The Investigations On Contribution of Girish Karnard in Indian Theatre

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Abstract

Now that India's writing in English has come of age, it remains one of the most important literatures in English-speaking countries. Aside from regular scholarly studies, literary awards and translations into major languages around the world that have placed some books on bestseller lists in different genres, it has received worldwide recognition. English-language drama has been one such genre, and it has been slowly developing in India in regional languages. Among the many talents that Girish Karnad (b. 1938) brings to the IED, he is an actor, director, poet, script writer, and translator. He is a member of the generation of Indian playwrights who came of age in the post-independence era and reshaped the Indian theater as a major national institution in the latter half of the twentieth century. He spends a lot of time looking at the challenges of modern life and trying to connect them to the past. He has been widely acclaimed as one of the world's greatest playwrights. He has received numerous accolades and accolades for his wide range of creative talents.

Keyword: *Indian, Playwright, Literary, Theatre.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Because he was born and raised in the Kannada-speaking region, Girish Karnad is a member of the Kannada theater community. His plays were originally written in Kannada. There is a long and illustrious history of Kannada theatre in the south-west Karnataka region. Puppetry, puppetry, and other forms of folk art are popular in India.3 The plays he has written have not only improved the quality of Indian drama, but he has also contributed to its growth. As a playwright and actor, he is also a talented filmmaker and director. Kannada-language Yayati, which was written in 1961 and later translated into English, was Karnad's first play. It was during this time that Karnad was reading about Jean Paul Sartre and other leading existentialists that he structured the play in a more contemporary way. The story of Yayati's father and son's intergenerational exchange "seemed to me terribly powerful and terribly modern," he said in an interview. Sartre and Existentialism were also on my reading list at the time. The Existentialists' incessant emphasis on personal accountability sparked an unexpected connection with Yayati's story.

Tughlaq (1964), his next play, is a true history play that depicts an important chapter in Indian history from the Mughal period. In this essay, Mohammad Tughlaq, the Sultan of Delhi, is examined as a paradox. There are all the necessary elements in the play to make it playable. Speech, silence and gesture, irony, homour, tragedy, and suspense are all used to great effect. To put it another way, it is free of melodrama and sentimentality. As Eunice de Souza had said, "Indian plays in English do not go back to history to establish modern man's relationship with history, or interpret contemporary problems." Karnad had responded to this by writing the play.

A play based on Thomas Mann's short story "The Transposed Heads" was Hayavadana (1971), his third and final play. Karnad used the Yakshagaan, a Karnataka folk theater form, to write the play. Hayavadana focuses on the question of man's identity in a world rife with conflicting feelings and expectations. Here, Karnad employs the Brechtian method to deal with the issue of identity crisis. Bhagwata performs a pooja for Lord Ganesha at the beginning of the play (kind of Sutradhara). Afterwards, Hayavadana takes the stage, allowing play to progress within play. When characters from one story interact with those from another, it piques the interest of the viewers.

All of Girish Karnad's plays are playable, making him a pioneer in new drama. Its goal is to bring together the diametrically opposed elements of life. "However, life absorbs and transcends paradoxes and reconciles opposites," says V.K. Gokak. It is only when you see them all together that you get a sense of the new movement's complexity and

its all-encompassing unity. Girish Karnad's plays are full of this intricacy, and they sound great. Their foundation is based on contradictions. The playwright Girish Karnad is regarded as one of the finest in contemporary Indian English. Kurkoti wrote, "His work has the tone and expression of great drama. Any situation can be transformed into an aesthetic experience with its genius and power. " On stage, Tughlaq and Hayavadana have had tremendous success. Karnad pioneered the Indian English dramatic verse technique. This will have a long-term impact. Drama, by definition, cannot exist in a vacuum. It is meant to be used by actors who play historical heroes. This is not a novel, short story, or epic in its own right.

When it comes to theatre, Aristotle is regarded as a pioneer. Playwrights all over the world have adopted his ideas after the release of his poetics. However, the Bible's dramatic premise was still believed by poets today. Epic film owes its inception to Bertolt Brecht. When Aristotle's theatrical illusion became too much for him, he created epic theater as an alternative. However, he pushes for the notion of estrangement as well as critical assessment, rejecting catharsis. It is common for audiences to empathize with their characters and become sucked into the story. Indian folklore and folk stories are used in this play to reflect the modern reality and personal pain of the author.

Karnad devotes a lot of time and effort to studying Indian culture. In spite of his admiration for mythology, he has a strong interest in Feminism. Feminism is evident in many of his works. Through the defensive mechanism, this text investigates the view of females in Indian patriarchal culture. Feminist critical approaches and norms have been applied in analyzing Hayavadana (1971)'s theatrical methods, themes, and female characters. Thus, this investigation's theatrical text explains the power linkages and female subjectivity in Indian culture and reveals how women utilize clever and clear tactics to confrontation and attempt to destabilize the power system.

Major Work

India's revival in modern theatre is shown by the success of Girish Karnad in the realm of experimental models. In his plays, he makes the case that only via a "return to the roots" will Indian theater find lasting popularity. Plays by him are a fascinating mix of Indian theater's traditional and popular components. He uses Indian traditional and Sanskrit theater methods in his performances. According to the general view, he himself has translated these plays into the English language. Most of Karnad's plays were written in Kannada, which was a second language for him. A lot of people think that English translations of his plays are superior than the Kannada originals in terms of literary value. It is also worth noting that Karnad's plays are not based on any particular rendition of a folk story or a folklore. It is not uncommon for them to spring from a clear and distinct English translation of the source. For example, Karnad claims in the prelude to his play Naga-Mandala that it is based on two Karnataka traditional legends that he originally heard from Professor A.K.Ramanujan.

2. THREATRE AND LITERATURE

Every element of human existence is linked to literature. 'Life is literature' and 'Literature is life' may both be stated to be true. Poetry, fiction, and theatre are three of the most common forms of literary expression. Drama is the most human of all genres because it depicts life on stage. In many ways, it is a reflection of the actual world. Drama, in contrast to poetry and fiction, necessitates the use of human senses such as hearing as well as seeing. It is a thing with many facets. To perform in front of an audience, you will need props like a script, a stage, and an artist. It is the most successful means of communication since it unites people of all backgrounds and orientations. Drama has been a part of human culture from the beginning of time, when it was first used for religious purposes. As a result, drama has a long and rich history across the globe.

Theater and play are often used interchangeably to refer to drama. However, there are also some variances between them as well. The term "drama" refers to the performance of a play on stage in accordance with the script. The 'Play' refers to this piece of writing. And the term "theatre" refers to the area surrounding the stage, or more specifically, the hall or area in which the performance takes place. A play, on the other hand, is not meant for a listening audience. The playwright is well aware that only after his or her work has been appropriately interpreted by directors, actors, and designers will it be properly received by an audience in a theatre. This is a group of professional readers—the actors who will bring the play's written words to life on stage for an audience to see and hear.

Drama is a mixture of literature and sociology since it brings together both the knowledgeable and the uninitiated. It provides us with a platform from which to express our views on societal issues. Using storytelling and the arts, it conveys the prevailing values and beliefs of society. In some circles, it is said that the audience sees the real world through the lens of an imagined one. Use it to bring about societal change. It connected the past and the present in a unique way. There is a long and rich history of drama in both England and India. NatyaSatra, the Sanskrit word for drama, seems to have a powerful influence in Indian play's beginnings. Also, the revered Vedas are linked to Natya-

Sastra, it is said. Folk-theatre has been practiced in India from the earliest times. As part of their ceremonies, ancient tribal people would impersonate other individuals and animals in order to better understand their surroundings.

3. GIRISH KARNAD'S THEATRICAL BACKGROUND

Karnad was born and raised in Sirsi, a rural town that lacked basic amenities like electricity at the time of his birth. Tales of local stories and myths were the only kind of entertainment available. Karnataka's conservative upbringing allowed him to get acquainted with the local folk theater. Karnad outlines his inspirations and why his history as a playwright is so important in the following comment:

Because I grew up in Sirsi, I believe this is a contributing factor. There was no power at the time. During my time in Sirsi, which spanned from 1941 until 1952, I never left. That indicates that the day used to end at about 8:00 p.m. I grew up in a time when there was no television and just lanterns for illumination. The atmosphere was filled with tales. Cooking for us was done by a single woman. As the sun began to set, she would come to visit and tell us tales. We used to swap tales all the time in elementary school. To write about mythological people is easy for me since they were a part of my childhood and my youth.

It is said that "the rich wealth of folklore, told and retold amid the frightening darkness of the surrounding jungles transported the little boy to a world where the snake spoke like a man and the gods changed forms" that the natak companies, the offshoots of the Parsi theatre, left an everlasting mark on his mind that formed the basis of his vision as a playwright. Natak Mandalis, another name for natak companies, were traveling theater troupes. Author Karnad claims that these troupes of professional performers were on tour throughout the year, based on his 'Author's Introduction' to Three Plays: Naga-Mandala, Hayavadana, Tughlaq. On proscenium stages, the plays were presented with petromax lights and lit by semi-permanent constructions with wings and drop curtains. In Maharashtra in the 1930s, several of these natak (drama) groups were successful. The burgeoning Bollywood film industry had forced away most natak firms by the 1940s.

4. CONTEMPORARY INDIAN DRAMATISTS

India's post-independence period is marked by a dramatic increase in the variety of theatrical genres that can be found throughout the country. In addition, Indian theater came to age during this time period. During the two decades after India's independence, a new generation of playwrights developed and rose to prominence. A growing number of stylistic divergences might be traced back to their roots in early 20th-century Indian theater movements including the Parsi stage and India's Peoples Theatre Association (IPTA). When it comes to topics, forms, structures, and presentation, these excursions took on a life of their own in their own right. In addition to this, unique directions in Indian theater have developed in the form of new notions of theater and dramatic practices. Among these playwrights, innovation and restoration of tradition were hallmarks of their creative self-expression. It is hard to argue that Girish Karnad, Dharamvir Bharati, Mohan Rakesh, Vijay Tendulkar, Badal Sircar, G.P.Deshpande and others are not typical of the current crop of playwrights.

5. INDIAN THEATRE UNDER BRITISH COLONIALISM

In order to convey a broad tone and universality to his or her play, the contemporary dramatist uses the technique of symbolism as a device. To them, the dramatic art is all about suggestion, therefore they avoid revealing anything outright in favor of only inferring. As the country's rulers changed throughout time, India's theater passed through several distinct stages. Indian Natya has a long and illustrious history that traces its ancestry back to Vedic ritualism and a long-standing social-cultural anthropology that has traced the evolution of Indian theater's diverse dramatic forms. During the British reign, theatre, which was essentially a form of amusement in medieval India, developed into a more solid form. It is well known that Indian theatre dates back to the mythical past, when epics and tales were first illustrated via theater. Over time, this kind of drama evolved into a more organised art form. A look at the rich history of Indian theater shows how it has evolved from epic forms such as classical Indian play and Indian folklore to more contemporary forms such as modern Indian theater.

It took a long time for Indian theatre to develop since the country was repeatedly invaded and a significant portion of the conquerors' populations remained in the country they conquered, contributing significantly to the development of Indian culture and history. During the Indian culture's heyday, folk theater was all but forgotten by many. A road away from traditional Indian theater, India's folk theater has evolved into a crude and impolite performance. Many organizations have started work on the redevelopment of the Indian theater in the last few years. In post-independence India, Indian theatre, which had been a means of resistance to British colonialism, became a more logical method of expression. London theaters' influence on Indian play provided a modern twist to the ancient traditions of the country's

drama. After independence, Indian theater became a lot more realistic and naturalistic. Instead of focusing on historical plays or mythical figures or virtues and vices, the contemporary Indian theatre was given a completely new voice.

Commercial hubs of Kolkata, Chennai, and Mumbai date back to when India was a British colony. The colonial towns of the seventeenth century, according to Erin B. Mee, are the source of contemporary Indian play. These cities drew a mostly upper-middle-class population, many of whom were fluent in English thanks to their public school systems. Having a good education in English was seen as a way to rise through the ranks of British government and trade. In the late eighteenth century, English-style playhouses were created in Bombay and Calcutta, and the Indian aristocracy was sometimes invited to see English-produced shows. Also, they were given the opportunity to play particular parts. For example, a proscenium arch with its background and curtains, Western furniture and other accessories such as costumes, and a variety of mechanical gear for creating spectacular effects were all taken over by later Parsi companies/theatre in the same rooms. The Indian aspects, such as theatrical acting and the usage of categories instead than psychological persons, were also used. The landscape was painted by European artists. So that "the spectacular stage effects of storms, waves or rivers in agitation, castle sieges, steamers and aerial movements and the like" might be achieved. In addition, the British model had an impact on advertising and programming. There were playbills distributed around the city announcing the next Saturday night performance. Western play was often imitated in terms of aesthetics, dramaturgy, and even architecture in this area.

When it comes to using a mask, Karnad follows certain well-established customs, but he gives it a new identity as both a theatrical prop and an emotional X-ray machine. On stage, one character in the 1971 Indian drama, Hayavadana, does not put on a mask. This means that rather than being locked to the characters, his masks may express a variety of moods as the drama requires.

The masculine characters Devadatta and Kapila in Hayavadana are both represented by physical masks designed by Karnad (1971). Consequently, these masks serve as an early reminder of the physical differences between these two pals. Bhagavata introduces Devadatta and Kapila as his closest pals in the film Hayavadana (1971), in which they are shown as being the best of friends. Devadatta is "unrivaled" in intellect and the sole child of Vidyasagara, a Brahmin (Karnad, 1994). He holds sway over the people of Dharmapura because of his education, intellect, and poetic ability. The ironsmith Lohita's lone child, Kapila, is the second young man. In terms of physical prowess and dance ability, "he has no equal" (Karnad 1994) despite his dark and "simple" (Karnad, 1994) look (Karnad, 1994). Running, trembling, the actor arrives as Bhagavata begins to sing "Two buddies they were one thought one heart" (Karnad 1994). He kneels at Bhagavata's feet and tells him that he has seen a horse conversing. Bhagavata, with the aid of the actor, attempts to remove Hayavadana's mask. It turns out to be a "genuine head," though (Karnad, 1994). Hayavadana begs Bhagavata for aid in regaining his manhood, frustrated by his dual identities. However, his head is the one thing he refuses to let go of. In the primary narrative, Devadatta and Kapila's relationship is damaged as they both fall for Padmini, the same girl. Padmini later swaps the heads of these two buddies in an accident. Karnad shows how the characters seek and battle for fulfillment in the last act.

6. MAGICAL REALISM

The entire play is entwined in a web of supernatural intrigue. In Karnad's plays, the meaning of Indian fantasies is consistently proposed as a means of addressing current cultural issues. He has given these stories and fantasies a new meaning in today's society. He has re-emphasized the importance of these old legends and stories in today's society. Karnad is a verifiable post-autonomy playwright who uses the resources of world theater to connect to India's provincial past and post-pioneer present. When Lionel Abel conceived the term "Metatheater," he saw it as simultaneously reflecting comedy and tragedy, where the audience can both laugh and sympathize. Reflecting the world as an extension of one's inner voice, the strategy does not tolerate cultural norms, but it does take into account possible social change. There are many different techniques of metatheatre, but this one is the most commonly used. In the words of Simon (Simon, n.p. Web).

Nagamandala is regarded as a metatheatre's best-kept secret. The anecdotal writer, the flares, and Rani's tale all help to pull in the audience and make it clear that this is a play. The disillusioned playwright addresses the audience directly at the beginning of the play. As the vagrant predicted, he is agitated by the looming threat of death. Because to his performances, several people had to take time off during the displays to recuperate. His promise to retract his work is made at this time. The audience is made aware of the circumstances behind the development of the play in this instance. Metatheatre or metadrama, according to Richard Hornby, consists of five techniques: a) ceremony inside a play; b) role-playing within a role; c) reference to reality; d) self-reference to the drama; and e) play within a play (Zatlin, p.55). There are a few examples of this in Nagamandala, when the Naga disguised itself as Appanna, Rani's better half, in order to visit her at night. This is Appanna, the Naga's reincarnation. As a result, the author uses the

magic of reality to elevate the Naga from the realm of animals to that of humans. The Hindus believe that snakes are gods, and the Naga seems to have particular abilities that reflect this belief.

The 'external play' is framed by the author, but the 'interior play' is told by Rani. Myth has it that once the fires have been put out in the homes of the hamlet, the flames congregate together and spend the night chatting. Rani's narrative is narrated by a young lady who is the story itself. Wizardry authenticity is evident in the play, in which the tales are presented into a more realistic setting. In the case of Rani, the tale is told through the eyes of an elderly lady who has never before spoken about the story or the song she knows. Narrative no longer suited to stay within the woman's body and the song no longer fit to a lovely sari, the story leaves the woman and enters the world. The audience quickly realizes that this is a play, not a reality broadcast, because of the constant depiction of delusions and deceptions. As a result, the mendicant's prognosis regarding the playwright's death as a result of his readers falling asleep is completely unfounded. In the play: Man: ..... 'You must remain awake at least one whole night this month,' a beggar advised me. You will have a chance at survival if you are able to do it. The final night of the month is when you will die if you do not do anything. Magical realism and metatheatre may be seen in the change of the Naga into a human, the humanization of the flames, and Kurudavva's promise of magical roots to Rani in order to win Appannas's love. To illustrate the diverse classes of individuals in society, each character has a distinct name. In the context of this story, Rani refers to the queen, while Appanna refers to any man. Kurudavva means "a blind woman," and she was given that name purposefully because she was oblivious to the poisonous male hierarchies that were taking place in her environment. Kappanna, a figure who refers to "the black one," is another character that symbolizes the lower-class society. The story's heroine, Rani, is often seen tending to the plot. This suggests that Rani is aware of the narrative's existence and that she is aware of the description of her story. Interruptions in the middle are used by the creator to inform the audience that they are seeing a play or an execution. It is not necessary for the audience to have a personal connection with the characters, but rather for them to be actively engaged in the play's relevance to the current social context. The audience must be able to deduce the play's internal meaning from the play's plot.

7. CONCLUSION

The IED, which is still in its infancy, features several of Karnad's plays, which may be studied in-depth. In his creative imagination, he uses Indian mythology, folklore, and history, which is based on the vast and diverse Indian culture. He travels back in time to examine the lives and societies of brilliant individuals, their policies, political techniques, secular ideas, and their greatest mistakes. For his message, he relies on the portrayal of Indian pre-colonial history on stage, in which the whole country is shown. Among the plays he has written, a number address themes of religious intolerance, such as the caste system within Hinduism, as well as the conflict between the dominant and minority faiths. He encourages people to put aside their differences of caste and work together for the sake of India as a whole. His non-violent, need based worldview does not provide preferential treatment to any one religion, even when he discusses inter-religious and intra-religious conflicts. According to him, we must learn from the past since it predicts the present and myths reverberate with current life. Karnad, a Postcolonial writer, has an extraordinary capacity to re-imagine the past within a modern context. Reflecting on his history, he looks at the present with a new perspective. When it comes to dealing with the problems that need to be addressed in our nation, Karnad does a good job of using myths and tales to make his point. As in each of the three plays, the Indian past is a significant component or takes center stage.

8. REFERENCE

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