



**CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA IN PLAYS OF GIRISH
KAMAD : INTERPRETS MYTHS, TALES, LEGENDS, TRADITIONS FROM
ANTIQUITY**

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ABSTRACT

Girish Kamad examines the cultural and social life of contemporary India via the use of storytelling techniques such as folktales, mythology, and historical accounts. He does a masterful job of combining the timeless lessons about human nature and emotions that can be found in traditional Indian stories with the ever-evolving societal mores and moral standards that are prevalent in modern society He intends to undertake. Rani is unable to respond to the minute variations that exist between these two worlds and shift between the edge and the centre because of the way that her oppositional consciousness is created. This is because of the way that she is constructed. In spite of this, she is opposed to the generally accepted concept of core and margin, which positions subjugated women on the peripheral and male domination in the centre of the hierarchy. During the course of her journey from innocence to experience, she not only becomes gender-recognizable but also challenges and challenges the patriarchal worldview and the patriarchal universe. This concise study of Girish's works of fiction aimed at women As Karnad follows the evolution of women in India from ancient times to the contemporary/postmodern age, his plays demonstrate that he spans various periods, depicting women from the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Shudra, and tribal civilizations.

Keywords: *Cultural , Social Life , Contemporary Myths, Tales, Legends, Traditions , Antiquity*

INTRODUCTION

Cultural and social life of contemporary India

In his plays, Girish Kamad examines the cultural and social life of contemporary India via the use of storytelling techniques such as folktales, mythology, and historical accounts. He does a

masterful job of combining the timeless lessons about human nature and emotions that can be found in traditional Indian stories with the ever-evolving societal mores and moral standards that are prevalent in modern society. His plays, in particular, concentrate on the psychological problems, moral conundrums, and conflicts that modern Indian men and women experience in the many social circumstances in which they find themselves.

In his first play, *Yayati* (1961), Kamad gave the ancient narrative a new relevance and meaning, which is highly relevant in the context of current life. *Yayati* is not only very relevant but also very meaningful. Even though it is a page from a history that has not yet been uncovered, the play addresses a topic that is extremely contemporary. Despite the fact that Kamad makes use of myth in the theatre, myth serves a function that extends beyond its own factual core. Myth expands, enhances, and enriches itself with each telling and retelling that it undergoes. It has been reported on several occasions that the *Yayati* myth exists. An explanation is provided by Kamad to Kirtinath Kurtkoti on the modernity of the play. He says, "Whatever modernity the play has might have been due to my young age and the influence of the European modernists whom I had read."

The character of King *Yayati*, who is the epitome of the contemporary average man, is shown in the play as someone who, although enjoying enormous pleasure, is nonetheless restless and rebellious. This situation is made abundantly evident by *Yayati*'s conversation:

Are you alone? Which subject are you going to talk about? No, I do not want to be alone myself. As for me, I can't handle it. What I desire is for other people to be close to me. Queens, ministers, armies, adversaries, and individuals in general are all types of people. I value each and every one of them above all others. The concept of being alone is repulsive in and of itself. *Sharmishtha*, I need to be honest with myself and I need to be able to maintain my youth. It is imperative that I preserve my youth.

Kamad examines history from the point of view of the present in order to build a better future. He does this by bringing up significant social, political, and cultural problems that are prevalent in Indian culture and politics. It is the opening scene of the play that sets the tone for the subsequent contemplation on leadership. This scene makes a significant reference to the Gandhian model of political action. *Tughlaq*'s subjects include one who asserts that he is a king who does not mind being human and another who wonders why the emperor feels the need "to make such a fuss about bring human and announce his mistakes to the whole world." Both of these individuals are from the same group of people.

Tughlaq has surprised both his Muslim and Hindu inhabitants by abolishing the *jiziya*, a poll tax that was supposed to be a discriminatory tool against Hindus but was instead mandated in the Quran for non-believers, and by creating a court system that allowed his subjects to question him. Both of these actions have caused a great deal of surprise. Gandhi's political strategy is founded on the humility and reflection that are necessary for making such forthright confessions of mistake over his political career. This is the story of my truth-experiments account. During a public meeting in 1919, for instance, Gandhi made the admission that he had begun the campaign too soon, following the violent turn of civil disobedience in the Ahmedabad region. He made this admission in the context of Gandhi's words. The discovery that I made sparked a significant lot of ridicule directed at me. Having said that, I have never once felt guilty about telling the truth. For as long as I can remember, I have been of the opinion that the only way to get an accurate

assessment of the two is to use a convex lens in order to perceive one's own mistakes and the reverse in the case of other people. In addition, I believe that in order to become a Satyagrahi, one must obey his rule with the utmost care and attention to detail.

The fictitious biography of Muhammad that Kamad has written is "basically concerned with the tragedy of limits of human power in predominately psychological context." In this account, many political figures from colonial and post-colonial India are mentioned.

Because Kamad has included two awful imposters into the subplot, the atmosphere of suspicion, dishonesty, violence, and other negative emotions has been amplified. The characters Aziz and Aazam are a representation of the opposing side of the depravity and viciousness that the Sultan has.

The persons in question are dishonest and macho. The person known as Aziz is one who is insightful, bright, creative, and strategic. Throughout the performance, he wears a number of different masks. In order to deceive the authorities, he assumes the identity of Vishnu Prasad, a Brahmin. Although he is employed by the state as an official, he steals money from the public coffers. By pretending to be Ghiyas-ud-din Abbasid, he is a thief who makes a living by robbing people and fooling both the king and the general public. A Muslim dhobi named Aziz is responsible for the murder of the most revered Arabian saint, Abbasid, which is a violation of the purity of religion. This idea proposes that every individual must, at some point in his or her existence, engage in criminal activity. It is his closest friend, Aazam, who he kills. Learning about his political opinions is a fascinating topic to investigate. He elaborates by saying, "Politics!" Despite the fact that there are a great number of people in our world who are affluent, successful, and powerful, there are also a great number of people who are foolish.

Kamad interprets myths, tales, legends, and traditions from antiquity

Relying on myths, tales, legends, and traditions from antiquity, Kamad interprets the old human condition in light of present reality in virtually all of his plays. He does this by relying on ancient cultural practices. It is through the exploration of ancient mythology that he leads us to the discovery of the inner conflict that tears at the mind of a man. Kamad's Hayavadana, on the other hand, digs into the difficult psycho-social dimension of the quandary of human identity crisis in both knotted and untangled relationships. This is in contrast to the moral component of the Indian tale and the philosophical objective of Mann's novel.

Before commencing anything new, Lord Ganesha is invoked at the opening of the play, much like we do before beginning anything new.

Herambha, you have the head of an elephant.

We honour you and begin our performance.

Whose flag is victorious.

and who shines like a million suns.

Riddhi and Siddhi's husband.

seated on a mouse and decked with a snake.

the one-tusked axe killer of incompleteness.

we honour you and begin our show.

The play draws attention to the underlying ambiguity that exists inside an individual's personality, which is either formed or destroyed by the environment in which they find themselves. Despite the fact that humans are intrinsically defective and incomplete, they persistently strive to acquire the level of perfection and completeness that is impossible to attain.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study on Kamad interprets myths, tales, legends, and traditions from antiquity
2. To study on Cultural and social life of contemporary India

Characterizing Padmini, Hayavadan, and Padmini's child with completeness and perfection

Girish Kamad does an excellent job of characterising Padmini, Hayavadan, and Padmini's child as having a strong need for completeness and perfection. It is most possible that Kamad is seeking to express, via Padmini, the predicament of a modern woman who is bold, independent, and stuck between two extremes. This woman is a lady who loves her husband and another person for two different aspects of their personality. Kamad has portrayed her position via the usage of symbols that are found in the Female chorus.

Why should love remain attached to a single body? Why should the lantana stem be limited to the relationship of a single flower when it is saturated with the dense longing of the numerous petals and flowers?

Following the head-to-head encounter, Padmini said she had the greatest qualities from both men: "fabulous body -fabulous brain -fabulous Devadatta."

Both Davadatta and Kapila are the subjects of her interest, which is the source of the problem. Padmini embodies the notion that human need is not satisfied. The two men are unable to tolerate one another when it comes to sharing a woman, and as a result, they end up murdering one another. Sati is committed by Padmini after she throws two dead bodies on a bonfire.

To provide one example, Hayavadana does not end up destroying himself in the same manner that Padmini does; rather, he suffers the harsh consequences of his pursuit of satisfaction by falling the existence ladder from man to horse. At long last, the serious and indifferent son of Padmini to human queries and requests enthusiastically responds to Hayavadana with a song that he had learnt from his mother from the beginning of his life. The laughter of Hayavadan, which restores the youngster to his natural state, is the catalyst that makes it possible for the boy to regain his humanity. As M.K. Naik points out, "Modern man must recover his sense of childlike curiosity, wonder and amusement at the sheer incongruity of life in order to achieve integration" .

According to a critical examination of Kamad's depiction of supernatural entities in Hayavadana, notably Kali, the playwright's atheistic tendencies are shown, and it is implied that these animals

are unable to aid humanity unless they accept the psychological limits that Nature has set upon them.

In his third play, *Nagamandala* (1981), Kamad portrays a powerful image of the anguish and suffering faced by both sexes as they develop into adult responsibilities and make social changes in a society that provides little opportunity for personal growth, awareness, and independence. This play was written by Kamad.

In his plays, Kamad employs mythology and folklore as a means of dealing with issues that are socio-cultural in nature. According to his opinion "The energy of folk theatre comes from the fact that although it seems to uphold traditional values, it also has the means of questioning these values of making them literally stand on their head."

Within the context of his play *Nagamandala*, he not only critiques patriarchal society, male chauvinism, and the subjection of women, but he also subtly destroys the concept of chastity via the tale of Rani. According to Karnad's interpretation, the role of Rani in the *Naga-Mandala* story may be seen as a metaphor for the conditions of a young girl who lives in a shared family. In this scenario, the young girl views her husband as a stranger during the day and as her lover at night. As a result of the fact that she is obliged to put together a pattern of connections from these random interactions, it is unavoidable that this pattern be partially made up. It is possible that Rani's married family will make their home in the empty house where she is now being held captive.

During the Middle Ages, the chastity belt, the relegation of women's gifts to domestic responsibilities, and the isolation of women from pleasure and enlightenment were all represented by Rani's solitary confinement in the house by Appanna.

The narrative of the play is written by Kamad, and it is subsequently revealed to illustrate the complexities of wedded love. Every kind of flame, including kusbi oil, castor oil, kerosene oil, and so on, have distinctive characteristics that are a reflection of the hierarchical structure that is prevalent in Indian culture. At this hour of the night, the Flames represent the women of the village who have come to tell tales and sing songs. They have come to tell stories and sing songs. According to Karnad, the story of the flame exemplifies the paradoxical nature of oral traditions in general. This is due to the fact that oral traditions exist apart from the one who tells them and only come to life when they are passed on from the person who tells them to the audience. Taking this perspective into consideration, the position of a narrative is analogous to that of a daughter. Historically speaking, a daughter is expected to be passed on from generation to generation rather than being kept at home for a lengthy period of time.

In the play, Kamad draws attention to the intimate link that exists between the oral narrative tradition and women's subculture in settings that are characterised by patriarchal societies. During the time that they are working on chores around the house or before going to bed, mothers like telling stories to their children, as stated by Kamad. It is possible that patriarchal and conventional narratives may not always enable or accept women's sharing of their own opinions and experiences when they are in the presence of other women and children. The author Karnad asserts that these stories are a manifestation of a "distinctly woman's understanding of the reality

around her, a lived counterpoint to the patriarchal structures of classical text and institutions." In civilizations that are dominated by patriarchy, men make it their goal to lower the IQ of women in order to demonstrate that they are ignorant and foolish.

Because of their intimate links with other members of their family and their inability to explore the world on their own, women often struggle with issues of identity that are related to their relationships outside of the home. As Sudhir Kakar points out, the "dominant psycho-social realities of a woman's life can be condensed into three stages," and this summary is accurate. She fulfils three duties in her life: first, she is the daughter of her parents; second, she is the wife of her husband and the daughter-in-law of his parents; and third, she is a mother to her sons and daughters.

The first obstacle that Rani must overcome on her path to personal development is the fact that she is living with a man who does not completely provide for her in terms of emotionally and physically connecting with her. The man's schizophrenic behaviour, which manifests itself in such a contradictory manner during the day and at night, contributes to her confusion.

When Rani becomes pregnant, it is time to confront the situation head-on once and for all. At the same time, Naga is conscious of the fact that her identity would be revealed if he were to use his patriarchal authority to suppress her reason and intuition.

I am afraid that is going to be the situation, Naga says in a serious tone. During the day, in the same way, and in the evening, in the same fashion with this. Ask not why, if you please.

The response from Rani was, "I refuse to."

We are reminded of Sita's trial in the Ramayana by the scenario of Rani's trial, which highlights the connections between the contemporary Indian values and the old Indian ideals. For a very long time, the normal examination in the local court has consisted of that individual swearing an oath while holding a hot iron. On the other hand, Rani is quite confident that "one must swear by the King Cobra."

A significant kind of devotion that is still commonly practiced in Kerala is the naga cult, which is largely inspired by Hindu mythology. This cult is a noteworthy example of devotion. Blind faith and superstition, which are driven by confidence in Naga mythology and folklore, are the driving forces behind the practice of ritual worship of various Naga. When it comes to their sociocultural life, the people of Kerala who follow the Hindu faith continue to actively observe these rituals regularly.

Immediately after the judgement was handed out, Rani took over as the head of the family. The appanna accepts her superiority and speaks to her accordingly.

You cannot be considered a typical individual. The matriarchal Rani, on the other hand, never gives him orders, in contrast to the patriarchal Appanna who came before her. The goddess that you are.

The drama makes a passing reference to matriarchy in its finale, which serves as a foreshadowing of the fact that matriarchy will ultimately follow patriarchy if our civilization is capable of progressing.

Throughout his career, Girish Kamad has explored a variety of topics that are associated with Indian mythology, religious beliefs, as well as historical and present ideals. As a result, he has a strong fascination with India and Indian citizenship. It would seem that Kamad has accepted the responsibility of reinterpreting and, if necessary, reorganising the traditional caste-related beliefs that are associated with social and political systems. Additionally, he has an interest in the nuances that are associated with religion. In his second historical play, *Tale-Danda*, he revisits the reasoning behind and the construction of India's caste system, which was once lauded as the most effective system in the world. In order to suit his contemporary requirements, he modifies the *Tale-Danda* theme by using historical and political backdrop in the process of crafting his narrative. As Kamad points out, "I wrote *Tale-Danda* in 1989 when the 'Mandir' and the 'Mandat' movements were beginning to show again how relevant the questions posed by these thinkers were for our age."

Exploitation and injustice

Exploitation and injustice have both become the "natural" norm in our society as a result of the internalisation and perception of individualism and competition that our culture has. Because of this, everyone has come to accept inequality as the norm. Steiner is true when he claims "The difficulty which we have in feeling equality with all other human beings is the result in part of our banal training in competitiveness and individualism."

Kamad makes an effort to study the factors that led to the failure of the Basavanna movement; in the end, it has been determined that the followers, and not the adversaries, were the ones who betrayed the organisation. In light of the fact that religious extremism is strong enough to cause the destruction of the Babri Mosque and the deaths of thousands of people, he is of the opinion that *Tale-Danda* is still important in his day. He continues by saying "When people all around us are slaughtered in the name of a temple, I hear echoes from those times long past."

Consequently, the comment made by Basavanna, which reads, "Violence is wrong, regardless of the provocation," is a reference to the violence that occurs in mandirs and masjids. It is a bad idea to resort to it just due to the fact that someone else has done it in the past. The fact that it is being done in the name of a physical structure is a tribute to stupidity.

The portrayals of Nittlai and Vishakha in the play are meant to represent the sexual and maternal aspects of the women of today. Problems that are designed to favour male domination are the foundation upon which their whole existence exists. Several factors, including the power struggle that takes place among the male characters of the upper caste, their domination in the marginalised group, and the extent to which they are unable to determine their own futures, all contribute to the oppression that they experience and the tragic end that they reach.

Within Brahmanic culture, Vishakha, who is the wife of the top priest Paravasu, is a member of a class that is considered to be of the highest distinction. a single individual who is faced with the challenges of a marriage that is devoid of love. The plight of aristocratic Brahmin and Kshatriya

women in ancient India is beautifully shown in her novel. These women had to deal with the contradiction of being abused and exploited while at the same time being sought, loved, and revered. Her story effectively shows this difficult situation. These ladies were constrained by the norms of society. "Yavakri and you," she says in her speech, highlighting the feminine viewpoint on men's unbridled thirst for power and knowledge, which makes them all equally bad. She says this via the phrase "Yavakri and you." How strikingly similar the two of you are in appearance. The two of you will vanish whenever you both feel like it. You should come back without giving a reason.

The sadness of the narrative is brilliantly captured by Vishakha in her own words, which are as follows: "Why is life so paradoxical, Yavakri? In the same manner that one feels as if they had stepped upon a little piece of stable ground, a miniature heaven, the earth cracks all the way through.

Nittilai is a drama that demonstrates the playwright's interest in investigating the many ideological issues that have renourished Indian civilization over the course of several millennia. She is the embodiment of the stern ideals that guide a society that is mostly non-Brahmanical and was not influenced by the power battles that occurred in ancient India. She gives us an introduction to the ascetic tradition, which was a strong cultural current in ancient India but now relatively unknown. These are the words that Tagore uses to describe Reminiscences. "The great is to be found in the small, the infinite within the bounds of form and the eternal freedom of the soul in love," Tagore says, and her character exemplifies this concept.

If Nittilai wants to gain Arvasu's devotion, she is willing to sacrifice her life. For the sake of serving him, she puts her life in jeopardy. She becomes the goat that is offered as a sacrifice. "She lies there, her eyes open bleeding, dying like a sacrificial animal," the writer says. "She is dying like an animal offering."

As a consequence of the fact that Nittilai and Vishakha are both representatives of a homogenised group (women), they are both subjected to male control, which leads to the exploitation and persecution of them by the diverse male subjects, who may be violent at times.

The work makes a very subtle reference to the widespread practice of Brahmins from higher social classes taking advantage of those from lower social classes. According to Nittilai's father, "that Brahmins bed their women but hesitate to wed," he says.

It is still the case that members of the higher class commit crimes of this kind against members of the lower class. It is vital to have a sympathetic understanding of their difficult past in order to cope with our contemporary reality, which likewise includes genuine humanity. This is because our current reality contains true humanity. It would seem that Kamad is arguing that caste and gender are irrelevant when it comes to the ability to think critically and come up with inventive solutions to problems.

CONCLUSION

The problem of power and control over Indian women in both the political and representational spheres. This is something that Karnad intends to undertake. Rani is unable to respond to the minute variations that exist between these two worlds and shift between the edge and the centre

because of the way that her oppositional consciousness is created. This is because of the way that she is constructed. In spite of this, she is opposed to the generally accepted concept of core and margin, which positions subjugated women on the peripheral and male domination in the centre of the hierarchy. During the course of her journey from innocence to experience, she not only becomes gender-recognizable but also challenges and challenges the patriarchal worldview and the patriarchal universe. This concise study of Girish's works of fiction aimed at women As Karnad follows the evolution of women in India from ancient times to the contemporary/postmodern age, his plays demonstrate that he spans various periods, depicting women from the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Shudra, and tribal civilizations. He also represents women from the tribal communities. The quality of his female buddies is not very high. Others are ambivalent and seeking to find their position in the patriarchal system, while yet others are stereotypically conformist. Some people are autonomous and rebellious in their ways, while others are defiant and striving to find their place in the system. It would seem that Karnad is more concerned with the dramatics, such as the immediate performative affect that the plays have on the audience, than she is with the feminist problem. Furthermore, he always follows Bharat's Natyashastra, which encourages a joyful conclusion, with the exception of historical plays.

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