

Masterstroke of Human Relationships in Indian Sensibility in Girish Karnad's – *Yayati* and *The Fire And The Rain*

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Abstract

Apart from being a playwright, GIRISH KARNAD is a wonderful actor, director, screen playwright and a man of creativity. He has enriched and adorned tradition of Indian drama with his own creativity. His plays propagate the virtue of tradition beliefs and values. In Vedic era, drama has been famed. Ramayana and Mahabharata have been the essence of various dramatic plots. These have been used for endorsing sensibility of issues overcoming in the society.

Through his plays *Yayati* and *The Fire and the Rain*, Girish Karnad is able to convey various shades of human relationships, “Man –woman relationships”. His first play *Yayati* displays the complex between Devayani, Sharmistha and the king Yayati on one side and Chitrlekha on the other side. In his another play *The Fire and the Rain* deals with relationship which rotate around- Parvasu, Vishakha, Raibhya, Yavakri, Nittillai and Arvasu.

Keywords: Girish Karnad, *Yayati*, *The Fire and the Rain*, Indian drama, sensibility, human relationship,

India has triumphant gift of drama right from the ancient period. Indian drama is much older than English drama. It is one of the oldest art forms. It began from the vedic era. In ancient times in Indian drama, there are seven dramatists- Bhasa, Shudraka, Bhavabhuti, Shudraka, Bhatta Narayana, Vishakhadutta and Harsha. The plays were based on the Hindu epics and the Puranas and these propagate the virtue of tradition, beliefs, values and myth.

“Drama is a composite art in which the written word of the playwright attains complete artistic realization only when it becomes the spoken word of the actor on the stage and though that medium reacts on the mind of the audience. A play, in order to communicate fully and become a living dramatic experience, thus needs a real theatre and a live audience”

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 20:3 March 2020

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Human Praxis and Modern Configuration through Literature -- VOLUME 2**

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The origin of drama is mostly rooted in religious instinct of the people. The development of drama had larger contribution from the “Church”, in England. Most of the clergymen wrote many ‘Miracle’ and ‘Morality’ plays, it drew heavily from the religious element. Largely the plays inspired in soul from deep rooted beliefs and values of the Indian soil- the “Indian Sensibility”.

The “Man- Woman Relationships” in his plays have received a rigorous treatment. The play Yayati displays the complex between Devayani, Sharmistha and the King Yayati on one side and Puru and Chitrlekha on the other side. The other play The Fire and the Rain deals with relationships, which rotate around Parvasu, Vishakha, Raibhya, Yavakri, Nittillai and Arvasu.

The relationship cosmos which surrounds Girish Karnad’s characters is the main string which builds around their appeal and magnetism. His characters are reared from the mythological bank of Indian Sensibility are outspoken in construct and dialogue. The Man- Woman Relationship canvas which these characters contribute to is diverse and comprehensive. Ranging from the husband and wife relationship to stepmother - son saga, Karnad has also been able to project universal perceptions of people in their times about man-woman relationship. Although women are the underdog in most of the relationship portrayals, but he has also touched the sensibility of man in complementary shades. Karnad has also depicted the levels in relationship response of his characters which are segregated age, caste and social tolerability wise.

In the play Yayati, the character of king Yayati is beautifully laid out amidst the longing for the youth which destroyed by the curse of Shukracharya and the encounter with Devayani, Sharmistha and Chitrlekha. The thread of love, extra marital relationship and incest is featured through the three female characters correspondingly.

Devayani’s relationship with Yayati is based on the theme of love. Her affection towards Yayati, her savior, is blemished by the presence of Sharmistha. In the play Yayati and Sharmistha are shown to be in an extra marital relationship, which Devayani couldn’t bear and hence- Shukracharya out of his daughter Devayani curses Yayati to become old. 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 feel in love with him. She is now horrified by the appearance of Yayati and runs away. The matrimonial relationship between the two shattered because of his extramarital affair and Devayani’s impulsive behavior. Yayati fails to realize the sacrosanct marriage. In this play Karnad depicts the father-daughter relationship in extreme manner, when Devayani express her love relationship to his father Shukracharya he accepted

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and allow her to marry Yayati, because of his faith in daughters decision Shukracharaya's maturity to handle the situation is appreciable. The curse which pour upon Yayati proves to be decisive in a negative sense. Sharmistha and Yayati are shown in out of social bound relationship. Yayati and Sharmistha relationship yet survives to the through the rough times of Yayati's old age curse the love of Sharmistha and Devayani to Yayati gives two shades of matrimonial aspects of man-women relationship.

Puru and Chitrlekha are seen in another deeper shade of relationship. Their matrimonial bond is destroyed by Puru's exchange of his youth with his father's old age. She is horrified by seeing the old appearance of Puru and encounters- "Don't come near me...go away from here...Don't touch!" (75). She can't able to console herself and this sudden shock leaves her longing for several of the act. Her agony pushed her in committing suicide.

Indian sensibility has played a large role in deciding actions of Puru. His exchange of youth reflects father- son relationship in Indian sensibility. There is complete lack of sympathy towards her. Chitrlekha's shocked state of mind can be seen by her act to offer herself to Yayati- Neither will you return Puru's youth nor will you accept me!... Of what use am I to your garland of victories? All of you have achieved your objectives. Who needs me now? You have your youth; Puru has his self-sacrifice, but what am I to do? (87) The shocking display of Chitrlekha's mental state couldn't move Yayati. The adultery of Yayati, rapidity of Devayani, Sharmistha's longing for Yayati, Puru's neglect of Chitrlekha, Chitrlekha's suicide and Yayati's regret leaves a deep impact.

The play "The Fire and the Rain" introduces a complex structure of relationship which is based on the components of hatred, jealousy and revenge. The characters Parvasu and Vishakha are shown to share marital bond. The relationship of these two persons is shown to be in a different pattern. Parvasu who has attained the chief-priesthood is away from his hermitage. In his absence, his wife Vishakha is shown to have been lured and courted by her past lover Yavakri. When he returns, he gets to know about the circumstances under which she was attracted towards Yavakri; Parvasu believes her. This is totally against the Indian Sensibility of imbalanced status adorned on women by men. The connection in the relationship of Parvasu and Vishakha shown here by Karnad with the notion of Indian sensibility as shown in the case of Puru, the concern towards his father rather than his wife Chitrlekha in Yayati. Vishakha on the other hand is shown to be a women dedicated to the husband. She gets lured by her past lover Yavakri. Her preliminary extraction from the trap shows that her sensibility protected her initially from being in an immoral relationship, but in the end the lure proved to be stronger and won.

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The past lover of Vishakha disturbed her and scorched for the vengeance against her husband and father-in-law. Yavakri projects his love to Vishakha and makes her a suitable vehicle to take revenge on Raibhaya. Thus the bond that Yavakri tries to stimulate due to the past affection, but just as towards the revenge. He uses Vishakha as an instrument in his fight against Raibhaya and Parvasu. For avenging his father's insult he entered into the marital life of Vishakha. She wishes to take revenge against her polluted environ makes her go outbound of the sacred relation of marriage. Raibhaya's relationship status with Vishakha is also the depiction of the pathetic state of affairs for women in the male dominated Indian society. The evil eye of Raibhaya upon Vishakha is the reflection of the treatment of women as instruments of pleasure and subjects of exploitation. The complication of the situation expresses the feeling of hatred and being insulted in father (Raibhaya) by the son (Parvasu) and since both have no direct opportunity to conflict; poor Vishakha becomes the subject of learned Raibhaya hatred and lust.

The relationship is based on love and sacrifices the totally opposite theme to the once depicted earlier in the same play. Nittillai is a sharp character in contrast to the character of Vishakha she is shown to the ideal Indian women. Nittillai's dedication and love towards Arvasu is indisputable, still she refuses his advances before marriage. When Nittillai married to an elder person she came to Arvasu and says in a serious voice-“Arvasu, when I say we should go together- I don't mean we have to live together- like lovers or husband and wife. I have been cruel enough to my husband. I don't want to discredit him further. Let's be together- like brother and sister. You marry any girl you like”. (Karnad, 1998) Arvasu respects her stand, but she lacks the same understanding by her brother and her husband. The brother and husband of Nittillai make her the object of the false vengeance. The important of things other than Nittillai in Arvasu's life depicts the lack in relationship. The unequal empathy in the relationship speaks of lack of correspondence in man-women relationship.

Grish karand has shown the man women relationship in the different frame of vengeance and distrust. In his works he results in completion of dispossessed and pathetic situation of women in the Indian society. He depicted various issue which touches the triad at the heart of audience. There is an consequence of issues such as adultery, misconception, ravens, domination and exploitation in contemporary scenario is consummate success at the platform of Indian English drama. The irresponsible and incentive men characters emerge large in his scripts. The characters are Puru, Parvasu, Araibhya, Yavakri, Yayati and Arvasu prove to be gruff and totally detached of any concern towards womenfolk.

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Female character are mostly suppressed and dominated they appear to be generally feebler to lunch themselves and their causes. Nittillai and Vishakha shows some challenge and our successful in either effecting the change in the attitude. A comprehensive evaluation of all these character points out the significance of abilities of women in general and appeals towards achieving respectfulness and equivalence in relations. The man-women relationship in the context with Indian sensibility, we can be best express as-

In that family, where the husband is pleased with his wife and the wife with her husband, happiness will assuredly be lasting (60).

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