

Treatment of Myth in Girish Karnad's Play the Fire and the Rain

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ABSTRACT: GirishKarnad has already set out his dramatic excellences while working on the myths and symbols in his Hayavadana, Tughlaq and Naga-Mandala. Myth and folk-tales becomes symbolic of unveiling the social and moral norms and the psychological obsessions with men and women of the society. He surpasses his own dramatic genius in the structural pattern of The Fire and The Rain for showing vehemently opposing elements; the rain of human love and sacrifices. The Fire and The Rain abounds in its hard-woven texture the riches of psychology, the aversion and the jealousy of man against man, father against son, wife against husband, high caste against low caste people, man against God, freedom against bondage, hate against love, the fire against the rain, passion against the truth, and above all vidya against avidya.

I.INTRODUCTION

The structural plan of The Fire and The Rain runs into three parallel streams; Raibhya and vishakha at the hermitage, the sacrificial place with Paravasu as the chief priest and the story of Nittilai and Aravasu as actors in a theatrical performance. The soul of the play entirely rotates around the indigenous myth of yavakri.

The mythical and symbolic plan of The Fire and The Rain is so designed as it links in its structural with the original myth of Mahabharata for displaying Indian ethos and modern apathy towards human relationship. The original story of the Mahabharata shows the molestation of Raibhya's daughter-in-law by Yavakri but Karnad exhibits a willing submission of Vishakha to the incestuous behest of Yavakri. The incestuous and aggressive forces in vishakha become salient properties of her mind but her meeting with Yavakri creates a stress and split in her personality.

Karnad follows some psychological devices when arranging a secret meeting between Vishakha and Yavakri. Vishakha listens carefully to the latent and unfulfilled desires of Yavakri ; she doesn't respond to Yavakri with the morality of wifedom. Vishakha knows the inhibition of natural impulses in Yavakri and perceives symbolically the metaphor of his hunger. Vishakha in her meeting with Yavakri concedes to her unwilling marriage with paravasu who is also cousin of him.

Both Paravasu and Vishakha are shown by the dramatist in their respective quest for identities but neither is successful to fulfill it in the entire course of the narrative. Vishakha feels heavenly pleasures in her sensuous fulfillment in the company of her husband. For she is eager to know the real meaning of life through the attraction and repulsion of the body. Amidst such bodily pleasures her husband Paravasu, decides to leave her alone in the hermitage. He lives her in the security of her father and lives the hermitage for the sacrificial place for performing the obsequies of yajna for it becomes a quest for his identity as a priest but Vishakha as a young wife undergoes severe pains and she reports them before Yavakri. As a young girl and as a wife, with the mystery of life a mystery that emanates from physical union with the opposite sex, but the departure of her husband to be the chief priest left her alone with her pangs of isolation and separation.

II.METHODOLOGY

Her long isolation in the hermitage bites her and she becomes a psychosis patient who desires for her immediate which fulfillment with no concern for logic, morality, time sequence, or the demand of external reality. Vishakha realises the deeper and mysterious meanings that emanates from the union of man and woman, body and soul, conscious and

unconscious streams of human psyche, but it does not longer on incessantly and she puts up a question before she fails to save Yavakri's life when Brahma Rakshasa kills her in spite of his spiritual powers.

The entire plot structure of this play based on the performance of vedic rituals, Obsequies and the art of Natya. On the pattern of the Fire and The Rain. Bharata's Natyasastra is an extent work of Indian Poetics, and it becomes helpful to common people, especially the people belonging to so called lower castes, and for all kinds of entertaining and visionary perceptions as well.

Like the Elizabethan dramatists in Hamlet, Karnad too arranges the device of play within the play for the self-reflexivity of the characters inside especially some sensations which are recalled in psychology she process of nightmare. The nightmare represents unconscious motifs and unacceptable thoughts of human mind. Nittilai as an obsession becomes an object of day-dreaming to Aravasu. This bizarre world of dream brings forth the total flux of time in which the merger of time past and time present has been effected successfully.

Aravasu resolves to act the role of vritra and unfolds another symbol like, The Waste Land by T.S. Eliot of Brama's triple progeny: god, man and a son of Brahma symbolises the acts of compassion and kindness and has an edge over the pleasure loving principle of Indra, another son of Brahma. Brama instructs his third son, vritra a demon for saving the life of his brother, vishwarupa from the jealousy and trickery of Indra even at the cost of his own life.

Over-powered through unseen forces Aravasu as an actor in the play decides to save the life of vishwarupa by killing Indra. Chaos prevails on the stage. Paravasu suspects of the foul intentions of demonic powers for polluting the sanctity of the sacrifice, he calmly walks into blazing enclosures and sacrifices himself for the general good of all.

Nittilai as a "lamp into hurricane" symbolises the rains of human love Vishakha as a young lady symbolises the fire of human passions. Nittilai is finally murdered by her husband and brother. In such situations, Indra appears on the stage and is pleased to grant a boon to Aravasu for two reasons; Paravasu's sacrifice and Nittilai's humanitarianism. Being passion ridden man, he begs from Indra the life of Nittilai back. But Indra makes him understand movement of the wheel of time with a complete chaos in the world. Aravasu now understands the mysterious and visionary perception of Indra.

"I am viser, I can stop the tragedy from repeating itself on such occasions, a shout comes a far I want release- release from bondage"

This was the voice of BramaRakshasa who is the creation of his own father, between his two-halves; the egoistic and altruistic impulses of human mind. Indra further unveils the secrets of a soul being released from the pangs of life and death. BramaRakshasa also stamps the superior validity of man for performing the deeds of mercy and compassion.

Arvasu changes the contents of his boon and bags from Indra the release of Brahmaraakshasa. The release of BramaRakshasa invites some parallel with that of The Tempest for apparent manifestations of the colonial-consciousness in The Fire and The Rain. The total impression that the reader draws together after the textual comprehensiveness of this play unfolds the vocal superfluity of the rites and rituals, the restriction of the universal knowledge on the caste bases division in society and the essence of altruism over egoism.

III. CONCLUSION

The world of gods with the concepts of immortality is scoffed off and the cyclic phenomena of death pertaining to human life is applauded for his dynamic of the indigenous myth with an individual talent for enriching the store of Indian English drama.

It is an excellent combination of the elements, metaphysical and supernatural that constitutes the core of the play. Karnad successfully makes use of the divine element, especially in the climax where the hero holds a conversation with the Gods and the final result of the rain pouring on a drought-ridden land.

The play also focuses both on the negative and positive human emotions _ jealousy, betrayal, deceit, as well as selfless love and sacrifice. The hero, like most of Karnad's heroes is a man torn between moral righteousness, love and duty. It is interesting to trace this path of the hero to its fitting end.

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