



FEMALE CHARACTERS IN THE PLAYS OF GIRISHKARNAD

Dr.B. AnandaRao¹. Mrs.AparanjaniUppa²

¹Sr. Asst. Prof. of English. Sri Vasavi Engg. College, Tadepalligudem

²Asst. Prof. of English. Sri Vasavi Engg. College, Tadepalligudem

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this essay is to highlight the role of women in the plays of GirishKarnad works. This study investigates how Karnad depicted the role of women with the use of examples taken from his chosen plays. This essay provides a comprehensive understanding of Karnad's attitude towards women. The plays of GirishKarnad are extremely important from a feminist perspective. As a living legend, He was regarded as one of India's greatest playwrights. He assesses each of his female characters critically. They are given a lot of room to express themselves. To achieve their goals, they go beyond social standards. They represent power, honesty, and protest against social structures that devalue women's roles in societies where men predominate.

KEYWORDS: *Feminism, patriarchy, courageous, dominating, liberty, strength.*

INTRODUCTION

The Women characters in GirishKarnad's plays are actual characters rooted in the Indian psyche throughout time, not just objects of society's infatuation with beauty. They are bright, brave, and sensible, in addition to being sensitive and reasonable. They are strong because of their vulnerability; they are protected by their delicate interpretation; their tongue is their sword; and, perhaps most importantly, they are led by spontaneity even in their most oppressed circumstances. By acting on their unrestrained urges like rage, passion, and desire within the confines of the man-made world, individuals not only represent the tendencies of social change but also serve as its agents. The most amazing double subalterns are Swarnalata, Sharmistha, and Kurudavva. They are the ones who have a much deeper understanding of reality and life's purpose than other characters. Women take the initiative to challenge the patriarchal attitudes and thoughts that dominate the leading male characters when those features are almost unchanging. They do this by asking crucial questions and acting differently. In most plays, men are the dominant characters and the towering figures, although women are thought of as having a variety of positions that allow them to be at the centre of the action or storyline.

In the plays of Karnad, there are at least three sets of female characters, and sometimes even more. The first group of characters did not perform on stage, but their stories nonetheless strongly influenced the audience and served to tie the plays' plots together. The second set of characters are vitally important to the plot yet are positioned lower among the women. This list includes Swarnalata, Kurudava, and Radhabai.

Devyani, Sharmistha, Chitralekha, Vishakha, Nittlai, Rani, Padmini, Manjula, and Vidula are the play's third group of heroines. These characteristics are renowned for their inner fortitude, impulsivity, and ruggedness, which make them energetic, brave, disobedient, and forward-thinking. This

species has evolved into a superior creature than its competitors thanks to its constant need to reinvent its place in society.

Although women hold a prominent position in society, they are viewed as the "other" or "second" sex in a patriarchal society. Karnad speaks out against this rather than continuing to glorify his son's selflessness. Devayani, the queen, must endure humiliation before going insane. Sharmistha is an easy target for Yayati's sexual fulfilment, while Swarnalata is tormented by her husband's accusations of infidelity and is ultimately abandoned. Even though Chitralekha likewise experiences these issues, she emerges as a new woman who bravely contests Pooru's choice and the erroneous rhetoric of Yayati. She forbids Pooru from going into her bedroom because he accepts his father's route due to his morally deficient demeanour and age.

In addition to being a playwright, GirishKarnad is a highly skilled communicator with In two different ways, women are portrayed in Karnad's plays. Despite not being truly modern, several other characters in his plays are given more freedom to express themselves. Another one of Karnad's characters is Chitralekha. No, sir, I didn't push him over to the edge of the pyre. I did. You talk about my wifely obligations; what about your responsibility to your son? Did you stop to consider your actions before blaming your son for your problems? Chitralekha appears to be looking for a guy to define her and give her some recognition in a world where men are in charge.

Karnad emphasises in the play the close connection between the oral storytelling tradition and the subculture of women that exists in patriarchal countries. prejudices rooted in culture in a patriarchal society dominated by men. Women are still perceived as being stupid and uneducated, and their intelligence is not fully appreciated. They also lack the freedom to express themselves in public. Rani serves as a metaphor for all women of that era who go through socialisation in a patriarchal society in the current drama. She respects social norms on the surface, as evidenced by her conventional appearance, yet she stands out



as a lady of courage, confidence, and self-trust. She prepares for any examination in an effort to establish her purity and succeeds in doing so regardless of gender.

Karnad is successful in demonstrating this through Rani's personality. As a religious piece, Tale Danda draws more attention to castism. Women's oppression and vulnerability are both depicted through the character of Rambhavathi in the reformation, and neither a woman of high status nor a woman of lower status are exempt from this circumstance. Rambhavathi, a middle-class wife and mother of Jagadevas, is likewise a target of oppression. His depictions of female characters reveal a deeper comprehension of Indian women. He has subjected his female characters to all of life's important phases, particularly guilt. The female character in almost all of his plays is the one who is in charge. He described how women are portrayed in his stories with all of his freedom. In his plays, he has developed a number of additional methods for portraying both classical and contemporary archetypes of female characters. Because women were not subject to sociocultural, political, or economic difficulties in ancient times, women are often portrayed in historical plays as submissive roles.

Hayavadana's mother, "the princess," is the only one who has crafted his past narrative. The princess is portrayed in this instance as being obstinate. By swapping the heads of both guys, she brazenly ruined the situation. She didn't pass up the opportunity to coexist with Kapila's body and Devadatta's soul. She defends what may be considered an unlawful connection with her justifications. Devadatta fought with Kapila until the very end although never suspecting her of the events. Padmini never allowed the pandemonium to affect how much she was enjoying her life. She herself makes the decision to kill both guys.

Kapila was represented as Hanuman since he assisted Padmini and Devadatta in getting married. In Bhagavata's hands, Padmini's son laughs for the first time in his five-year life. This demonstrates the fact that Padmini is a terrible mother. Such a representation of women is not a healthy one. In a patriarchal society, women are expected to follow the directives of the men in the household, but Karnad gave Padmini the authority to make decisions, which led to the tragic conclusion of the story. After being married, a woman is expected to completely rely on her husband's words rather than her parents' advice. But in the case of Padmini, Karnad deviates from the norm and gives Padmini the freedom to express herself and make her own decisions. The exchange that follows between Padmini and Devadatta demonstrates Padmini's courage in defying her husband.

In this play, Karnad employed a female chorus in addition to Padmini. This chorus of women is significant because it shows that the sole choices made by the female characters are what direct the plot. He used this chorus as a situational allusion as well as a symbol for the subconscious thoughts of the human mind. encourages her to have guts and bravery. Even though Rani was the primary character and the focus of the plot, she was once again portrayed as a rigid patriarchal adherent. She pays attention to the male cobra's comments once more. His

main character similarly abides by the established norms that are intended to create a patriarchal society. Appanna, Rani's husband, was genuinely portrayed as a tyrannical figure who cares little for either his life or his wife. Rani works very hard to maintain their bond, even going so far as to play a nasty joke on her spouse. Despite Rani's admiration in some places, Karnad also criticises her for her immaturity. She is portrayed in Karnad as an immature young woman who is easily seduced by anyone's seductive words. Even the cobra, who visits Rani every night in disguise, manages to fool her. She lacks the maturity to distinguish between the genuine Appanna and the Cobra in disguise. She is portrayed by Karnad as a woman who yearns for love and devotion. The village elders also made Rani submit to a purity test; however, Appanna maintains that the kid growing inside of her is not his. Despite her husband accusing her, she still lets the cobra in disguise inside her room. She once more makes the irrational decision to follow the cobra's advice and believes its tales wholeheartedly.

Karnad portrays her in these situations as an example of a post-modern Indian woman who battles for her freedom and works hard to understand her role in society. In other circumstances, her actions raise questions about the patriarchy's demands on how she should behave. But she was frequently forbidden from sticking out her tongue. Karnad places Rani in a position where she must demonstrate her virginity, just as Sita did in the Ramayana. Through this scene, Karnad imbues the reader with Sita. Karnad attempted to portray the mindset of a post-modern woman who craves modernity but still adheres to the patriarchy through the female characters Rani and Padmini. Karnad demonstrated that while it's great for women to oppose the patriarchy, there are occasions when it really protects them from calamity.

Two ladies play parts in the other drama, Bali. The other character is a queen and her mother. Queen Mother is the mother of the king and practises Hinduism. She adheres fervently to the customs, rites, and cultural practises of the Hindu religion; she worships gods and goddesses and enjoys offering sacrifices of human blood to them. She demands that every member of the family adhere to Hindu traditions, which have a long and illustrious past. However, the mother of the other character, Queen, the wife of the King, is aware of their extramarital relationship. Without citing the aforementioned justification, she instructs her son to kill his wife by stating that she is sterile. It shows the queen mother's conservative mentality, which was created in a patriarchal society, and how deeply ingrained conventions were in her life. Her daughter-in-law's extramarital connection was something she could not stomach. Instead of blaming her son for not being able to satisfy his wife's desires, the mother of the queen accuses the queen of being impure and betraying her husband. Karnad tries to introduce both characters in two different ways, with the queen mother serving as an example of tradition in a patriarchal society.

CONCLUSION

In Karnad's drama, every single female character is harmed by the male-dominated culture. They were more severely repressed because they attempted to enter the social system that



was dominated by men. While the female is silent, absent, and helpless, the male has a voice, is present, and has influence. By giving women the power to follow their inner convictions and challenge deeply ingrained social conventions, rites, and rituals that are dominated by men, the Karnad movement has, to some extent, been successful in lessening the immense unfairness that women experience in patriarchal society. The article ends with some recommendations made by Amartya Sen in his book "more than 100 million women are missing" to help women in societies dominated by men. He claims that the only way to elevate her status would be through gainful employment outside the home. In family matters, her recommendations are appreciated. She might achieve gender equality by taking on the job of the breadwinner, and gradually society would begin to treat women with the same respect and equality as men. Many societal prejudices that support male dominance may disappear. Karnad has given the female characters the least emotional nuance possible so that they can break free of their customary confines and either protest against injustice or pursue their own desires. They are the ones who have a much deeper understanding of reality and life's purpose than other characters. Women take the initiative to challenge the patriarchal attitude and thought that dominates the leading male characters when those features are almost unchanging. They do this by asking crucial questions and acting differently. In most plays, men are the dominant characters and the towering figures, although women are thought of as having a variety of positions that allow them to be at the focus of the action or storyline.

REFERENCES

1. Karnad, Girish. *Hayavadana*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi. 2010.
2. Karnad, Girish. *Three Plays Naga-Mandala, Hayavadana, Tughlaq*. Oxford University Press, New Delhi. 2009.
3. Khatri, C.L. *Script of Submission and Subversion: A Critique of Girish Karnad's Women. Creation and Criticism, A Quarterly International Peer-Reviewed e-Journal*. April 2016. Web: 04/07/2019.
4. Nayak, Bhagbat. *Girish Karnad's Plays Archetypal and Aesthetical Presentations*. Yayati: New Delhi: O.U.P., 2008
5. *Hayavadana (fourteenth impression)*. Chennai: OUP, 1998. This edition has been used and subsequent references are from the edition.
6. Tripathi, Vanashree. *Three plays of Girish Kanale. A study in politics and culture - Hayavadana, Tale - Danda, the fire and the Dain*: New Delhi, prestige books, 2004
7. Henrik Ibsen's - 'Dolls House' (play)
8. Somalata Y. "Girish Karnad's Tale - Danda painful life of passage, Flowering of Indian English Drama: Growth and development. Eds. Reddy, Venkatesh K and R.K. Dhawan - New Delhi: prestige book.
9. Soni J.D. "Girish Karnad's Naga-Mandala: An experiment in technique. India writing in the New millennium. Ed. Dhawan, R.K. New Delhi: Indian association for Indian studies, 200.
10. Raj Mohit K. "Hayavadana: A study of Karnad's use of source - texts and Folk Form Indian writing in English. Volume I. (Ed). Rama kundu, New Delhi: Atlantic publishers and distributes, 2003
11. British, Joseph: "sexuality" India: Routledge (2007)
12. Dhanvel P. *Indian Imagination of Girish Karnad* New Delhi, prestige books (2000)