

HUMANE RELATIONSHIP IN THE BACKGROUND OF INDIAN RECEPTIVITY IN GIRISH KARNAD’S DRAMAS

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Drama in India is a richest tradition. Its roots, admired Vedic era, and drama has been celebrated throughout the ages. Ramayana, Mahabharata and the holy Bhagavad-Gita have been the personification of various dramatic plots. These have for long been used for human relationships issues prevailing in the society. The derivation of drama in the world is mostly rooted in the religious nature of people. Indian ‘English Drama’ was structured on the various European Models and plots of Sanskrit plays. The peregrination of Indian English Drama has been the canvas portrayal of diffidence until the literary wizard like- Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Harindranath Chatopadhyay occupied the stage in the pre- independence era. Their plays were largely inspired in soul from the deep rooted beliefs and values of the humane relationship. In the post independence era the trend of translation of plays from various original vernacular form of language to English was in vogue. The prime flag bearers of the genre were great playwrights like Girish Karnad, Mohan Rakesh, Badal Sircar, Mahesh Dattani, Uma Parmeswaran and Vijay Tendulkar. Girish Karnad has been the playwright who impacted the Indian English Drama in a big positive manner.

Through his first play-Yayati in the year 1961, Karnad embarked on what was going to be a splendid set of contribution to the Indian English Drama. Being a convincing voice of the era Girish Karnad has through his plays being able to convey beautifully the various shades of ‘Man-Woman Relationships’. It would be apt to term that he had the connoisseur eye in visualizing and building the under lying currents in the relationships of the characters of his play. The fabulous blend of myth and folklore made his creations churn out the crux of man-woman relationships. These would though appear complex in display, but were simple to comprehend and correlate. The power of communication that his characters imbibed from his outstanding yet simple style of creation had a phenomenal effect on the audience.

The 'humane Relationships' is very essential in Karnad's plays. **Yayati** presents the complex structure of relationship between the triangle of Devayani, Sharmishtha and king Yayati on one hand and Puru and Chitrlekha on the other. In **Nagamandala**, relationship of Appanna, his wife Rani and the Nag is described. **The Fire and The Rain** is indeed a bunch of relationships which rotate around-Paravasu, Vishakha, Raibhya, Yavakri, Nittilai and Arvasu. **Hayavadana** focuses on Padmini a newly wedded wife, Devadatta-the husband and Kapila the friend of Devadatta. In **Tughlaq**, we find the relationship between the stepmother and Muhammad the son being exhibited. In **Tale-Danda**, King Bijjala and Rambhavati the queen are shown in various shades of matrimonial bond. Also Sovideva's relationship with his mother Rambhavati is explored. Latiamba's and Madhuvarsha's fiasco is also seen in the shade of Kalavati and Sheelavanta, along with Sovideva's neglect of his wife. **Bali-The scarifies** present the relationship in between Queen and Queen mother and the king and the Queen which shows the dark picture of man-women relationship. **Wedding Album** presents the Man-women relationship in particular family on the occasion of marriage.

The relationship is a main thread which makes the strong bound between Man and Women. Series from the husband-wife relationship to stepmother-son saga, Karnad has also been able to project general perceptions of people in their times about the man-woman relations. Although women are the underdog in most of the relationship portrayals but he has also touched the sensibility of man in contrasting shades. Karnad has also depicted the levels in relationship response of his characters which are separate- age, caste and social acceptability wise.

I

The character of king Yayati is beautifully place for the lost youth and the encounter with three women-Devayani, Sharmishtha and Chitrlekha. The cord of love, extra marital relationship and incest is featured through the three female characters respectively. Devayani's relationship with Yayati is based on theme of love and power politics.

The triangle of love thus formed between them is ousted by Shukracharya's curse of old age on Yayati. The loss of youth acts heavily upon the psyche of Yayati and he loses trace of his affections. Devayani who was taken over by the youth of Yayati and fell in love with him; she is now seen horrified by the curse of old age being enacted upon him and runs away. The matrimonial relationship between the two is seen to be shattered because of Yayati's extramarital affair and Devayani's impulsive behavior.

Shukracharya and Devayani display the father-daughter relationship. The decision of Shukracharya to allow Devayani to marry Yayati shows the extreme love and faith of father in his daughter's decision. This shows the maturity of relationship, in the context of patriarchal Indian sensibility. The daughter is shown have found respect for her decision by her father; even though it was against the prevalent caste system of times. Where one could marry in one's cast only. The curse proves to be decisive in a negative sense for Devayani; bringing even more sorrow and despair to her.

Sharmishtha and Yayati are shown in out of social bound relationship. This brings curse upon Yayati, making him old. There is drawn a great contrast in this bond. Being an adulterous bond in nature and appearance- Yayati and Sharmishtha relationship yet survives through the rough times of Yayati's old age curse. Although immoral, the relationship between the two is shown to be more than carnal pleasure and bodily charm. The love of Sharmishtha and Devayani to Yayati gives two shades of matrimonial aspect of man-woman relationship.

Puru and Chitrlekha are seen in another deeper and darker shade of relationship. Their matrimonial bond is shown to be devastated by Puru's exchange of his youth with his father's

old age. Chitrlekha a newly married young lady finds it hard to bear with the sudden loss of youth in Puru. In her distressed relationship she finds no console. Her agony ends in self infliction-committing suicide.

Puru though sacrifices his youth for the happiness of his father, fails to care about the needs and sentiments of his young bride-Chitrlekha. Chitrlekha's repeated requests to Puru, not to lose his youth, are turned down by him. Anxiety makes her decide to leave the kingdom which she is not allowed to do. Then she committed suicide. Even her death made no effect on old Puru, who could only shed a tear on her death and realize what tragedy has befallen only after the return of his youth by Yayati.

Yayati and Chitrlekha, presents the father and daughter-in-law relationship. Yayati's blind self interest ruins the life of Chitrlekha. Yayati is seen to be completely disjointed from the Indian sensibility of a father-in-law. He fails to make sure and protect the interests of his son's bride. In fact he is real root cause of Chitrlekha's misfortune.

Realizing this, she latter commits suicide. Even the shocking display of Chitrlekha's mental state couldn't move Yayati. Regret dawns on him only after the death of Chitrlekha. The character of Yayati is shown as a complete dominating patriarch.

II

Hayavadana bears the plot which materializes the relationship account of: Devadatta, Padmini and Kapila-the friend of Devadatta. Padmini is the limelight of the relationship. Devadatta has already fallen in love fifteen times before he raises affections towards Padmini. Devadatta's love and affections are impulsive and secondary of fascination for beauty rather than love for Padmini. His unreliable nature is evident from his vows of sacrifice to goddess Kali and lord Rudra; if he gets Padmini as his wife. The relationship quotient in terms of his contribution is invisible. His raw and rustic responses make relationship till the end is non contributive in handling of odds which erupt.

The relationship between Padmini and Devadatta is shown in the state of misery and dilemma. Padmini is shown to be in an existing fondness for Devadatta, due to his intellectual capabilities, but she is also seen wanting for the perfect body of Kapila. This dilemmatic thinking creates the drift in the relation of husband-wife. Hence, suffering with 'confusion of affections' in relationship Padmini losses the faith of Devadatta, who in fit of jitters sacrifices his head to goddess 'Kali'.

Kapila's love for Padmini is- fascination for her beauty; same is communal by Padmini for him-love for his muscular body. Having had the most of intellectual Devadatta Padmini craves for the other man in her life (Kapila). The episode of Fortunate Lady's flower marks the creation of lecherousness in her heart and soul for Kapila. Her lustful eyes fall upon the fit muscular body of Kapila and she craves for his physical perfection. Lust is differentiated from love here in both the relationships that Padmini aspires for.

Too much of free and willful interaction in sprouts affections; as has been the case with Kapila and Padmini. Kapila and Padmini's relationship is very complex. Such relationships result in a invalidate meaning, both socially and mentally.

Thus in Hayavadana we find the essence of Padmini's greed for perfection and the consequent drawback in her relationship with Devadatta. The situational creation is of prime importance in bringing out the desires, along with a note of sensibility which always acts upon the characters in the drama. The construct is careful and provides an opportunity to evaluate the

acts of the characters and the Indian sensibility in immediate comparison of the man-woman relationship in the drama.

III

A unique display of son and stepmother relationship forms the sign in the mother-son relationship in one of the most celebrated work of Girish Karnad- Tughlaq. The stepmother here is seen to have a concern for Tughlaq's life. She is seen to be bothered about his direction towards life. The character of Tughlaq though is unresponsive and suspicious towards her, which finish in the decree of her publicly humiliating and cruel death. The story builds environ of suspicion, horrible deaths, treachery and tyranny at large; in the guise of general public welfare.

Relationship of mother and son detailed in the drama is no exception to it. In scene two, Tughlaq treats her without any seriousness. Her advices and concern for well-being of her son is taken in mockery and false by Tughlaq. He does not disclose in her concerns. Remarkably, both these attitudes are unnecessary according to the Indian sensibility of stepmother-son relationships. The concern of Tughlaq's mother fails the sensibility of jealousy, competition and ill feeling generally associated with the Indian culture. Relationship of lord Rama and Kaikaki (second wife of king Dashratha) and Dhruva and Suniti (second wife of king Uttanipada) are conspicuous examples of hatred and disgust of stepmother towards son and reciprocation of likeability from son towards the stepmothers.

Voice of mother fails to make any impact on Tughlaq; as he is surrounded and advised by people who had started to believe in his theories and designs making them even more vicious. Tughlaq on the other hand guided by his nature of distrust towards stepmother sees- ill feeling and treachery in the killing of Najib. On coming to know that his stepmother had made it happen, Tughlaq decrees her to be stoned to death in public. The concern for well-being of her son is rewarded by claims of her being adulteress and finally decree of her humiliating death. Thus in Tughlaq, Girish Karnad has built an opposite case to the Indian sensibility of relationship of stepmother-son.

IV

In Nagamandala- Rani, Appanna and the Nag take up the centre stage in humane relationship. The relation of Rani, the central character in the drama, with Appanna is plagued with disharmony and neglect. Appanna is a mature man as compared to the Rani a newly wedded ignorant girl. Rani a new candidate to the matrimonial world is inflicted by an extreme neglect and mental exploitation at the hands of Appanna-her husband. Appanna's neglect of Rani is caused by his involvement in an out of bond relation with another woman. The adulterous ways of Appanna create a silence in his relations with Rani. The core factors of – love, concern, protection and togetherness are absent in their mutual relation. Duty of this unnatural relation structure belongs to Appanna. He being a matured youth well versed with the ways of the world should have made relation turn the right way. Rani's immature nature is hardly to blame for any relationship discord.

The plot of the drama focuses upon the state of young married girls who are subjected to complete neglect. The expectations built on the part of Rani is of- concern. The custody of Rani by Appanna, while he is away, is inhuman and unjustifiable. This reflects the captivity of the hope of Rani. Appanna and Rani share a constrained relation of a cruel master (Appanna) and a humble and obedient servant (Rani). While Appanna is seen busy in his relations with concubine, Rani's plight is heart moving colors the picture of women in such relations. She has no one to

share her fears and loneliness with. The status of wife present on her by virtue of the social bond is concentrated to- a prisoner, a maid and a human without feelings and demands or expectations. Being ill treated and tortured by her husband, her marital rights remain unconfirmed. She bears the brunt of the situational and cultural factors in the male dominated patriarchal Indian society. The Naga comes as the indication of change in her life. The Naga is developed as a conscious character that finishes the trouble of Rani's life. The old woman who gives the potion to Rani- is symbolic of care and guidance which one woman offers to the other, seeing her plight.

The Naga is the symbol of freedom and break for Rani. He fulfills her barren life with seeds of love, care and affections. It is made only possible through the character of Naga that Rani achieves completion in her womanhood. The symbolism of Naga is chosen very skillfully by Karnad.

We find that the women are taken to be the source of providing strength to the husbands. Husbands on the contrary may be following evil ways of life. The unparallel construction of man-woman relationship is the main cause of isolation which is expressed in Dramas.

Naga is sacrificial figure which aims to comfort Rani. Important to note here is that the sympathy developed in Naga is not automatic, but by virtue of the magical herbs given accidentally by Rani. This shows that the male figures are insensitive towards the sufferings of their counterparts; it's only some magic which could create the sympathy in them for their women. Rani is a very powerful description of Indian female. She depicts- softness, sensitivity and longing for affections on one hand and depict the incarnation of goddess on the other. Either she is too weak or too strong. In any of the case she is not taken up as any other normal male counterpart in the society. She is out reach of normal ways of life.

To summarize the effect of man-woman issues in the drama *Nagamandala* it would be correct to term the situation of Rani as a 'Solitary prisoner'. She is dominated and crushed by Appanna transforms to a new level of avatar of 'Goddess' who is served and obeyed by Appanna. Girish Karnad in this drama has tricked the humane relationship such that the plight of the downtrodden female changes to a visibly powerful figure.

V

In Tale-Danda we find the relationships which discussed at the background of casteism. It is fantastic application of casteism as a factor in the development of the plot of Drama. The relationship of King Bijjala and Rambhavati the queen takes up the inequality in human relations as have been observed in the previously discussed plays. The King doesn't treat the queen as an equal. It is by the virtue of king's wishes that the queen performs her acts. The relationship between Bijjala and Rambhavati is not decorated evenly in the same color it has its good scrap too.

Her extreme anger is mark of change from tolerance to intolerance of the male control. Still her neglect and unparallel status by the king, is responded by the expected agreement of king by her. Sovideva the son of King Bijjala is seen to be more close to his mother than his father. This shows a son's affections towards his mother and anger and hate towards father. Sovideva confides his anguish and plans to his mother-the queen. The queen ideally supports the son but subject to the liking of his father –the king. Sovideva's relationship with his wife is also of the same order and kind as that between the king and the queen. Sovideva too is seen to offer neglect and under status to his wife, he also rebukes and scolds her also. Sovideva send away his wife to her father's house without bothering to call her back. Again we see the other factor –

Indrani, the prostitute being responsible for the differences in the relationship. Substitution of Indrani in the life of Sovideva in place of his wife shows the primary value of the relationship is not due to love care and affections but instead carnal pleasure.

The next episode involves portray of man-woman subjects and their relations amidst the casteism factor. Madhuvarasa and Lalitamba fiasco is coupled with the Kalavati and Sheelavanta marriage. Karnad has given a new shade to the relationship scenario in this plot of the drama. Here the marriage between Kalavati and Sheelavanta depicts the Indian sensibility of casteism in the man-woman relations of the Indian society. The marriage between a Brahmin's daughter and a Cobbler's son is a main theme of the Drama which is based on Casteism.

Madhuvarasa and Lalitamba are Brahmins by caste and are the parents of Kalavati. The episode and the clash between the two parents on the issue of their daughter's marriage is an important one. It reflects the challenge of concern in mother's heart to the patriarchal decision of the father. Lalitamba, the mother is seriously concerned of the result of the marriage. She fears that her daughter who so loving would not be able to cope up with the tough and debased lifestyle of a Cobbler's family.

Thus, in Tale-Danda we are introduced to an altogether different shade of man-woman relationship which has casteism and parental concern in its stock. Karnad has been once again successful in bringing out the Indian classification of patriarchal dominance in the man-woman relations. Bijjala and Rambhavati relation is also a reflection of same male supremacy. Sovideva too, presents his dominancy towards his wife. Madhuvarasa proves to be an irresponsible husband and father. He is awful in his behavior towards his wife and dominant in his decision of marriage. Lalitamba is a dedicated woman, who is oppressing by her husband, and also unable to take her right to protect the welfare of her daughter. Her right is grabbing by the dominance of Madhuvarasa.

VI

The Fire and The Rain introduces complex humane relationships which are based largely on the components of hatred, jealousy, revenge and Murder. The relationship network is woven and it represents consistent cycle of hate and jealousy. Parvasu and Vishakha are shown to share the matrimonial bond. The relationship between the two is shown to be in a different pattern as compared to the earlier discussed ones. Parvasu who has attained the chief-priesthood is away from his home. In his absence, his wife Vishakha is shown to have been attracted by her past lover Yavakri. Her disrespect reaches Parvasu who then plans to visit his wife reject all the limitation of the Vedic ritual. Getting to know about the circumstances under which she was attracted towards Yavakri; Parvasu believes her. This is totally against the Indian sensibility of unequal status of women by men. Parvasu behaves differently to the normal rules.

Parvasu believes her word to word and as a result of which he is convince of the evil in the mind of his father Raibhya. The bond in the relationship of Parvasu and Vishakha shown here by Karnad is out of tune with the concept of general Indian sensibility as shown in the case of Puru. His kindness- towards his father rather than his wife Chitrlekha in *Yayati*. Vishakha on the other hand is shown to be a woman dedicated to the husband. She gets attract by the pleadings and advances of her past lover Yavakri. Her initial withdrawal from the trap shows that her sensibility protected her initially from an immoral relationship.

Yavakri the past lover of Vishakha is want to take the revenge against her husband and father-in-law. The chance meeting with Vishakha is taken by him as an opportunity to guide her

according to his plan. Yavakri, feels dual insulted when he learns that his love Vishakha has been married to his foe's son- Parvasu. Yavakri projects his love to Vishakha and makes her the suitable vehicle for the accomplishment of his revenge on Raibhya.

Thus the bond that Yavakri tries to revive is no more due to the past affection, but just as step towards his revenge. He uses Vishakha as an instrument in his fight against Raibhya and Parvasu. He is carefree about the effect of such an immoral relation on Vishakha's life.

Raibhya's relationship status with Vishakha is also the depiction of the pathetic state of affairs for women in the male dominated Indian society. Being in the status of father-in-law to Vishakha, Raibhya is expected to offer care and protection as the father does to his daughter, instead of this he gives her to physical torture and also casts his evil eye on Vishakha.

This is reflection of the treatment of women as instruments of pleasure and subjects of exploitation. Poor Vishakha becomes the subject of learned Raibhya hatred and lust. Another totally different relationship aspect without any revenge, the central theme of the play, is that of Arvasu and Nittilai. The relationship is based on love and sacrifices the totally opposite theme to the ones depicted earlier in the same play. Nittilai is a sharp contrast to the character of Vishakha. She is shown to be the ideal Indian woman. Her calm and merged nature speaks volumes about the dignity and responsibility she bears for everyone else's sake. Arvasu could not marry Nittilai as he was busy to cremate the body of Yavakri and as a result couldn't reach on time where the elders of Nittilai were waiting. The importance of things other than Nittilai in Parvasu's life depicts the lack in relationship. Whereas Nittilai's selfless reaction to help Arvasu when she heard he was in terrible need, shows her commitment level. The unequal empathy in the relationship speaks of inequality in man-woman relationships.

VII

In this play the picture of relationships had destroyed because of a ritual: Bali and Scarifies. In the play A Hindu king married a Jain Queen, out of his love to Queen he changes his religion from Hinduism to Jainism. But he was unable to come to with terms of new faith. The king and his mother followed the principles of Hinduism. The Queen is not happy with the King up to some extent so she develops relationship with the Mahout, a elephant keeper. She was happy with the company of Mahout; on the other hand she respects his husband also. Women are believed to live pious life after their marriage. In conjugal life, women are not permitted to join other person. Extra-marital relationship of woman is assumed as immoral act in Indian social system. The Queen becomes very aggressive to achieve her desire and she wants to control over her husband and her mother-in-law. The king could not accept her relationship with Mahout.

The nature of Queen Amritamati is more asserting as well as impulsive. More than any other female characters of Karnad, she is self-possessed. She controls and dominates behavior of her husband. She has managed to convert her husband to her faith, Jainism. Also, she gradually controls his state affairs. The Queen's sexual betrayal is quite unconvincing. Her husband attends her more than any other things in the world. For her happiness, he makes his own mother live separately. For her sake he left his family tradition of sacrificing animals.

The Queen wants to impose her principle of non-violence upon the King and the Mother Queen, and in the beginning she succeeds also. However, after her adulterous act, the Mother Queen gains ground. She makes the King insist the Queen upon involvement the act of sacrificing the dough cock. Finally, she pushes the Queen mad and at the end, the Queen

offers herself as a sacrifice. In other words, the Queen kills herself. She fails to understand the real meaning of the relationship which is based on the love, affection and happiness.

Girish Karnad presents the relationship between the Queen and Queen mother as a traditionally. Firstly she is not happy to listen that her son married a girl from Jain tradition. Her son's inter-religion marriage hurts her. She becomes very unhappy to know that her son adopted Jainism. She always wants that her son must accept the principles of Hinduism. Queen mother firmly believes in Hindu religious principles and she didn't accept the Queen's disloyalty towards his son. Queen mother wants to impose her thoughts on her family members. She was always kept interference in her son's married life. Queen and Queen Mother are derived from Indian myths but both of them have no personal feeling for each-other. Queen mother was not ready to accept her daughter-in-law as a family member. She just wanted to a baby from her which would be the king of the reign. Queen Mother and Queen Amritmati who strive to achieve and dominate on their male counterparts.

VIII

Karnad uses the marriage occasion to explore several modern issues related to relationships and society. The present play also throws new light on the psyche and behavior of men-women relationship. The mother, Hema, Vidula, Pratibha and even Radhabai are new women in the true sense of the term. Their lives are full of anxieties and resentments while facing the mental, psychological and emotional hardships of life.

The protagonist of the play, Vidula, is a girl of 22 who is going to get marry a NRI boy. She loves her brother very much. On the request of her brother she became ready for a video shoot for Ashwin. But her brother wants to hide the reality of her family from Ashwin. Vidula finds fault in her brother who thought that she must impress her fiancé in every possible way. For this she has to pretend what she is not. This shows the relationship between brother and sister. Her views about marriage have grown strangely due to the forceful behavior of Rohit who wants all the time that his sister must present herself beyond her original strengths. The relationship between mother and Daughter is not quite good. Her mother wants to take some kind of revenge from family relatives because they didn't treat her in good manner so she wants to do the same on the occasion of Vidula's marriage.

A very different shade of the humane relationship of mother-daughter is in suspense through mother and Hema's respond behavior, which is one of the peculiar characteristics of mother-daughter relationship in Indian context. The biases and prejudices of the mother-daughter relationship are clearly visible through mother and Hema. The Nadkarni mother is a typical incarnation of selfless attitude and sacrifice. Women's struggle in the contemporary Indian society is to find and preserve her identity as mother, wife and most important of all as a human being is expectant in the character of mother. She once might have expected to be emancipated but she could not, because of her family obligations. To peep into mother's mental and emotional make up one need to have a deep insight into her psychological realism.

When Ashwin has postponed his coming to India for few days, whole family worried about the shopping, wedding cards, booking of marriage hall etc. but nobody could not understand the inner felling of Vidula. Every family member is utterly anxious about his or her role to be played during the Wedding, but nobody is concerned to the mind-game of Vidula who is going to be a bride. Her bridal tensions are not understood by anybody. Father is concerned about the hefty advance given to the Wedding Hall. This shows the lack of maturity,

love, responsibility in relationships. The imbalanced empathy in the relationship converse of inequality in human relationships.

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