

# Three superficial beings: an eagle, a whale and a stag with golden antlers in Girish Karnad's plays

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## Abstract

The study of interpretation of dreams has a deep impact on man from prehistoric times by primitive races and effect of dreams has the formation of their conceptions of the world and soul. Karnad's dramas give a flamboyant variety of characters particularly his women characters dream about the infinite, Possibilities and reality. Karnad does not create his characters in a Psychoanalytic perspective but he unconsciously brings out the factual stand of Indian women in an Indian Scenario. His women characters are respected but they are given second position when they are compared with male character.

The transformation of ideas into hallucination is not the dreams which differ from corresponding thoughts in waking life. Dreams create a situation out of these images. In *Naga-mandala*, Rani is capable of power in dream-construction which Freud calls as "Fantasy". According to Freud, daydream is analogous to waking life. In the Play *Naga-mandala*, Rani views three superficial beings, an eagle, a whale and a stag with golden antlers all the three beings are able to speak like a human being. After studying dreams, we come to know that Wild animals come in dreams represent the passions which the dreamer is afraid, whether by his own or those of other people.

In the play *Naga-mandala*, she is afraid of her husband Appanna. She views her husband as a demon who is unwilling to speak to her and treats his house as a 'Castle' in which she is locked up. She dreams about the presence of Prince. According to Freud, if Emperor and Empress come in a dream, it represents the dreamer's parents and if prince or princess comes, it represents the dreamer himself or herself. In this drama, Rani's dreams are her "Wish - Fulfillments", even she is weak in body, and she expects her escape unconsciously.

All dreams have the same meaning. Dreams of flying come under the category. Flying dreams represent the sexual organ as the essence of the dreamer's whole personality and make him fly. According to Freud, Women also get the experience of flying dreams as men. The water image is interpreted as Rani deep in her mind, wants of a third person in her lonely life.

In *Hayavadana*, Padmini dreams of Kapila whom she has to give up for her husband. Though she is not able to contact him, she still yearns for his presence. In this play, two dolls communicate with each other and see what a human being is dreaming. Kapila's appearance in Padmini's dream is her 'Wish-Fulfillment'. In Indian tradition, seeing another man is not entertained. If the situation comes she can see the stranger in the presence of the male members of her family. In this play, even though Kapila is Devadatta's bosom friend, Devadatta does not wish his friend's appearance in front of Padmini.

Karnad's women characters from *Hayavadana*, *Naga-mandala*, and *The Fire and the Rain* are similar in various ways. All women characters are psychologically same in his plays. His women characters are searching for Self-Identity, grouping to find a place in society, crying out for attention and trying to fit into the position of mother, daughter, sister and wife. Karnad's women characters are kind and compassionate. They do not forget that the life of future generation lies in their hands.

Girish Karnad uses the story *Hayavadana* for analysing many existential problems like Possession in love, the illusion of friendship, the alienation of man and the quest for identity in an uncertain world. Already he has discussed these problems in his historical plays but his ability to analyse the psychological forces of the man makes it unique.

*Hayavadana* is a drama which endorses Carl Jung's idea that myth represents the collective consciousness of mankind. There are many theories to interpret myths. E.B.Taylor says:

Myth should not be treated as untrue or outdated, because they have a personal cause, as understood by myth maker, to natural events. Since, Personal causes are not predictable. So, there is uncertainty in the significance of myths. (107)

Bronislaw Malinowsky, a popular anthropologist says, "Primitive People use myth to reconcile themselves to the aspects of the world that cannot be controlled, such as natural calamities, ageing and death". (137)

Another Sociologist Mircea Eliade argues that "Myth is not only an exploration but also a ritual recreation of a story that it tells". (10)

According to him "the real purpose of myth is thus experimental encountering divinity". (84)

Girish Karnad says that the idea to write *Hayavadana* came in his mind when the producer of the play B.V.Karant y argued him about the meaning of masks in Indian theatre and theatre's relationship to music.

He believes that there is a drastic development between the face and the mask in the Western theatre. This contract development is between the inner person and the exterior one, wishes to present, to the world outside. But the mask is only the face in the Orthodox Indian Theatre, since a character represent not a complex psychological entity, but an ethical archetype, the mask merely presents in enlarged detail its essential moral nature.

Karnad says that the characters in *Hayavadana* do not have real names as they represent more than individuals. He gives the name Padmini to her heroine, the best one of the four types of woman introduced by Vatsayana. The two friends are given the name Devadatta and Kapila, their names represent meaning of stronger and a man of dark-complexion respectively.

Karnad says that the idea to use mask to his characters led him to question the theme itself in greater depth. As Jacob George observes,

Hayavadana's Problem is one of alienation as well as incompleteness. The incompatibility of his head and body and his inability to find his society, haunt him. He could not join the world of divine because he is rejected by his father (Celestian Being). The animal world is denied to him since he has not his mother's advantage of having a complete animal body and the equine face makes him a stronger among men. (22)

In the play *Hayavadana*, Hayavadana is yearning not only for perfection but also for a sense of belonging. He has been born out of the irrational love of the princess of Karnataka and a Stallion. He never understands that his feeling of dual qualities is natural. Bhagavata makes a description about the friendship of Devadatta and Kapila. He says that the world wonders about their friendship. The World compares their friendship with *Lava and Kusha, Rama and Lakshmana, Krishna and Balarama*. Their Mind and Heart are one.

But the irony here is Devadatta and Kapila are not mythical characters. They are ordinary human beings. The impact of mythical character forces them to be one mind and one heart but the human nature forces them to be two passionate human beings. The differentiation comes in their life when a beautiful woman enters their life.

The principle of Friendship expects Kapila to treat the wife of his friend as his sister. But he couldn't help himself because his yearning becomes strong when She comes near him in spite of the orthodox values force on her marriage with Devadatta. The heads of their bodies forces them to be idealistic but the

passionate bodies yearn for physical satisfaction. The duality of mind continues till Padmini transposes the heads of friends.

Karnad reveals how the nature of the man depends upon the intellect in the beginning and then by the physique. When Devadatta and Kapila get back their life, they are happy to find that their heads are transposed. Devadatta tells to Kapila that they are friends so far but now they are blood relation and body relation.

Soon their happiness becomes dry as they have to take decision, who is the husband of Padmini. According to tradition head is the important part of the body

So Padmini follows the body with Devadatta's head. Kapila finds out the real intention of Padmini. Kapila criticises Padmini for choosing Devadatta's clever head and Kapila's strong body.

But Devadatta supports her idea and says that there is nothing wrong in choosing him. It is natural for a woman to attract to a fine physique of a man. Thus, the idea of Devadatta reveals the true nature of human being who always tries to support his arguments according to his whims and fancies but not to the established traditional values.

Human beings nature is clearly revealed through the character of Padmini. Now, she yearns for Kapila after living for some time with the body which has Devadatta's head. She tells Kapila that she bore her son to the body which has Kapila's head. She consoles Kapila for his pain of being tortured by the conflict between his head and body. After the transposition of the heads, both Devadatta and Kapila are ruled by the body.

Finally, the head triumphs. Kapila starts writing poetry and Devadatta is interested in wrestling. But the success of the head over a body which is tuned according to the original head proves to be disastrous.

The problem of twenty first century man is to live the other body's life. Instead of living spontaneously, he is always crushed under the burden of living other's life. His up rootedness from the nature may be a reason behind it. The impact of alienation, rootless and loneliness are reason for it. Thus, Devadatta and Kapila represent the people of contemporary society.

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