

killed his friend because he was in love with Sita and because he does not want to live without his friend, kills himself. Sita realizes what has happened and prepares to hang herself.

The goddess Durga appears in front of her and chides her for her act and grants life to the two dead bodies. Sita, in her excitement, fixes the heads wrongly. Naturally the problem is: Who is her husband? The hermit Kamdaman whose advice is sought decides in favor of Shridaman's head. Gradually Shridaman's head begins to control Nanda's body and the body becomes refined. Sita begins to pine for Nanda, so much so that she sets out to meet him carrying Andhak, her baby boy with her. After a strenuous journey, she finds him at a pleasant spot in the forest. They spend the day and the night in heavenly bliss. Next morning Shridaman arrives on the scene. He suggests that they should kill each other in a combat and that Sita should perform Sati. Sita thinks that if she lives the life of a widow Andhak's future will be doomed but if she performed Sati Andhak will be a Sati's son and his social image will improve. Therefore, she gives her consent and burns herself on the funeral pyre of her two husbands! The stories in the Vetala Panchavimshati and Somdeva's Brihatkatha Saritsagara are basically the same except for a few alterations in the latter, in place names and in the references to the names of the castes of the characters.

Prince Dhavala married Madansundari, the daughter of a king named Suddhapata, through the favour of goddess Gauri, in a temple in the city of Shobhavati. Then one day Svetapata, Suddhapata's son, proceeded to his own country along with his sister and her husband. On the way, he came to another temple of goddess Gauri. Dhavala went into the temple to pay homage to the goddess. Through some irresistible urge, he cut off his head with a sword, which he chanced to see there, and presented it to the goddess.

As Dhavala did not come even after waiting for some time, Svetapata went inside. When he found out what Dhavala had done, he also cut off his own head and offered it to the goddess. Then Madansundari, realizing that her husband and her brother had been away for a long time, went into the temple and saw their dead bodies lying before the goddess and, in great grief, she also began to cut off her own head. Just then, the goddess Gauri appeared before her prevented her from doing so and offered to her what she wanted. Madansundari, naturally, requested the goddess to restore her husband's and her brother's life. The goddess asked her to set their heads on their shoulders. However, through excitement, she joined her husband's head to her brother's body and vice versa.

Karnad's play in a characteristic way begins where the Vetala story ends. How would the woman take it if it really happened and would it ultimately solve the problem for her? Are the fascinating problems the artist in him faces? In all his plays Karnad takes this kind of leap from the original story and develops it further. This further development is

the play of the artist's imagination and it challenges the glib solutions offered in the original stories (Prasad, 55).

Hayavadana is a bold and successful experiment on folk theme. Karnad uses successfully the conventions and motifs of folk tales and folk theatre. Masks, curtains, dolls and the story within a story have been deftly employed to create a bizarre world. In the opening of Act I, the entire stage is empty except for a chair and a table at which the Bhagvata and the musicians sit.

The mask of Lord Ganesha is kept on the chair. Karnad's versatility as a director is evident in the dolls scene in the play *Hayavadana*, Mahadevan, has aptly complimented as Along with melody, rhythm and colour Karanth's *Hayavadana* was meant to entertain and delight the audience and it did.... For those who wondered what it was all about, there was a very enjoyable drama, and for those who were familiar with the play it was a slight disappointment, with the play taking shape as unreal and farcical, but it elevated itself to fantasy in a few scenes when the live dolls appear. (20-21)

Another aspect that one will find highlighted in the plays of Karnad is the belief and faith the Indians have in the Gods and Goddesses. In his symbolic and spectacular play *Hayavadana*, he exposes the belief the Indians have in the elephant-headed Gajavadhana, According to Vinod, Ganapathi known as Lord of Obstacles and Lord of Wisdom also has epithets like "Adivinayaka, Siddhivinayaka, Vigneshwara, which mean, respectively, the ruler of the divine aspects of Shiva, the first God to be worshipped, the God who can assure achievement the remover of obstacles." (HN18).

The Indians have a staunch belief that by worshipping Gajavadhana all their troubles will come to an end: "Unfathomable indeed is the mercy of the elephant headed Ganesha. He fulfills the desires of all" The Bhagvata sings verses in his praise: O Elephant - headed Herembha

Whose flag is victory?

And who shines like a thousand suns.

O husband of Riddhi and Siddhi,

Seated on a mouse and decorated with a snake.

O single - tusked destroyers of incompleteness,

We pay homage to you and start our play. (HN 1)

The Bhagavata evokes Ganesha as a destroyer of obstacles and problems to shower his blessings for the success of the play. But this is certainly ridiculous. Lord Ganesha himself is an example of imperfection. An elephant's head on human body, a broken tusk and a cracked belly - Whichever way he is looked at, he is the embodiment of imperfection, incompleteness. It is very difficult to believe that this 'VakratundaMahakaya' is the lord and master of success and perfection. (HN 1)

Karnad has succeeded in creating a proper Indian atmosphere in *Hayavadana*. He has introduced a number

of words from Indian languages into his English translations, and then suitably Indianized English.

Hayavadana, the title itself is suggestive of this art; asHaya(Horse) and Vadana(faced) are both Sanskritised words. Moreover, words like Vakratunda-Mahakaya and Mangalmurthy for Lord Ganesha. He uses words like Gandharva, Ganesha, Kali, the names of Indian Gods and Goddesses, Yakshagana and Kathakali- the Indian dance style, rishi, Kalpavraksha, Pativrata, Sita and so on. (Prasad, 34)

II. THE RECKLESS REGIME IN TUGHLAQ

Virish Karnad draws the contours of contemporary reality upon the mythological canvas. Drawing the plots of his plays from Indian history, myths and legends, he presents them in such a way that they assume contemporary significance. As a modern playwright the urgency of exploiting the incommensurable and inscrutable impels him to negotiate a dramatic form, novel in form, characterization, organization of incidents and their dramatic representation. In order to constitute the desired form, he explores the devices of his own land and those of the west as well. However, he makes bold experiments with the folk and classical devices but the modern devices like use of symbolism, irony and humour remain an integral part of his dramatic technique.

This play presents the story of a monarch who came to throne by murdering his father and brother and ruled over India for about twenty years. In the play he is depicted as a wise and foolish, kind and cruel, impulsive and farsighted emperor in one breath. His two major decisions- shifting of his capital from Delhi to Daultabad and change of currency- backfire and render him and his subjects homeless. In order to prove himself a just and kind emperor sometimes he behaves in an unjust way. He kills some of his associates including his step mother thinking they are traitors to him. At the end he is totally shattered as a ruler. The characters like Aziz, Aazim, the step mother and the Prayer Scene are the dramatic inventions of the playwright designed to match his purpose.

Indian history is divided into three periods— Ancient, Medieval and Modern. In Tughlaq, Karnad goes back to the second phase of the Indian history because Tughlaq's reign also comes under this phase. In his portrayal of Tughlaq, Karnad has depicted the last five years of his reign. He came to know about Tughlaq, when he was going through the *Tarikh-FirozShahi* (The History of Firoz Shah Tughlaq 1891) of Tughlaq's court historian, Zia-ud-din Barani. In an interview, Karnad says:

When I read about Mohammed bin Tughlaq, I was fascinated. How marvelous this was, I thought. Tughlaq was a brilliant individual yet is regarded as one of the biggest failures. He tried to introduce policies that seemed today to be farsighted to the point of genius, but which earned him

the nick name —Mohammed the madl then. He ended his career in bloodshed and chaos. (Mukherjee 35)

Tughlaq was a great success on the stage. It is a story on a historical figure of India - Mohammad Bin Tughlaq. Only five years from the reign of Tughlaq have been taken by the author. In Tughlaq almost all characters can be seen in the light of existentialism, but the most important is Muhammad Bin Tughlaq. His individual identity, his so called absurd decisions, his frustration, his individual way of thinking about life, are all good examples of the themes of existentialism. Individual perception supersedes any abstract conceptual or transcendently grounded theory of what is real or the nature of reality and human life. Neither the behavior nor the nature of others can be understood by observation as Tughlaq could not understand the real nature and identity of Aziz.

The history of Mohammed bin Tughlaq is primarily the product of medieval Muslim and colonial British tradition of historiography whose ways of ideological implications have only recently begun to be scrutinized. Before the British came to India, there were Muslim kings who ruled over India for many centuries. When one turns to Indian history, one comes to know that there had been various wars among the kings and their kith and kin for the sake of kingship.

From 1206-1526, there were five dynasties the Slaves, the Khaljis, the Tughlaqs, the Sayyids and the Lodis that ruled India. The British seem to have used these wars as a tool to denigrate the Indian culture. Orientalist historians have treated the turmoil of the Muslim rule in India in such a manner which shows the necessity and superiority of the British colonial rule. Henry Elliot, in his preface to the Bibliographical Index to the *Historians of Muhammedan India* says, Though the intrinsic value of these works may be small... they will make our native subjects more sensible of the immense advantages occurring to them under the mildness and equity of our rule (Dharwadker 24).

III. CONCLUSION

GirishKarnad is hailed as one of the leading lights of *The New Drama* in India. He is a film producer, an actor and a TV artiste and a playwright, an all in one. This versatility has come in the way of his composition of plays. He is a household name for his acting performance, and understanding of culture and folk arts. He has become one of India's brightest shining stars, earning international praise as a playwright, poet, actor, director, critic, and translator. He has appeared on the literary scene with the genius and ability to transform any situation into an aesthetic experience. He has brought to Indian drama a firsthand knowledge of the practical demands of the state, and a better understanding of dramatic style and technique.

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